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**Linguistic Practice on Contemporary Jordanian
Radio: Publics and Participation**

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Submitted in part satisfaction of the requirements for the degree of

PhD in Islamic and Middle Eastern Studies

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Declaration

This is to certify that the work contained within has been composed by me and is entirely my own work. No part of this thesis has been submitted for any other degree or professional qualification.

Signed

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14 September 2017

Abstract

Contemporary studies of media Arabic often pass over issues of media form and the broader relevance of language use. The present thesis addresses these issues directly by examining the language used in Jordanian non-government radio programmes. It examines recordings and transcriptions of a range of programme genres – primarily, morning talk shows and “service programmes” (*barāmiž ḳadamātiyya*), and Islamic advice programmes, both of which feature significant audience input via call-ins. The data are examined through an interpretive form of discourse analysis, drawing on linguistic anthropological theory that analyses language as a form of performance, through comparison of radio programmes as ‘units of interaction.’ This is supported by sociolinguistic data obtained from the recordings, including phoneme frequency analysis, in addition to the author’s experience of 6 months of fieldwork in Jordan in 2014-15. The analysis focuses on four major themes: (1) the influence of media context, specifically the sonic exclusivity and temporal evanescence of radio, on language use, as well as the impact of digital media; (2) the indexicality of certain locally salient sociolinguistic variables, and the use to which they are put in radio talk; (3) the role of language in constructing the identity, or *persona*, of broadcasters; and (4) the role of language in constructing and validating authoritative discourse, in particular that of Islamic texts and scripture in religious programming.

Through its analysis of these themes, using selected recording excerpts as demonstrative case studies, this thesis shows that specific strategies of

Arabic use in the radio setting crucially affect both the *publics* – the addressed audiences – of radio talk, as well as the frameworks of *participation* in this talk – how and to what extent broadcasters and members of the public can participate in mediated discourse. The results demonstrate the unique value of an interpretive study of linguistic performance for highlighting broader social issues, including the inclusion and exclusion of particular segments of the society through linguistic strategies – Jordanians versus non-Jordanians, Ammanis versus non-Ammanis, and pious Muslims versus non-believers; and the use of language to reassert, or occasionally challenge, dominant ideologies and discourses, such as those of gender, nationalism, and religion. This study thus contributes an examination of contemporary Jordanian non-government radio language in its social and political context – something which has not been attempted before, and which provides important insights regarding both the nature of contemporary Arabic media language and its broader social and cultural import.

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Lay Summary

Contemporary studies of media Arabic often pass over issues of media form and the broader relevance of language use. The present thesis addresses these issues directly by examining the language used in Jordanian non-government radio programmes. It focuses on morning talk shows and Islamic advice programmes, both of which feature significant audience input via call-ins. The data are examined through an analysis of transcripts which are presented as illustrative case studies, drawing on the author's experience of fieldwork in Jordan in 2014-15. The analysis focuses on four major themes: (1) the influence of media context on language use, as well as the impact of digital media; (2) the importance of phonetic aspects of spoken language, and the use to which they are put in radio talk; (3) the role of language in constructing the on-air identity of broadcasters; and (4) the role of language in validating the authority of Islamic scripture in religious programming.

This thesis shows that specific strategies of Arabic language use affect both the *publics* – the addressed audiences – of radio language, as well as *participation* in this language – how and to what extent broadcasters and members of the public can participate in communication through the medium. The results demonstrate the unique value of studying media language for highlighting broader social issues, such as the inclusion and exclusion of particular segments of society through linguistic strategies – Jordanians versus non-Jordanians, Ammanis versus non-Ammanis, and pious Muslims versus non-believers; and the use of language to reassert, or occasionally

challenge, dominant ideologies and discourses, such as those of gender, nationalism, and religion.

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#

Note on Transliteration

When transliterating Arabic, I have adopted a modified version of the transliteration format used by the *International Journal of Middle East Studies* (IJMES). Proper names have been transcribed without diacritical marks (e.g. “Hani,” “Ahmad,” “Amman”). When widely used Latin script versions of proper names exist (e.g. “Nasser,” “al-Wakeel,” “Jessy”), these have been adopted instead of transliterated versions. Occasionally, square brackets have been used to denote transcriptions in the International Phonetic Alphabet (IPA).

The main modifications to the IJMES format were implemented to accommodate phonetically accurate transcription of sounds that occur in Jordanian and Levantine Colloquial Arabic, but are not part of formal transliterations of Standard and Classical Arabic. The details are listed below, including (approximate) transcriptions of sounds in the IPA in square brackets, and Arabic script equivalents where relevant.

Vowels

- a, ā* standard tripartite set of Standard Arabic (SA) vowels, IPA [a] [i]
i, ī [u]; macron denotes a long vowel
u, ū
- e, ē* mid front vowel, IPA [e] / [ɛ]; macron denotes length
- ə* mid central vowel, IPA [ə] (approximate)

Consonants

- ʾ glottal stop, IPA [ʔ]; SA *hamza* (ء)
- ʿ voiced pharyngeal approximant, IPA [ʕ]; SA *ʿayn* (ع)
- č voiceless postalveolar affricate, IPA [tʃ̠]; colloquial equivalent of SA *kāf* (ك) in certain Arabic dialects
- ḏ voiced dental fricative, IPA [ð]; SA *ḏāl* (ذ)
- ḍ voiced ‘emphatic’ / velarised alveolar stop, IPA [dˤ]; SA *ḍād* (ض)
- ḍ voiced ‘emphatic’ / velarised dental fricative, IPA [ðˤ]; SA *ḍāl* (ظ); colloquial equivalent of SA *ḍād* (ض) in certain Arabic dialects
- dž voiced postalveolar affricate, IPA [dʒ̠]; version of SA *žīm* (ج)
- g voiced velar stop, IPA [g]; Egyptian pronunciation of SA *žīm* (ج); colloquial equivalent of SA *qāf* (ق) in certain Arabic dialects
- ġ voiced velar fricative, IPA [ɣ]; SA *ġayn* (غ)
- ħ voiceless pharyngeal fricative, IPA [ħ]; SA *ḥā* (ح)
- ḵ voiceless velar fricative, IPA [x]; SA *ḵā* (خ)
- ʔ ‘emphatic’ / velarised alveolar lateral approximant, IPA [lˤ]; version of lateral approximant in certain words (principally *aʕlāh* “God”)
- q voiceless uvular stop, IPA [q]; SA *qāf* (ق)
- ṣ voiceless ‘emphatic’ / velarised alveolar fricative, IPA [sˤ]; SA *ṣād* (ص)
- š voiceless postalveolar fricative, IPA [ʃ̠]; SA *šīn* (ش)

- t voiceless dental fricative, IPA [θ]; SA $tā'$ (ث)
- $t̤$ voiceless 'emphatic' / velarised alveolar stop, IPA [t̤]; SA $tā'$ (ط)
- $z̤$ voiced 'emphatic' / velarised alveolar fricative, IPA [z̤]; colloquial equivalent of SA $dā'$ (ظ) in certain Arabic dialects
- $ʒ$ voiced postalveolar fricative, IPA [ʒ]; version of SA $ʒīm$ (ج)

Additional Symbols

In order to map conversation dynamics, there are four additional sets of symbols I use in transcripts and translations of transcripts. These broadly follow conventions used in the field of Conversation Analysis (CA).¹

- [] single square brackets: **overlap** between speech of speakers in adjacent lines (from the initial aligned square bracket)
- (()) double round brackets: author's **descriptions** of speech; including paralinguistic sounds (e.g. ((uh)), ((laughter))) and editorial comments (e.g. ((inaudible))) in transcripts
- () single round brackets: **editorial additions** in translations, especially for added words that do not occur in the original Arabic
- (??) double question mark in round brackets: **uncertain** transcription or translation

#

¹ Jack Sidnell, *Conversation Analysis: An Introduction* (Malden, MA & Oxford: Wiley-Blackwell, 2010), ix-x.

1. Introduction

Charles Ferguson's seminal 1959 essay, "Diglossia," describes a number of languages which distinguish between "High" and "Low" versions: a 'standard' form, used in writing and formal situations, and the spoken or 'colloquial' vernacular idiom, respectively.² One of the cases Ferguson presented as typical of this diglossic division was Arabic. His reflections on the social contexts of using Standard and Classical Arabic versus the various dialects of Colloquial Arabic were highly perceptive, and subsequently taken up by a number of linguists eager to refine, and occasionally challenge, his framework. Various alternative models were proposed, from el-Said Badawi's concept of multiple intermediate language levels to the existence of "mixed" idioms, speech continuums, or even "multiglossia" of multiple Arabic languages.³ Simultaneously, sociolinguists ventured to explore the *social* implications of using one Arabic variety over another – such as the work of Muhammad Ibrahim and Clive Holes on the social prestige assigned to specific linguistic variants; or the way diglossic language use varies according to

² Charles A. Ferguson, "Diglossia," in *Language Structure and Language Use: Essays by Charles A. Ferguson*, ed. Anwar S. Dil (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1971), 1–10.

³ el-Said Badawi, *Mustawayāt al-'arabiyya al-mu'āšira fī miṣr* (Cairo: Dār al-ma'ārif, 1973); Shahir El-Hassan, "Educated Spoken Arabic in Egypt and the Levant: A Critical Review of Diglossia and Related Concepts," *Archivum Linguisticum* 8, no. 1 (September 1977): 112-32; Benjamin Hary, "The Importance of the Language Continuum in Arabic Multiglossia," in *Understanding Arabic: Essays in Contemporary Arabic Linguistics in Honor of El-Said Badawi*, ed. Alaa Elgibali (Cairo: American University in Cairo Press, 1996), 69–90.

gender, both between Classical and Colloquial Arabic and within the dialects themselves, in the work of Enam al-Wer, Murtadha Bakir, and many others.⁴

Today, the use of Arabic is no less marked by the diglossic background than it was half a century ago. Exploring this linguistic variability in public settings was my initial motive for studying media Arabic: the details of what kind of language is used by Arabic speakers when they perform for wider audiences, as well as the beliefs and convictions that motivate them to choose particular styles and variants over others. In Arabic-language media, fierce debates continue regarding the status of Standard and Classical Arabic and the dialects. The expanding domains of its use have led certain commentators to bemoan the imminent loss of the ‘High’ language while others praise the expressive potential associated with bolstered legitimacy of the vernacular. During the political upheavals in Tunisia in January 2011, which led to the ousting of then-president Zine El Abidine Ben Ali, the linguist Mark Liberman published a blog post highlighting Ben Ali’s unprecedented decision to use Tunisian dialect in a speech – a highly prescient reflection on imminent social and political change, as later events seemed to prove.⁵ Although the

⁴ Muhammad H. Ibrahim, “Standard and Prestige Language: A Problem in Arabic Sociolinguistics,” *Anthropological Linguistics* 28, no. 1 (April 1986): 115-26; Clive D. Holes, “Patterns of Communal Language Variation in Bahrain,” *Language in Society* 12 (July 1983): 433-57; Enam al-Wer, “Why Do Different Variables Behave Differently? Data from Arabic,” in *Language and Society in the Middle East and North Africa: Studies in Variation and Identity*, ed. Yasir Suleiman (Richmond: Curzon, 1999), 38–57; Murtadha Bakir, “Sex Differences in the Approximation to Standard Arabic: A Case Study,” *Anthropological Linguistics* 28, no. 1 (April 1986): 3–9.

⁵ Mark Liberman, “Ben Ali Speaks in Tunisian ‘For the First Time,’” *Language Log*, January 14, 2011, <http://languagelog.ldc.upenn.edu/nll/?p=2905> [accessed 15 January 2014].

momentum of political transition of the early 2010s has since petered out, linguistic issues in Arabic-speaking countries continue to be more visible than ever before.

These debates have not, of course, gone unnoticed by scholars of the Arabic language. The use of Arabic in media and other public settings has been explored by authors such as Naima Boussofara-Omar, Atiqa Hachimi, Reem Bassiouney, and Niloofar Haeri, all of whom link the particularities of linguistic variation to different social and political processes in the region.⁶ But much of this scholarship focuses on providing insights about language variation as such, without necessarily linking it to the social context of its production. What often appears to be lacking is an appreciation of language as a process of communication taking place in specific *sites*, with their own conditions of production, circulation, and uptake. My background in social and linguistic anthropology, in particular, has led me to an appreciation of language as a highly context-dependent phenomenon. A sociolinguistic interview, a conversation in a café, a televised political debate, a monologue broadcast on the radio, and a sermon recorded in a mosque all provide vastly different settings for producing and interpreting language – even when the actual words

⁶ Naima Boussofara-Omar, “Learning the ‘Linguistic Habitus’ of a Politician: A Presidential Authoritative Voice in the Making,” *Journal of Language and Politics* 5, no. 3 (2006): 325–358; Atiqa Hachimi, “The Maghreb-Mashreq Language Ideology and the Politics of Identity in a Globalized Arab World,” *Journal of Sociolinguistics* 17, no. 3 (June 2013): 269-296; Reem Bassiouney, “Identity and Code-Choice in the Speech of Educated Women and Men in Egypt: Evidence from Talk Shows,” in *Arabic and the Media: Linguistic Analyses and Applications*, ed. Reem Bassiouney (Leiden: Brill, 2010), 97-121; Niloofar Haeri, *Sacred Language, Ordinary People: Dilemmas of Culture and Politics in Egypt* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2003).

produced are, in many cases, the same. Yet for most studies that focus on the diglossic contrasts between Standard or Classical and Colloquial Arabic, or on speakers codeswitching between these variants, such differences are less important than variation internal to the linguistic system.

Hence the need for scholarly work on Arabic that acknowledges the sited character of language more explicitly. Linguistic anthropologists have, in the past few decades, developed theoretical and methodological approaches designed specifically to address these issues. The concept of *language ideologies*, developed by authors such as Kathryn Woolard and Paul Kroskrity, has demonstrated how beliefs about language structure and use can be used to reinforce social stereotypes and maintain structures of inequality across class, gender, and ethnic lines, through interpreting linguistic differences to stand for 'inherent' differences in character or ability between people.⁷ Similarly, the focus on *indexicality* – or the tendency of linguistic forms to stand for meanings beyond the merely referential – by authors such as Mary Bucholtz, Kira Hall, and Michael Silverstein has brought important insights regarding how the use of language in public settings can be aimed at valorising particular social groups while vilifying others.⁸ All of these meanings are

⁷ Kathryn A. Woolard, "Introduction: Language Ideology as a Field of Inquiry," in *Language Ideologies: Practice and Theory*, ed. Bambi B. Schieffelin, Kathryn A. Woolard, and Paul V. Kroskrity (New York & Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998), 3-47; Paul V. Kroskrity, "Regimenting Languages: Language Ideological Perspectives," in *Regimes of Language: Ideologies, Politics, and Identities*, ed. Paul V. Kroskrity (Santa Fe, NM: School of American Research Press, 2000), 1-34.

⁸ Mary Bucholtz and Kira Hall, "Identity and Interaction: A Sociocultural Linguistic Approach," *Discourse Studies* 7, no. 4-5 (2005): 585-614; Michael Silverstein, "Indexical Order and the Dialectics of Sociolinguistic Life," *Language & Communication* 23 (June 2003): 193-229.

closely interwoven with aspects of what Richard Bauman and Charles Briggs have termed the *performance context* of language: where language is performed, for what audiences, for what purposes, and with what motivations.⁹

In the mid-2010s, the heyday of electronic media and digital connectivity, we have more than our fair selection of such contexts, from social media websites to YouTube clips to countless hours of digital audio and video production, and satellite channels such as al-Jazeera – an especially popular topic in discussions of contemporary Arabic-language media.¹⁰ My choice in this thesis to study Arabic in the ‘classic’ medium of radio might therefore come across as rather quaint, perhaps even outdated. But beyond the glossy screens and buzzwords of digital media, radio persists. Though now irrevocably transformed from its days as a bulky receiver apparatus serving as a family or communal gathering point, in a country such as Jordan, one is struck by radio’s constant presence: as background noise in taxis and public transport, in private vehicles, through headphones on people’s smartphones, and in conversations conducted by Jordanians online, through the very ‘new media’ that now occupy the media studies spotlight.

The contradiction between radio’s persistence in public life and its apparent lack of scholarly appeal was, in part, what led me to choose it as a research site. Within Jordan alone, there are a great number of other possibilities for studying media language: patriotic songs, with their

⁹ Richard Bauman and Charles L. Briggs, “Poetics and Performance as Critical Perspectives on Language and Social Life,” *Annual Review of Anthropology* 19 (January 1990), 66-7.

¹⁰ Walter Armbrust, “A History of New Media in the Arab Middle East,” *Journal for Cultural Research* 16, no. 2–3 (July 2012), 158-61.

exaggerated performances of East Jordanian dialects; religious media, such as Islamic sermons, recordings, and discussion and interpretation programmes, in the digital and television spheres; and local television channels and online TV series, which also exhibit interesting aspects of using different local dialect forms for various purposes.¹¹ But I found radio to be the most intriguing choice precisely because of its neglect in academic literature. There is a lack of detailed studies focusing on the form and role of radio in Arabic-speaking countries in particular – making it, in Everette Dennis and Edward Pease’s felicitous phrase, a properly “forgotten medium,” despite the fact that it has been a constant presence in many people’s lives since its mass distribution in the 1920s and 30s.¹² Though this gap has come to be addressed in recent years by studies such as Andrea Stanton’s work on mandate-era Palestinian radio, and Gretchen King’s contemporary ethnographic study of Radio al-Balad in Jordan, much more needs to be written in order to give justice to this unassuming yet ever-present mass medium.¹³

The main impetus for this thesis was, nevertheless, the study of language. This led me specifically to study Jordan’s numerous non-

¹¹ Alexander Magidow, *Sawayt Laha Poke: Mocking and Challenging Dominant Language Varieties in a Jordanian Comedy Series*, 2014, https://www.academia.edu/6777839/Sawayt_Laha_Poke_Mocking_and_Contesting_Dominant_Language_Varieties_in_Jordan [accessed 31 January 2015].

¹² Everette E. Dennis and Edward C. Pease, “Radio – The Forgotten Medium,” *Media Studies Journal* 7, no. 3 (1993): 224–33; Andrea L. Stanton, *“This Is Jerusalem Calling”: State Radio in Mandate Palestine* (Austin, TX: University of Texas Press, 2013), 1-75.

¹³ Stanton, *This Is Jerusalem*, 29-165; Gretchen King, “Hearing Community Radio Listeners: A Storytelling Approach for Community Media Audience Research,” *Participations* 12, no. 2 (2015): 121–46.

government radio stations: these exhibit a great degree of variability in the language they use, not only on the diglossic axis but also with regard to different dialect variants and styles available and relevant for Jordanian speakers of Arabic – by contrast with state radio which hews much more closely to Standard Arabic performance norms in most of its programming. In this context, some of the central questions that guided my research were: What is the Arabic used in Arab media today – specifically, Jordanian non-government radio – *actually* like? What are the main language ideologies – the beliefs regarding language structure and use – and the indexical meanings that it invokes? Finally, what broader social and cultural significance does this language use carry? Is it just a neutral choice between different idioms depending on the competencies and tastes of broadcasters? Or does it link to broader trends – to what may be termed social identities, stereotypes, structures of participation, inclusion and exclusion and inequality?

This thesis answers these questions with reference to language used on Jordanian non-government radio today. It is composed of five substantive chapters. Chapter 2, first, provides an overview of relevant theory and methods. It reviews the present thesis's disciplinary background of Arabic sociolinguistics and linguistic anthropological literature, and its methodology, namely an interpretive form of context-sensitive discourse analysis focused on transcripts of linguistic data. This is followed by four empirical sections that each deal with a different aspect of language use on contemporary Jordanian non-government radio. Chapter 3 considers the impact of the specific nature of *media context* on language use – an important factor in mass-mediated

linguistic production, yet one which has so far rarely been considered at all in studies of Arabic in the media. It is specifically concerned with how different types of media context – the classic sound-only setting of radio on the one hand, and digital media on the other – impact strategies used by broadcasters to address their audiences, constructing discursive entities such as the “Jordanian nation” and the “Jordanian people” through different linguistic means. Chapter 4 examines in detail some of the linguistic norms of Jordanian non-government radio usage, proceeding from the necessity to choose and develop a linguistic idiom that is *heard as* reflective of ‘everyday’ or ‘spontaneous’ conversation by the radio audience – which in turn is highly revealing of ideas regarding who this audience is imagined to be. These norms and stereotypes can also be challenged, however, through various creative linguistic strategies on part of broadcasters.

The final two chapters each focus on a prominent genre of call-in programmes on non-government radio stations: “service programmes” (*barāmiž ḵadamātiyya*) in Chapter 5, and what I term ‘Islamic advice programmes’ (sometimes known locally as *barāmiž fatāwa*, “fatwa programmes”) in Chapter 6. Chapter 5 provides a comparative analysis of two popular service programme hosts: Muhammad al-Wakeel on Radio Hala, and Hani al-Badri on Radio Fann. It argues that, despite broad similarities in terms of programme genre, the language of these hosts nevertheless exhibits differences in individual character – or *persona* – that they perform in their programmes, which in turn affects the model on which audience members are able to participate in these programmes. Chapter 6, finally, analyses Islamic

advice programmes, focusing on a key linguistic strategy through which such programmes are presented as 'Islamic' in the first place: namely, references to Islamic texts and the Islamic textual tradition as authoritative sources of knowledge. Again, this affects both the way hosts address their audiences as well as participation dynamics: while such programmes may open up the airwaves to a multiplicity of Jordanian Muslim voices, they nevertheless reinforce a hierarchical model of top-down knowledge distribution, whereby experts use the discursively constituted authority of religious texts to legitimise their own views and advice above all others.

All the chapters are thus driven by a motivation to explore the language of contemporary Jordanian non-government radio and its wider social relevance. I have chosen somewhat unconventional means to do so: this is neither a classic sociolinguistic study based solely on examining variability in transcribed data, nor a linguistic anthropological one rooted in ethnography. It is also theoretically promiscuous: at various points I draw on insights from sociolinguistics, linguistic anthropology, social and cultural anthropology, media studies, and sociology in order to develop my findings. But I believe the value of exposing previously unknown links between 'hard' linguistic data and broader social implications more than offsets these considerations. Taking account of various features of context and connections between language and socio-cultural understandings, it adds to Arabic sociolinguistic literature by explaining just *what* various features of language use in the media – diglossic and non-diglossic – might mean. And it offers a broader contribution to linguistic anthropological literature regarding the properties of language in

mediated settings – in particular, regarding mechanisms for invoking different publics and structuring participation of those who engage with media.

In making these claims, I follow Pierre Bourdieu's conviction that language is deeply intertwined with social structures and common-sense cultural understandings that shape human societies.¹⁴ Michael Warner, whose work on public discourse forms a cornerstone of this thesis's theoretical contributions, likewise argues the way language is used – how groups of humans are addressed, by themselves and others – is crucial for understanding how these groups actually function.¹⁵ Even if we take an oppositional stance towards prevailing social structures and stereotypes, these must first be diagnosed and understood if they are to be combatted effectively.

Jordanian radio today is a much richer field than any single thesis can explore. In selecting the data for this thesis, I have had to bypass entire genres of programming, such as daytime domestic advice programmes, afternoon 'drive-back' programmes, debate and discussion call-in shows; and entire programme formats, such as English-language programming, or radio stations directed at local audiences. There is also insufficient space here to provide a historical analysis of Jordanian state radio, or to compare its current programming to programmes on non-government radio. But my goal is certainly not to provide a final, definitive account of Jordanian radio

¹⁴ Pierre Bourdieu, *Language and Symbolic Power*, ed. John B. Thompson, trans. Gino Raymond and Matthew Adamson (Cambridge & Malden, MA: Polity Press, 1991), 127-32.

¹⁵ Michael Warner, *Publics and Counterpublics* (New York: Zone Books, 2005), 67-96.

broadcasting. Careful sifting and selective presentation of data can be at least as informative as an analysis seeking formal representativeness or generalisability – if conducted with adequate contextual awareness. My methodological and analytical choices were based on broader knowledge of the Jordanian social, cultural, political, and media context, as well as a fieldwork experience that has guided my research towards an original contribution to knowledge regarding language use in Middle Eastern media today.

Along with providing empirical data, this study thus serves as a starting point for further debates regarding the role of specific strategies and techniques of linguistic performance in Arabic-language media. It contributes to scholarly knowledge not only with its focus on a hitherto neglected media site – in particular, radio in the contemporary Arabic-speaking Middle East – but also describes the broader relevance of language use and variation in public media settings. In order to understand the true role of media language, it should not be studied for the details of its forms alone, or for the specific information that it circulates. We must appreciate not only *what* is being said, but also *how* it is said: the sounds and words of language – but also the particular techniques of putting these structures together and directing them at others, and the understandings that animate them. This is what the present thesis hopes to achieve for Jordanian non-government radio today.

#

2. Studying Arabic-Language Radio in Jordan: Theoretical and Methodological Overview

As an object of academic inquiry, language can be approached in a number of ways. It can either be subjected to structural analysis, which seeks to define language as a set of grammatical or semantic rules; it can be seen as a vehicle for expressing social structures and cultural ideas, as in discourse analysis; or it can combine both structural and social considerations, as in classic sociolinguistics. This chapter reviews the dominant approaches to Arabic in the media today, and argues for a hybrid, interpretive discursive approach that is nevertheless grounded in linguistic data. This is the methodology adopted by the present thesis, and one best suited to simultaneously examine both the nature of mediated language use and its contextual ramifications.

Contemporary Arabic sociolinguistic research has, for the most part, been preoccupied with issues of diglossia, codeswitching, and dialectal variation of Arabic. The same is true of analyses that study Arabic in mass-mediated contexts. As discussed below, issues of diglossia and codeswitching are indeed central to how social factors impact the use of contemporary Arabic. Focusing too exclusively on diglossic variation, however, also shuts off certain areas of inquiry that are highly productive in exploring how language is not only influenced by, but can itself gain broader relevance for, the contexts in which it is used.

In the first section of this chapter, I argue that a major problem with contemporary studies of Arabic in the media is an insufficient attention to context: both the mediated context in which language is produced, and the mechanisms through which language use becomes relevant for social groupings and cultural issues on a broader scale. I discuss these issues in three representative studies of Arabic media language: Clive Holes's study of Gamal Abdel Nasser's political speeches; Mahmoud Al Batal's work on local news language in Lebanon; and Abdulkafi Albirini's analysis of codeswitching in Arabic media. These studies all provide valuable insights regarding the role of Arabic diglossic switching in the context of mass media. But they are also weighed down by viewing the diglossic framework as the major independent factor defining linguistic variation and its meanings, and do not sufficiently account for the specific influence of media settings on linguistic production.

In the second section, I then draw on linguistic anthropology as an alternative that can bypass these limitations. First, the linguistic anthropological view of language as a form of *performance* gives more creative agency to language users. It reveals a much wider range of ideological and indexical meanings that can be assigned to any particular linguistic token than the diglossic model, or indeed any other deterministic variationist perspective. It also suggests that greater focus should be put on the *context* of performance, or the interactional setting, including the specific nature of the medium in which language is produced. And it provides theoretical tools which can define more precisely how specific instances of language use gain social relevance, through circulation and accretion of indexical meanings. I examine

Debra Spitulnik's linguistic anthropological study of Zambian radio language as one successful model of such an approach. I also contrast certain recent studies of Arabic media language which, although providing a welcome focus on language ideology and intra-dialectal variation, nevertheless move away from detailed linguistic data, and thus foreclose the exploration of a wider range of ideologies and evaluations of language.

Although the linguistic anthropological position has its shortcomings, I argue that it is nevertheless well-suited for studying Arabic a contemporary media context. To that end, I describe, in the third section, how I set about my study of radio language in Jordan, based on six months of field research in Amman – a period which allowed me to gain critical insights about language use in local media – in addition to a general overview of the social and political context of contemporary Jordan, and the general climate in which Jordanian media (including radio) operates.

In the fourth section, I then describe the data gathered during the period of field research, and how this thesis will analyse them. The bulk of data is composed of recordings of radio broadcasts on non-government radio stations, which were subsequently examined in detail and particular segments chosen for more detailed transcription and analysis. Most of the analysis took the form of “anthropological discourse analysis” in which discourse (language) was analysed by comparing segments of talk and identifying the broader socio-cultural meanings made relevant by elements of this talk.¹ Studying media

¹ Susan Philips, “Method in Anthropological Discourse Analysis: The Comparison of Units of Interaction,” *Journal of Linguistic Anthropology* 23, no. 1 (June 2013): 82–95.

language in this way offers a unique perspective on Arabic language use in the media today, and on Jordanian radio in particular: it enables one to analyse how the media setting itself shapes language use, as well as allowing a precise tracing of the indexical and ideological mechanisms by which language use gains broader social and cultural relevance. It also raises a number of ethical and reflexive issues, which are reviewed in the final section of this chapter – in particular, the ethics of using data gathered in a publicly available medium, and the implications this has for language users under study; and issues related to drawing conclusions about language use in a society which the researcher is not a part of, including the limitations of using selected segments as representative of the talk of participants in linguistic interaction.

2.1 Theoretical approaches to studying Arabic in the media

Most existing research on Arabic in the media focuses on the issues of diglossia and codeswitching. Modern Arabic is characterised by a broadly diglossic pattern of language use, whereby native speakers utilise two distinct linguistic varieties: a cross-regional ‘standard’ used in written and formal oral communication, and a number of ‘colloquial’ idioms that diverge significantly across the areas where Arabic is spoken.² Codeswitching, in this framework,

² Ferguson, “Diglossia,” 1–10.

is usually understood to take place when a speaker switches from using standard to colloquial forms, or vice versa.³

Research on codeswitching has provided valuable insights on socio-cultural aspects of Arabic use, both in mediated settings and beyond. Authors such as Keith Walters for Tunisia and Niloofar Haeri for Egypt have productively analysed the relationship between codeswitching practices and judgments about the social status and prestige of speakers.⁴ Naima Boussofara-Omar's work on the changes made to the various versions of the first public address of the former Tunisian president Zine El Abidine Ben Ali likewise examines how code-switches from Standard Arabic to Tunisian dialect carries potent social meaning – in this case, in the political sphere, establishing the authority of a newly inaugurated political leader.⁵ These studies demonstrate that codeswitching deserves attention as a linguistic strategy with potentially wide social and cultural ramifications.

In much codeswitching research, however, the frame of diglossia tends to be imposed upon Arabic language data even when much of this data

³ Reem Bassiouney, "Theories of Code Switching in the Light of Empirical Evidence from Egypt," in *Perspectives on Arabic Linguistics XV*, ed. Dilworth B. Parkinson and Samira Farwaneh (Amsterdam & Philadelphia: John Benjamins, 2003), 19–39; Naima Boussofara-Omar, "Revisiting Arabic Diglossic Switching in Light of the MLF Model and Its Sub-Models: The 4-M Model and the Abstract Level Model," *Bilingualism* 6, no. 1 (April 2003): 33–46; and Abdulkafi Albirini, "The Sociolinguistic Functions of Codeswitching between Standard Arabic and Dialectal Arabic," *Language in Society* 40, no. 5 (November 2011): 537–562.

⁴ Keith Walters, "Fergie's Prescience: The Changing Nature of Diglossia in Tunisia," *International Journal of the Sociology of Language* 163 (September 2003), 89–101; Niloofar Haeri, "The Reproduction of Symbolic Capital: Language, State, and Class in Egypt," *Current Anthropology* 38, no. 5 (May 1997), 795–801.

⁵ Boussofara-Omar, "Learning," 325–58.

challenges or even defies such framing. This imposition is not entirely unjustified. However ambiguous the data might be, diglossia is – as I discuss below – a linguistic *ideology* of central importance for Arabic speakers. But privileging diglossia above all other possible frames of assigning value to linguistic forms results in an occlusion of contextual detail, both regarding the impact of the settings in which language is spoken as well as the mechanisms by which aspects of language gain broader social and cultural relevance.

One of the first Western linguists to seriously tackle the sociolinguistic peculiarities of Arabic was Charles Ferguson. Ferguson argued that the Arabic linguistic situation, among others, exhibits two distinct language varieties that exist “side by side throughout the community,” which he termed “High” (or H) and “Low” (or L): referring to the standard “superposed variety” common across the community – but not spoken natively by anyone – and the “regional dialects”, respectively.⁶ The contextual appropriateness of using either form varies across different situations: as a matter of normative preference, formal situations call for use of ‘High’ (in the Arabic case, Classical Arabic (CA) or Modern Standard Arabic (MSA), or *fuṣḥā*), while in less formal ones the ‘Low’ variety (colloquial Arabic, or *‘āmmiyya*) is preferred.⁷

In practice, however, the vast majority of Arabic speech mixes both standard and colloquial language, and therefore cannot be straightforwardly classified under either of the two labels. In all of the contexts that Ferguson defined as “appropriate” for either the ‘High’ or ‘Low’ variety, language use in

⁶ Ferguson, “Diglossia,” 1, 3.

⁷ Ferguson, “Diglossia,” 5-10.

fact exhibits features of both classical and vernacular Arabic.⁸ Authors such as Haim Blanc, El-Said Badawi, and Shahir El-Hassan have attempted to redress this apparent shortcoming by proposing various intermediate “levels” of Arabic that fall between the poles of ‘High’ and ‘Low’.⁹ Still, these classifications all reproduce precisely the same “taxonomic” bias that they criticise Ferguson for, since they merely replace one imperfect classificatory system with another. No matter how meticulously each particular level is defined or described, the type and amount of mixing in contemporary Arabic speech styles makes any kind of imposed division essentially arbitrary.¹⁰

By contrast, Ferguson’s model at least has the merit of being emically warranted, since the ‘High’-‘Low’ dichotomy fundamentally *informs speakers’ choices* regarding the specific phonological, lexical, and morphosyntactic linguistic forms that they use in different situations.¹¹ In this sense, diglossia can productively be viewed through the linguistic anthropological model of *language ideology*: a description of the structure and use of language which has cultural validity.¹² Crucially, calling diglossia an ideology in the linguistic

⁸ El-Hassan, “Educated Spoken Arabic,” 113-6; Albirini, “Sociolinguistic Functions,” 559-60.

⁹ Haim Blanc, “Style Variations in Spoken Arabic: A Sample of Interdialectal Educated Conversation,” in *Contributions to Arabic Linguistics*, ed. Charles A. Ferguson (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1960), 80–156; Badawi, *Mustawayāt*; El-Hassan, “Educated Spoken Arabic,” 115-130.

¹⁰ Dilworth B. Parkinson, “Verbal Features in Oral Fusha Performances in Cairo,” *International Journal of the Sociology of Language* 163 (September 2003), 28-9; Hary, “Importance,” 69–90.

¹¹ Parkinson, “Verbal Features,” 40; Albirini, “Sociolinguistic Functions,” 560.

¹² For more details on the notion of language ideology as developed by linguistic anthropologists, see Woolard, “Introduction,” 11-20; and Kroskrity, “Regimenting,” 1–34.

anthropological sense does not imply that it is an inaccurate description of linguistic reality. Rather, using the term shifts the focus of analysis towards the meaning and interpretation of linguistic categories, rather than using them for supposedly objective classificatory purposes. Thus, even if the diglossic dichotomy cannot be a definitive categorisation tool for different contexts of Arabic speech, its importance re-emerges on a meta-pragmatic level: the meanings and connotations speakers of Arabic assign to the forms they use are patterned according to a diglossic classification, suggesting that diglossia is a language ideology of central importance for any informed linguistic analysis of Arabic.¹³

If the majority of discourse in Arabic can in fact be located somewhere on a continuum between 'High' and 'Low', Ferguson's remarks could lead one to believe that forms with 'High' implications are universally more highly valued as linguistic resources than those that are unambiguously 'Low'. But as authors working on variation within Arabic speech communities have indicated, the situation is somewhat more complex.

Muhammad Ibrahim was one of the first to suggest that since standard Arabic is not the native speech variety of any segment of the population, it cannot serve as a marker of prestige in Arabic speech communities the same

¹³ In a later paper, Ferguson himself clearly recognises this point, even though he puts it in somewhat different terms; see Charles A. Ferguson, "Epilogue: Diglossia Revisited," in *Understanding Arabic: Essays in Contemporary Arabic Linguistics in Honor of El-Said Badawi*, ed. Alaa Elgibali (Cairo: American University in Cairo Press, 1996), 59. Cf. Steven C. Caton, "Diglossia in North Yemen: A Case of Competing Linguistic Communities," *Southwest Journal of Linguistics* 10, no. 1 (September 1991), 147; Haeri, *Sacred Language*, 1-51.

way as 'standard' varieties do in other linguistic contexts.¹⁴ On the other hand, different varieties of *vernacular* Arabic are often evaluated according to the status of the social groups they are associated with. Most prominently, certain phonemic variants that appear distant from standard forms in fact enjoy considerable social prestige by virtue of their use by urban or educated strata.¹⁵ This observation has been confirmed especially by scholars working on sex-linked linguistic variation – such as Enam al-Wer and Hassan Abd-el-Jawad in Jordan, Farida Abu-Haidar in Iraq, and Niloofar Haeri in Egypt – as well as Arabic dialectologists more generally, as for example in Clive Holes's work on Baharna Shi'a linguistic accommodation in Bahrain.¹⁶

This body of work indicates that, in the case of Arabic, the *social* prestige of a language variety does not necessarily stem from its closeness to the 'High' code. Rather, patterns of cross-dialectal variation point to the existence of dialectal hierarchies whereby speakers of Arabic accommodate to certain locally prestigious varieties of 'Low' – a process which takes place, as al-Wer has pointed out, quite independently of their relationship to standard

¹⁴ Ibrahim, "Standard and Prestige Language," 118-9.

¹⁵ Ibrahim, "Standard and Prestige Language," 116-9, 122-5.

¹⁶ Enam al-Wer, "Arabic between Reality and Ideology," *International Journal of Applied Linguistics* 7, no. 2 (December 1997), 258-61; Hassan R. Abd-el-Jawad, "The Emergence of an Urban Dialect in the Jordanian Urban Centers," *International Journal of the Sociology of Language* 61 (August 1986), 57-62; Hassan R. Abd-el-Jawad, "Cross-Dialectal Variation in Arabic: Competing Prestigious Forms," *Language in Society* 16, no. 3 (April 1987), 361-2; Farida Abu-Haidar, "Are Iraqi Women More Prestige Conscious than Men? Sex Differentiation in Baghdadi Arabic," *Language in Society* 18, no. 4 (April 1989), 475-8; Bakir, "Sex Differences," 3-9; Holes, "Patterns," 447-8; Niloofar Haeri, *The Sociolinguistic Market of Cairo: Gender, Class, and Education* (London & New York: Kegan Paul, 1996), 174-82, 231-3.

or classical Arabic.¹⁷ In other words, it is not just the specific admixture of ‘High’ that varies due to colloquial influences or regionally specific styles, but there is also significant variability along a scale of ‘Low’ speech forms, none of which can be characterised as a ‘High’ variety.

Thus, as with all other language ideologies, perceptions of variation within Arabic – including both diglossia and variation within and across diglossic categories – have social implications that go beyond the confines of language alone. Different linguistic forms carry a variety of meanings linked to particular identity stereotypes or group membership, including class, gender, education, religious or ethnic affiliation; or they may have particular implications for social prestige in certain settings of language use. These connotations are, naturally, hardly lost on language users. Both ‘Standard’ and variously marked ‘Colloquial’ forms may be used strategically to convey specific meanings – including implications of speaker affect, such as social distance or solidarity – or exhibit patterned variability across speech genres and interactional settings.¹⁸ Close attention must, therefore, be paid to the context in which linguistic forms are used, as wide-ranging labels such as ‘Standard’ or ‘Colloquial’ are not particularly helpful in understanding the

¹⁷ al-Wer, “Arabic,” 260-2; Holes, “Patterns,” 447-8; Haeri, *Sociolinguistic Market*, 167-72.

¹⁸ An additional issue is the use of non-Arabic linguistic codes, many of which (such as English and French) also have implications for social prestige. See for example Haeri, “Reproduction,” 795-801, on Egypt; Atiqa Hachimi, “The Urban and the Urbane: Identities, Language Ideologies, and Arabic Dialects in Morocco,” *Language in Society* 41, no. 3 (June 2012), 323-4, 327-8, and Abdelâli Bentahila, “Motivations for Code-Switching among Arabic-French Bilinguals in Morocco,” *Language & Communication* 3, no. 3 (1983): 233–243, on Morocco; and Keith Walters, “Gendering French in Tunisia: Language Ideologies and Nationalism,” *International Journal of the Sociology of Language* 211 (January 2011), 88-93, on Tunisia.

complex, interwoven strands of socio-cultural meaning that the use of a particular form might imply.

There are a number of existing studies on the use of Arabic in the media which grapple with this complex linguistic reality. One early example is Clive Holes's analysis of political speeches made by the Egyptian president Gamal Abdel Nasser between 1956 and 1965, extracts of which were distributed on an LP record, and subsequently transcribed and analysed by Holes.¹⁹ Drawing on earlier studies of Arabic diglossic variation, Holes argues perceptively that variation in Arabic is best viewed as a speaker-focused *strategy*, rather than being unilaterally determined by a speaker's social status (as argued by classic sociolinguistics in the tradition of William Labov).²⁰ One example is that of Nasser using Standard Arabic as a vehicle for an *abstract* appeal to mobilisation during the Suez Crisis, while using Egyptian Colloquial Arabic in the same context to mount a *personalised* challenge against foreign enemies.²¹ In a pair of speeches from the 1960s in which Nasser seeks to explain the meaning of "socialism," by contrast, pure Standard Arabic is used to expound basic socialist principles – with Nasser acting as a kind of "prophet" (as Holes puts it) of "socialist scripture" – whereas Egyptian Colloquial is used in a more exegetic mode when Nasser seeks to take on the role of teacher or

¹⁹ Clive D. Holes, "The Uses of Variation: A Study of the Political Speeches of Gamal Abd Al-Nasir," in *Perspectives on Arabic Linguistics V*, ed. Clive D. Holes and Mushira Eid (Amsterdam & Philadelphia: John Benjamins, 1993), 13–45.

²⁰ Holes, "Uses," 15; Penelope Eckert, "Three Waves of Variation Study: The Emergence of Meaning in the Study of Sociolinguistic Variation," *Annual Review of Anthropology* 41, no. 1 (October 2012), 88-91.

²¹ Holes, "Uses," 26-7.

interpreter of the political creed for the masses.²² For Holes, these examples suggest that movements along the stylistic spectrum – that is, using differently valued varieties of Arabic that Nasser had at his disposal – can be used for various strategic purposes, and that there is no necessary one-to-one correspondence between the variety of Arabic used and the speaker's communicative intent.²³

But despite Holes's sensitivity to variability and hybridity on the diglossic spectrum, he still operates with a fairly basic conception of diglossic variation as moving between two idealised poles of 'Standard' and 'Colloquial' Arabic – without acknowledging the possibility of variation *within* either of these poles. For example, while he does acknowledge that Nasser's 'Colloquial' moments involve, specifically, the *Cairene* dialect, Holes barely touches upon the implications of this for the material he studies – particularly in terms of dialectal hierarchies, or the kind of prestige using (a particular form of) Cairene might hold for audiences both within and outside Egypt. It may well be that the Standard/Colloquial split is the most relevant ideological distinction in the particular setting of Nasser's speeches; but this should not merely be assumed if one's goal is to provide a truly multidimensional interpretive study of the meanings of Arabic variation.

A further issue is the socio-political environment of Nasser's speeches, and the media setting in which they were delivered and distributed. Holes includes some reflections on the possible audiences and circulation of the

²² Holes, "Uses," 30-1.

²³ Holes, "Uses," 33.

material: he notes Nasser's awareness that his speeches will have been heard by listeners beyond his immediate audience, and beyond Egypt as well, through radio broadcasting.²⁴ But these concerns are abandoned as Holes develops his analysis, during which the audience is flattened to undifferentiated "Egyptians," and the speeches are compared as stretches of spoken discourse without reference to their various contexts of production and circulation. Moreover, Holes claims that the conclusions from the speeches he examined are applicable to *spoken discourse in Arabic as a whole*.²⁵ Although a laudable attempt to link theoretical insights to language use more broadly, this kind of generalisation inevitably elides the specific factors that affect language use in mediated environments, or their socio-cultural implications.

A second indicative study of Arabic language use in the media is Mahmoud Al Batal's analysis of diglossic variation in local news broadcasts on a Lebanese television station, LBCI, in 1999.²⁶ Al Batal adopts a more rigid theoretical framework than Holes, couching his analysis in terms of language "tension" between distinct "registers" of Standard and Colloquial Arabic in Lebanon. However, he similarly acknowledges the importance of speakers' strategic choices and the *meaning* assigned to language varieties, particularly in his discussion of registers as markers of different kinds of "identity" depending on context.²⁷ Al Batal further contextualises his study in terms of

²⁴ Holes, "Uses," 21-3.

²⁵ Holes, "Uses," 36-8.

²⁶ Mahmoud Al Batal, "Identity and Language Tension in Lebanon: The Arabic of Local News at LBCI," in *Language Contact and Language Conflict in Arabic: Variations on a Sociolinguistic Theme*, ed. Aleya Rouchdy (London: Routledge Curzon, 2002), 91–115.

²⁷ Al Batal, "Identity," 91-2.

the socio-political situation in Lebanon: he notes the ongoing debate regarding Lebanese identity as either Arab or non-Arab, and its particular relevance in Lebanon's agonistic media environment, with numerous private media outlets associated with various factions and promoting their ideological agendas.²⁸

Al Batal suggests that LBCI seeks to promote a "unique Lebanese identity... with an Arab facet" – a project evident in their efforts to mix Standard Arabic with Lebanese Colloquial in the station's local news broadcasting.²⁹ He explains this variability by referring to the process of production of the media text – produced, originally, in written Standard Arabic, but then transformed to varying degrees by different reporters in order to inject a Lebanese flavour to the news broadcasts via colloquial insertions.³⁰ While this is an informative explanation for how the type of 'mix' on LBCI might differ from, say, the more consciously strategic switching in Nasser's speeches, it restores a predominantly descriptive perspective on Arabic diglossic variation, without considering the ideological implications of varying degrees of mixing within a single programme. Indeed, while Al Batal cites Holes at length, he does not appear to fully appreciate his insight regarding the way linguistic forms can gain different values and meanings depending on context.³¹

There are a number of further issues with Al Batal's analysis. He does not acknowledge intra-colloquial variability within Lebanon at all; unlike Holes, he does not even hint at the possibility that this might be subject to different

²⁸ Al Batal, "Identity," 92-5.

²⁹ Al Batal, "Identity," 95.

³⁰ Al Batal, "Identity," 109-11.

³¹ Al Batal, "Identity," 110-1.

kinds of ideological valorisation, in terms of prestige of otherwise. Moreover, while his reflections on the context of media production and circulation are deeper than Holes's, he still does not examine the implications of the mediated context of *television news*, in particular, in sufficient detail. And finally, while the discussion of identity and its ideological linkage to different varieties of Arabic in Lebanon is insightful, it overwhelms Al Batal's analysis to the extent that he does not consider *other* possible evaluations of Arabic linguistic tokens, or diglossic switching generally.³²

A somewhat different approach is adopted by Abdulkafi Albirini, in his study of code-switching across a number of mediated settings. Albirini proceeds from sociolinguistic theory which defines codeswitching, or the "alternation between two language varieties in a speech episode," as a "creative communicative act employed for various pragmatic and sociolinguistic purposes."³³ Applying this model to Arabic, a switch between Standard and Colloquial Arabic is thus not merely determined by context, as a crude understanding of Ferguson's model would imply; that is, it is not limited to what Blom and Gumperz have termed "situational codeswitching," in which the setting determines the variety of language which is to be used.³⁴ Rather,

³² Al Batal, "Identity," 112-3.

³³ Albirini, "Sociolinguistic Functions," 537. His view of codeswitching is elaborated further in Jan-Petter Blom and John J. Gumperz, "Social Meaning in Linguistic Structure: Code-Switching in Norway," in *Directions in Sociolinguistics*, ed. John J. Gumperz and Dell Hymes (New York: Holt, Rhinehart & Winston, 1972), 407-34; and Carol Myers-Scotton, "Common and Uncommon Ground: Social and Structural Factors in Codeswitching," *Language in Society* 22, no. 4 (April 1993): 475-503.

³⁴ Albirini, "Sociolinguistic Functions," 537-9.

codeswitching is a creative act, where use of a particular language variety as opposed to another always has some sort of ideological or pragmatic function. As a result, both Standard and Colloquial Arabic occur in “contexts of varying degrees of formality,” depending on the meanings which speakers wish to convey with their use.³⁵

Albirini then examines the motivations speakers of Arabic might have for switching between Standard and Colloquial in three different contexts: televised political debates, soccer commentaries, and religious sermons. He identifies a number of patterns, including the use of Standard Arabic for formulaic expressions and direct quotations, conveying an air of importance or emphasis, and (as in Al Batal’s study) indexing a pan-Arab or Muslim affiliation; and switching to Colloquial Arabic for de-emphasising stretches of talk, conveying a comic or insulting tone, and (as in Holes’s study) for explanation or simplification.³⁶ Taken together, these functions imply different ideological values for using Standard or Colloquial language more generally. Speakers use Standard Arabic, the ‘High’ code, for serious or sophisticated functions, while Colloquial Arabic, the ‘Low’ code, is used for less serious, more accessible discourse. The functional associations preserve the different status of the codes across a variety of contexts, and effectively make codeswitching a marker of the *speaker’s attitude* towards speech.³⁷

Albirini provides a sensible counter to the notion of situationally

³⁵ Albirini, “Sociolinguistic Functions,” 555.

³⁶ Albirini, “Sociolinguistic Functions,” 540-55.

³⁷ Albirini, “Sociolinguistic Functions,” 555-7.

determined diglossia, and develops a more systematic framework for the functions of switching between varieties than Holes. But his critique of situational determinism ultimately produces only an equally rigid model of *functional* determinism: that is, scouring spoken language for switching patterns in order to formulate a definitive list of pragmatic ‘functions’ of Standard-Colloquial switching, from which the ideological valuations of different language levels can be deduced. Although Albirini acknowledges that his list is not exhaustive, this approach nevertheless leads away from considering the variety of potential meanings linguistic tokens carry in different contexts of language use.³⁸ Issues such as whether a switch from Colloquial to Standard Arabic through, for instance, a religious quotation carries quite the same weight in the context of a religious sermon and that of a soccer commentary are left unexamined.³⁹ And, like Holes and Al Batal, Albirini also does not consider the issue of intra-colloquial variability – even though his study includes data from a number of different dialects of Arabic, which may have very different systems of prestige evaluation, both intra-dialectally and in relation to Standard Arabic.⁴⁰

Holes, Al Batal, and Albirini’s studies are indicative of broader trends in studies of Arabic in the media. Other examples that share a broadly sociolinguistic orientation focused on diglossic variation include Madiha Doss’s study of news bulletins in Egyptian Colloquial Arabic; Adrian Gully’s work on

³⁸ Albirini, “Sociolinguistic Functions,” 540.

³⁹ Albirini, “Sociolinguistic Functions,” 541-2.

⁴⁰ Albirini, “Sociolinguistic Functions,” 540.

advertising in Egypt; Medhat Sidky Rabie's thesis on diglossia on Egyptian radio; the work of Reem Bassiouney and Mushira Eid on identity and codeswitching in televised talk shows and interviews in Egypt; and Dina Matar's study of the linguistic aspects of Hassan Nasrallah's rhetoric in Lebanon.⁴¹ These studies exhibit much the same issues as the three studies discussed above – in particular, lacking a detailed analysis of how specificities of context might influence language use. Their focus on diglossic variation tends to ignore contextual factors beyond those which can be fitted into a diglossic framework – for instance, intra-dialectal variation, or different evaluation of linguistic tokens and segments of speech that belong to the same diglossic pole in different settings of language use.

With regard to the latter, in particular, there is a problematic neglect of the features of the media from which linguistic data has been acquired. The authors usually offer some reflection on this in broad terms, but lack a coherent framework that could accommodate the impact of distinctive properties of media transmission and circulation. As such, they also often casually take

⁴¹ Madiha Doss, "Ḥāl Id-Dunyā: An Arabic News Bulletin in Colloquial ('āmmiyya)," in *Arabic and the Media: Linguistic Analyses and Applications*, ed. Reem Bassiouney (Leiden: Brill, 2010), 123–40; Adrian Gully, "The Discourse of Arabic Advertising: Preliminary Investigations," *Journal of Arabic and Islamic Studies* 1 (January 1996): 1–49; Medhat Sidky Rabie, "A Sociolinguistic Study of Diglossia of Egyptian Radio Arabic: An Ethnographic Approach" (PhD Thesis, University of Texas, 1991); Bassiouney, "Identity," 97-121; Mushira Eid, "Arabic on the Media: Hybridity and Styles," in *Approaches to Arabic Linguistics: Presented to Kees Versteegh on the Occasion of His Sixtieth Birthday*, ed. Everhard Ditters and Harald Motzki (Leiden: Brill, 2007), 403–34; and Dina Matar, "Performance, Language and Power: Nasrallah's Rhetoric and Mediated Charisma in the Context of the 2006 July War," in *Arabic and the Media: Linguistic Analyses and Applications*, ed. Reem Bassiouney (Leiden: Brill, 2010), 141–57.

mass-mediated language as representative of spoken discourse at large.⁴² This is despite the fact that sociolinguists such as Allan Bell and Nikolas Coupland have long drawn attention to the ways in which language use is affected by *media* settings, in particular – such as the “national” distribution of news broadcasts, or the particular framing of dialect use in “light entertainment” radio shows.⁴³ While parallels can certainly be drawn, the issue of how *particular kinds of* mass mediation affect language use and variation in Arabic – both within and beyond diglossic lines – remains largely unexplored.

In the following section, I draw on linguistic anthropological scholarship as the starting point for a more critical approach to the use of language in a mass-mediated setting. Such an approach would need to acknowledge the full variability of Arabic usage, and its potential connotations for the various participants in linguistic interaction. But it also requires an appreciation of the specific features of the medium in its own right. No form of media is just a neutral vessel for the transmission of language; rather, it possesses its own principles of production and transmission that impact language use. Viewing language as performance enables us to take account of this contextual background in a more nuanced manner, as well as outlining the implications of mediated language use for broader socio-cultural context.

⁴² E.g. Albirini, “Sociolinguistic Functions,” 559-60; Bassiouney, “Identity,” 96, 112-3; and Doss, “*Ḥāl id-dunyā*,” 139-40.

⁴³ Allan Bell, “Broadcast News as a Language Standard,” *International Journal of the Sociology of Language* 40 (August 1983): 29–42; Nikolas Coupland, “Dialect Stylization in Radio Talk,” *Language in Society* 30, no. 3 (April 2001): 345–375.

2.2 Language in mass media as performance: a linguistic anthropological perspective

How might the understanding that speech is being circulated via a medium of mass communication impact linguistic performance? And does this performance, in turn, have implications for socio-cultural understandings on a broader scale? Below, I propose a framework, rooted in linguistic anthropology, that enables a consideration of these contextual links in a more coherent way than studies of Arabic in the media have typically done thus far.

Languages exhibit stylistic variation both within and across social contexts. In traditional sociolinguistics, such variation has been taken as a product of external, objectively identifiable variables – such as the nature of the communicative context, participant and audience roles, and elements of the speaker’s identity.⁴⁴ An important development in linguistic anthropology and variationist sociolinguistics has been the emergence of models that grant speakers more agency in stylistic choices. Rather than simply correlating with measurable contextual changes, the meanings of linguistic tokens are now seen to imply particular *stances* and *role alignments*.⁴⁵ That is, speakers have at their disposal a variety of language forms that are ideologically associated

⁴⁴ Studies reacting to the “first wave” of Labovian correlationism sought to discern the emic meaning of such variables, but did not themselves challenge the assumption that discrete or stable categories exist. See Eckert, “Three Waves,” 88-93.

⁴⁵ Nikolas Coupland, “Style-Shifting in a Cardiff Work-Setting,” *Language in Society* 9, no. 1 (1980), 1-10; Penelope Eckert, “Variation and the Indexical Field,” *Journal of Sociolinguistics* 12, no. 4 (January 2008), 455-6; Eckert, “Three Waves,” 93-7; and Bucholtz and Hall, “Identity,” 593-8.

with features of context, participant roles, or identity; and they are able to use these strategically, aligning themselves – taking a “stance” – with or against particular ideologies and identity stereotypes, and either disrupting or reinforcing dominant discourses and power structures in turn.⁴⁶

And it is only through the accumulation of concrete instances of language use that these stances and alignments have implications for socio-cultural processes on a broader scale. This phenomenon has been termed “stance accretion” by Bucholtz and Hall, who discuss specifically the relationship between the use of linguistic tokens in small-scale interactional contexts, and larger ideological structures, including speaker identity.⁴⁷ Their work, as well as the work of linguistic anthropologists such as Asif Agha and Michael Silverstein, has demonstrated how this accretion can both refer to and produce broader language ideologies: for example, the kind of speech that has through time come to be understood as ‘standard’ English “Received Pronunciation,” or the loss of the second person singular-plural distinction in English due to the ideological implications of using the second person singular

⁴⁶ John W. Du Bois, “The Stance Triangle,” in *Stancetaking in Discourse: Subjectivity, Evaluation, Interaction*, ed. Robert Englebretson (Amsterdam: John Benjamins, 2007), 139–82; Alexandra Jaffe et al., “Introduction: Heteroglossia, Performance, Power, and Participation,” *Language in Society* 44, no. 2 (2015), 135-6. Bucholtz and Hall, “Identity,” 595. Much of this work builds on the insights of Erving Goffman – in particular, his concept of “footing,” as a source for determining participants’ evaluative attitudes towards ongoing interaction. See Erving Goffman, *Forms of Talk* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1981), 124-57.

⁴⁷ Bucholtz and Hall, “Identity,” 595-6.

pronoun *thou*.⁴⁸ Importantly, these ideologies are not set in stone: there are many possible meanings any particular linguistic token might indicate, and a detailed appreciation of interactional context is required in order to suggest which understandings are the most relevant.⁴⁹

The core insight here is that broader ideologies and meanings of language-in-use are construed from concrete instances of creative, often strategic linguistic *performance*. Such performance is, as Richard Bauman and Charles Briggs have pointed out, always emplaced in context: it is institutionally situated, has a particular audience, and has its own specific participation dynamics with regard to the roles played by the ‘performers’ of language.⁵⁰ Bauman similarly notes that performance implies a specific *frame* for the interpretation of language, rather than viewing it as a wholly decontextualised ‘text’ that can be compared with other texts regardless of the setting in which the language was actually produced.⁵¹

Bauman and Briggs also warn, however, of conceptualising context as a static structure which unidirectionally determines the nature of a performance. They prefer the term “contextualisation,” which they define as an ongoing process in which language users have a central, agentive role.⁵² Often, speakers utilise “meta-narrative” devices through which they comment

⁴⁸ Asif Agha, “The Social Life of Cultural Value,” *Language & Communication* 23 (June 2003), 246-70; Silverstein, “Indexical Order,” 210-3.

⁴⁹ Eckert, “Variation,” 463-4.

⁵⁰ Bauman and Briggs, “Poetics,” 66-7.

⁵¹ Richard Bauman, “Verbal Art as Performance,” *American Anthropologist* 77, no. 2 (April 1975), 291-3.

⁵² Bauman and Briggs, “Poetics,” 68-9.

on the immediate features of the performance, but also its broader social significance and the ways it is linked to other events of language use, as in intertextual quotation and reported speech. In this view, performance is an “active process of negotiation” which not only refers to features of context, but also helps to *produce* it, demonstrating precisely which links to other communicative events it considers relevant and how it evaluates them.⁵³ Speakers are, of course, never simply free to assign meanings to elements of their speech; existing stereotypes and language ideologies always shape how these are understood, even if a user’s own evaluation is critical or subversive. Still, contextualisation links are always forged in particular interactional settings, and one cannot understand their significance properly without attentive study of particular instances of communication.

Importantly, my reference to performance does not imply that all mass-mediated language should be viewed as ‘performances’ in the sense of “verbal art,” as self-consciously artful displays of communicative competence subject to heightened audience evaluation.⁵⁴ Sociolinguists such as Allan Bell and Andy Gibson have focused on the dimensions especially relevant for such “artful” performance – such as stylization, or the conscious “staging” of language characterised by rehearsal, self-awareness, and hyperbole; audience and referee design, in which language is modified with awareness of a specific evaluating audience or the indexing of a “targeted reference group”; and reflexivity, whereby performed language “draw[s] attention to its own

⁵³ Bauman and Briggs, “Poetics,” 69.

⁵⁴ Bauman, “Verbal Art,” 293.

performativity,” through linguistic virtuosity that emphasises self-display.⁵⁵ Other authors, such as Nikolas Coupland and Barbara Johnstone, have used this framework to good effect in analysing media language, for example in English-language radio talk shows where presenters use distinct dialects identifiable by their audience, such as “Welsh” or “Pittsburghese,” for comedic purposes.⁵⁶ But as Bauman also indicates, in any particular mass-mediated setting, it is difficult to predict to what extent language use will be likened to contexts of artful performance outside mass media.⁵⁷ In Laura Kunreuther’s work on Nepali radio stations, for example, FM radio programmes are in fact ideologised as transmitting *transparent* speech – that is, speech that is supposed to be *freed* of the constraints of performing, directly transmitting one’s “inner thoughts” without recourse to verbal virtuosity.⁵⁸ While actual enactment of such ‘direct’ language obviously involves performance at another level, Kunreuther shows that it is nevertheless locally contrasted with more oblique linguistic styles marking genres that are explicitly set apart as *artful* performance, such as indirect critiques of authority through humour and irony.⁵⁹

⁵⁵ Allan Bell and Andy Gibson, “Staging Language: An Introduction to the Sociolinguistics of Performance,” *Journal of Sociolinguistics* 15, no. 5 (November 2011), 558, 560, 562-3.

⁵⁶ Coupland, “Dialect Stylization,” 351-72; Barbara Johnstone, “Dialect Enregisterment in Performance,” *Journal of Sociolinguistics* 15, no. 5 (November 2011): 657–679.

⁵⁷ Richard Bauman, “Commentary: Foundations in Performance,” *Journal of Sociolinguistics* 15, no. 5 (November 2011), 711.

⁵⁸ Laura Kunreuther, “Transparent Media: Radio, Voice, and Ideologies of Directness in Postdemocratic Nepal,” *Journal of Linguistic Anthropology* 20, no. 2 (November 2010), 335-40.

⁵⁹ Kunreuther, “Transparent Media,” 340-1.

We thus cannot assume that the use of language in media discourse will always be a product of consciously performance-oriented strategies of artful speech. It would, of course, be equally disingenuous to celebrate the ‘informality’ and ‘spontaneity’ of media talk – aspects which are themselves to a large extent *staged*.⁶⁰ Still, the performance framework is useful for emphasising that mediated language is ‘performed’ to the same extent as any other act of language use: it is emplaced in a specific performance context that impacts how language will be used and understood, and involves the use of stylistic resources with specific meanings – with properly *creative* potential on part of speakers to shape these meanings, drawing on (or pushing against) ideologies and stereotypes on a broader scale.

Speaking more formally, any act of linguistic performance in the media will involve links between, at minimum, two different spatio-temporal contexts: that of the communicative interaction within the mediated discourse itself, and that of its anticipated uptake in circulation.⁶¹ How the links between the two are structured and what kind of assumptions they make thus provides a basis for considering the relationship between particular communicative events and

⁶⁰ Informality and spontaneity may, nevertheless, serve as powerful *ideologies* of how radio talk should function. See e.g. Jackie Cook, “Dangerously Radioactive: The Plural Vocalities of Radio Talk,” in *Culture & Text: Discourse and Methodology in Social Research and Cultural Studies*, ed. Cate Poynton and Alison Lee (St. Leonards, New South Wales: Rowman & Littlefield, 2000), 60-3; Goffman, *Forms of Talk*, 232-73; Espen Ytreberg, “Formatting Participation within Broadcast Media Production,” *Media, Culture & Society* 26, no. 5 (September 2004), 688-90; Espen Ytreberg, “Erving Goffman as a Theorist of the Mass Media,” *Critical Studies in Media Communication* 19, no. 4 (December 2002), 489-95.

⁶¹ Asif Agha, “Recombinant Selves in Mass Mediated Spacetime,” *Language & Communication* 27 (June 2007), 321-4.

larger-scale imaginings of social collectivities or cultural values – though one rooted firmly in speech events themselves as a point of departure.

These are, so far, very much abstract claims. But linguistic anthropological research also provides models how such a doubly contextualised analysis works in practice. Debra Spitulnik's work on Zambian radio is one example, focusing on the "entextualisation" of mediated language – a process whereby particular linguistic forms or stretches of talk are made susceptible to detachment from a context of occurrence and re-contextualisation in another, often with different kinds of discursive properties.⁶²

Spitulnik explores a number of expressions and interactional routines that appear on Zambian state radio – including programme titles, customary turn-taking formulas, or marked features of broadcaster speech styles, all aspects of linguistic performance which owe their particular shape and character to the fact that they *appear in the context of radio* specifically.⁶³ But she also provides examples of these expressions re-emerging in everyday interaction outside the context of mass media – for example, in shops or marriage ceremonies.⁶⁴ Such expressions, then, in effect become "public words": quotable elements of discourse, usable and recognisable on a variety of levels – from the pan-Zambian community of radio listeners as a whole to more particular 'subcultures' – and thus functioning as resources for imagining

⁶² Bauman and Briggs, "Poetics," 72-3.

⁶³ Debra Spitulnik, "The Social Circulation of Media Discourse and the Mediation of Communities," *Journal of Linguistic Anthropology* 6, no. 2 (July 1996), 163-178.

⁶⁴ Spitulnik, "Social Circulation," 167-9.

social collectivities and cultural norms.⁶⁵ Spitulnik's analysis, while grounded in specific instances of mediated linguistic interaction, thus also takes account of context and contextualisation in the senses examined above: the immediate context of linguistic performance itself, and the contextual links activated and produced by this performance.

It should be noted that Spitulnik's analysis focuses on *actual* instances of entextualised circulation – which, although a vivid example of the broader relevance of mediated language use, require lengthy ethnographic engagement with a particular socio-cultural setting in order to determine which linguistic forms are successfully circulated.⁶⁶ But outward links to context can be examined on a text-internal level as well. For media language in particular, a concept of central relevance is the *audience* of any particular linguistic performance. As Michael Warner has pointed out, this audience is usually subject to a very particular form of address: understood, in broad terms, as “public”-ness – or the directedness of a discourse towards an audience of indefinite strangers brought together by such acts of address alone.⁶⁷ For Warner, this addressivity joins the audience together in a social collectivity he terms a “public” – a collectivity that is entirely “self-organised,” in the sense that its constitution takes place mostly on a discursive level: it is, in other words, *performative*, or brought into being only inasmuch as text or talk exists

⁶⁵ Spitulnik, “Social Circulation,” 163-6.

⁶⁶ It also helps that, during the period of Spitulnik's fieldwork, Zambian state radio held a monopoly on broadcasting – and by implication was the most widely disseminated and 'consumed' mass media form in the country. See Spitulnik, “Social Circulation,” 165.

⁶⁷ Warner, *Publics*, 8-16, 67-96.

that addresses and assumes it.⁶⁸

This performative addressivity, as Warner acknowledges, nevertheless requires some sort of basis in actual circulation in order to be effective.⁶⁹ Awareness of the context of circulation is, in other words, crucial to understand which contextual links become socially relevant in a broader sense. But these can be identified and analysed effectively even in the absence of the kind of ethnographic data that allows authors like Spitulnik to diagnose emergent publics on the ground.

In studies of media language in particular, linguistic anthropologists have identified a host of semiotic processes that hold broader socio-cultural implications, and take place on scales more amenable for analysis via a text-focused study of media discourse. Quotable expressions or communicative routines might form intertextual series within actual (or assumed) circulation in other media settings.⁷⁰ Different media, formats, genres, or programmes may be marked by specific forms of addressivity and norms of interpersonal interaction that again assume a particular kind of circulatory public.⁷¹ Genres

⁶⁸ Warner, *Publics*, 67-76. Cf. Benjamin Lee and Edward LiPuma, "Cultures of Circulation: The Imaginations of Modernity," *Public Culture* 14, no. 1 (2002), 193-6.

⁶⁹ Warner, *Publics*, 90-2, 103-6; Lee and LiPuma, "Cultures," 192-3.

⁷⁰ Kathryn Graber, "What They Said (She Said) I Said: Attribution and Expertise in Digital Circulation," *Culture, Theory and Critique* 54, no. 3 (2013), 286-97; Jane H. Hill, "Intertextuality as Source and Evidence for Indirect Indexical Meanings," *Journal of Linguistic Anthropology* 15, no. 1 (May 2005), 115-22; Norma Mendoza-Denton, "The Semiotic Hitchhiker's Guide to Creaky Voice: Circulation and Gendered Hardcore in a Chicana/O Gang Persona," *Journal of Linguistic Anthropology* 21, no. 2 (2011), 270-6.

⁷¹ Flagg Miller, *The Moral Resonance of Arab Media: Audiocassette Poetry and Culture in Yemen*, vol. XXXVIII, Harvard Middle Eastern Monographs (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2007), 280-345; Paddy Scannell, "For-Anyone-as-Someone Structures,"

of mediated communication, whether explicitly interactive (such as call-in radio) or not, can also involve “feedback loops” which serve to “characterise their own space of consumption”⁷² – either via validated participation from members of the assumed public, or through explicit re-presentation of the spaces and contexts in which they are imagined to circulate.⁷³ Or they might involve stereotypes of participant roles and characterological figures formed across mediated communicative events, with lamination of meanings which imply particular stances and possibilities for future action on part of participants.⁷⁴ These are all creative aspects of linguistic performance, the meaning of which is deeply embedded in the context of their production, but which also have broader socio-cultural relevance evident from semiotic processes internal to the performance itself.

Similar analyses have been attempted in the study of media Arabic. Atiqa Hachimi’s work on language ideologies in Arabic-language reality TV programmes provides a good example. Hachimi explores the dialectal

Media, Culture & Society 22, no. 1 (January 2000), 10-12, 19-22; Andrew Tolson, “‘Authentic’ Talk in Broadcast News: The Construction of Community,” *The Communication Review* 4, no. 4 (January 2001): 463–80; and Jacqueline Urla, “Outlaw Language: Creating Alternative Public Spheres in Basque Free Radio,” *Pragmatics* 5, no. 2 (August 1995), 253-9.

⁷² Warner, *Publics*, 100.

⁷³ Francis Cody, “Echoes of the Teashop in a Tamil Newspaper,” *Language & Communication* 31, no. 3 (July 2011), 243-5, 247-52; Laura Kunreuther, “Technologies of the Voice: FM Radio, Telephone, and the Nepali Diaspora in Kathmandu,” *Cultural Anthropology* 21, no. 3 (August 2006), 328-43; and Ytreberg, “Formatting,” 682-90.

⁷⁴ Agha, “Recombinant Selves,” 324-33; Michael Lempert, “Avoiding ‘The Issues’ as Addressivity in US Electoral Politics,” *Anthropological Quarterly* 84, no. 1 (January 2011): 187–207; Michael Silverstein, “The ‘Message’ in the (political) Battle,” *Language & Communication* 31, no. 3 (July 2011), 203-5.

hierarchies evident in these programmes, in which dialects from the “Mashreq” – the eastern part of the Arab world – are consistently more highly evaluated than “Maghrebi,” or North African, dialects of Arabic.⁷⁵ She develops her analysis in terms of *stance-taking* and *authentication*, allowing for a contextually sensitive appreciation of the performance of dialects in reality TV programmes in which speakers actively value Mashreqi dialects, while communicating Maghrebi dialects as “deficient.”⁷⁶ This is evident from the “uneven distribution in the communicative burden” between Mashreqi and Maghrebi participants in the programmes, with Maghrebi participants accommodating more to Mashreqi speakers, as well as more explicit strategies such as mockery of Maghrebi dialects and adulation of Mashreqi ones.⁷⁷

Hachimi effectively takes on board the reality of intra-dialectal variation within Arabic, and thus avoids many of the pitfalls of fetishising the diglossic framework discussed above. Moreover, she considers language use as emplaced in its particular mediated context: for example, she notes how participants acknowledge the viewing audience in sharing their putative confusion when hearing Maghrebi dialects, and how linguistic mockery is legitimised by being framed as mere “play” in the setting of a reality TV programme.⁷⁸ And she considers the broader social and ideological implications of such language use, particularly in terms of struggles over “authentic” Arab identity and the sociocultural value of different Arabic

⁷⁵ Hachimi, “Maghreb-Mashreq Language Ideology,” 270.

⁷⁶ Hachimi, “Maghreb-Mashreq Language Ideology,” 271.

⁷⁷ Hachimi, “Maghreb-Mashreq Language Ideology,” 278-84.

⁷⁸ Hachimi, “Maghreb-Mashreq Language Ideology,” 279, 283.

dialects.⁷⁹

Hachimi's conclusions are compelling, and founded in a detailed consideration of actual instances of linguistic performance by TV programme participants. She analyses, for instance, mocking exchanges hinging on the pronunciation of particular words in Egyptian and Moroccan Colloquial Arabic, and unravels their particular ideological connotations.⁸⁰ But in fact, these references form only a minor part of her overall analysis. Although Hachimi does consider other forms of semiosis in addition to speech – such as gestured stylization and written comments posted by audiences online – there is nevertheless a sense that she mobilises linguistic data for the singular purpose of exploring the implications of one, very specific, language ideology: that of the hierarchical relationship between Maghrebi and Mashreqi varieties of Colloquial Arabic.⁸¹ While this is certainly an important topic, framing the analysis in this way inevitably forecloses other possible ideologies that may be deployed by speaker-participants in reality TV programmes, or other strategies for contextual reference in their linguistic performance.

In recent years, a number of studies have similarly adopted an ideology-focused approach to Arabic in the mass media. Like Hachimi, these studies tend to identify a single highly visible Arabic language ideology – usually a locally relevant aspect of intra-dialectal variation – based on a sampling of linguistic data from a mediated setting. Examples include Myriam Achour

⁷⁹ Hachimi, "Maghreb-Mashreq Language Ideology," 290.

⁸⁰ Hachimi, "Maghreb-Mashreq Language Ideology," 279-80.

⁸¹ Hachimi, "Maghreb-Mashreq Language Ideology," 281-8.

Kallel's study of ideologically motivated language choices on a radio station in Tunisia; Casey Michelle Faust's work on "style shifting" and dialect levelling on Al Jazeera programmes; Alexander Magidow's study of dialect mocking in a Jordanian web comedy series; Reem Bassiouney's work on code choice by non-Egyptian celebrities in Egypt, and the reproduction and erasure of religious difference in Egyptian popular songs and films; and Becky Schulties's study of using Mashreqi dialects as a form of "unmarked media Arabic" in pan-Arab talent programmes.⁸²

This body of work is a welcome corrective to the diglossia-focused studies outlined earlier in this chapter, in particular as it is more sensitive both to the context of mediated linguistic performance and the broader social implications such performance might have. But in this move towards ideology, actual language data tends to recede into the background. Giving more space to analysing stretches of actual mediated communication, by contrast, without overly focusing on a single dominant ideology, allows one to consider a greater range of uses and implications for the mediated linguistic performance of Arabic, as well as the specific techniques and strategies language users utilise

⁸² Myriam Achour Kallel, "Choix langagiers sur la radio Mosaïque FM: Dispositifs d'invisibilité et de normalisation sociales," *Langage et société* 138, no. 4 (January 2011): 77–96; Casey Michelle Faust, "Style Shifting in Egyptian and Tunisian Arabic – a Sociolinguistic Study of Media Arabic" (MA Thesis, The University of Utah, 2012); Magidow, *Sawayt Laha Poke*; Reem Bassiouney, "Dialect and Stance-Taking by Non-Egyptian Celebrities in Egypt," *Open Linguistics* 1 (2015): 614–33; Reem Bassiouney, "Religion and Identity in Modern Egyptian Public Discourse," in *Applied Linguistics in the Middle East and North Africa: Current Practices and Future Directions*, ed. Atta Gebriel (Amsterdam: John Benjamins, 2017), 38–60; Becky Schulties, "Do You Speak Arabic? Managing Axes of Adequation and Difference in Pan-Arab Talent Programs," *Language & Communication* 44 (2015): 59–71.

to achieve them. Such studies are notably lacking.

But it is exactly this kind of analysis that forms the crux of linguistic anthropological research. Through comparison of concrete instances of linguistic performance, broader patterns – consistencies, contrasts, omissions – can be identified in invocations of ideological meaning, and from these suggestions formulated as to the values and principles that motivate communication in the context under study. For mass-mediated discourse, as in other settings of language performance, it is thus crucial to pay attention to the context of production and transmission in order to make valid conclusions.⁸³

There is, in the final analysis, still an inevitable selection bias in determining which particular language performance events, or moments of meaning-formation within these performance events, are to be considered as significant. But this selectivity can also be an important analytical asset, given sufficient familiarity with socio-cultural context. This is all the more important in mass-mediated contexts, governed as they are by ideologies that themselves fetishize media encounters and prioritise the formulation of meaning at a singular imagined point of reception or uptake – even though it is, in practice, spread out over longer sequences of communicative events, as suggested by the concept of stance accretion.⁸⁴

Likewise, linguistic anthropological study is not well suited for

⁸³ Philips, “Method,” 83-4, 93.

⁸⁴ Asif Agha, “Meet Mediatization,” *Language & Communication* 31, no. 3 (July 2011), 164-5; Agha, “Recombinant Selves,” 325-6; Bucholtz and Hall, “Identity,” 595-6.

longitudinal analyses of minute historical trends in language use, or precise information on frequencies of linguistic tokens in different contexts of interaction. These are, nevertheless, important dimensions of linguistic performance, and should be kept in mind in any close empirical study of language. Finally, unless contexts of production or consumption are specifically prioritised, the actual social processes underlying mediated discourse are likely to receive less attention, and conclusions will necessarily be limited to the level of discursive principles and the organisation of linguistic communication.

Still, the relevance of such principles reaches beyond the setting of mediated interaction alone. Simply observing patterns of linguistic variability – the presence of a colloquial Arabic register in a mediated setting, for example, or even variability within categories distinguished under the diglossic ideological schema – is insufficient to explore the full implications of language use in a media setting. By contrast, a linguistic anthropological framework offers the means to do so, both by viewing language as a form of performance emplaced in a particular context, and by considering how its performative strategies are linked to a broader ideologies and social issues. In the following sections, I set out a more detailed plan of research for an analysis of Arabic language use in Jordanian non-government radio that can achieve these goals.

2.3 Studying language on contemporary Jordanian radio

From a linguistic anthropological perspective, spending an extended period of time ‘in the field’ is crucial for the researcher to absorb information about the context in which language is used, and collect data beyond speech transcripts.⁸⁵ Research based on excerpts of language alone can certainly be insightful; indeed, most of the studies of media Arabic and diglossia discussed in the previous chapter fall into this category. A period of field research, nevertheless, enables the researcher not only to supplement a purely linguistic analysis with broader socio-cultural insights, but also to shape and guide their data gathering process depending on issues that emerge as particularly relevant during the fieldwork.⁸⁶ For this latter point in particular, long-term engagement is crucial, and ultimately allows for the development of different kinds of insights than studies in which data collection is pre-determined and temporally restricted.

To that end, I spent a period of fieldwork in Amman, the capital of Jordan. Between September 2014 and March 2015, I lived at the German Protestant Institute of Archaeology (GPIA), a residential research institute located in West Amman, with most of my time divided between listening to non-government radio stations on my phone and computer; using public transport, including buses and private and shared taxis; and engaging with local Jordanian digital media and news sources. I also arranged two visits to local radio stations, and conducted interviews with employees and presenters,

⁸⁵ Philips, “Method,” 83-4.

⁸⁶ Philips, “Method,” 93.

focusing on the questions on language use within the radio context in particular.

I thus gained a unique perspective not only on the specific contexts in which Jordanian radio language is produced and consumed, but also on the broader socio-political and media setting in which it is embedded. While my initially envisioned ethnographic study of contexts of listening and production of radio programmes proved unfeasible due to difficulties of gaining access, my attempts at further engagement provided me with certain crucial analytical insights – such as realising the role played by digital media, including digital radio listening and social media websites, as central components of how Jordanian listeners engage with contemporary radio. By listening to the radio on my own while being physically present in Amman, I was also able to link radio programmes directly to current events and emergent issues of local relevance that ultimately guided the choice of the main topics of my analysis. Often, this took place through conversations and discussions with Jordanian friends and acquaintances whose import did not become clear until after the fieldwork period – yet was nevertheless central to the developments that guided my analytical process, and ultimately the conclusions presented in this thesis.

I chose Jordan as the locale for my analysis of media Arabic for two main reasons. One was my previous familiarity with the context: I had stayed in Amman before, and was fluent in Jordanian Colloquial Arabic. But Jordan also features a particularly complex language situation which – despite a wealth of sociolinguistic work on the topic – has not yet received detailed

attention as far as usage of Arabic in the media is concerned. In particular, as authors such as Abd-el-Jawad, Al-Wer, and Bruno Herin have explored in detail, Jordan features a considerable degree of intra-dialectal variability in which different dialects and linguistic tokens are linked to very specific prestige evaluations and ideological positions.⁸⁷ One example, discussed in some detail by Yasir Suleiman and others, is the characterisation of certain speech forms as either ‘Jordanian’ or ‘Palestinian,’ cross-linked with complex evaluations of masculinity and femininity, national identity, and national origin – or who has the right to claim to be an ‘authentic’ ethnic Jordanian.⁸⁸

The political and socio-historical context of Jordan requires some further discussion here. Following the collapse of Ottoman rule in the Middle East and the partitioning of large areas of the Levant by European powers after World War I, Jordan was founded roughly within its contemporary borders as the Emirate of Transjordan in 1921, ruled nominally by the Hashemite monarch Abdullah I but under British protectorate control until independence in 1946, as the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan.⁸⁹ Considerable British influence persisted until the expulsion of the British military advisor John Bagot Glubb in 1956, but the 1950s and 60s also witnessed a consolidation of the Jordanian

⁸⁷ Abd-el-Jawad, “Emergence,” 57-62; al-Wer, “Arabic,” 258-61; al-Wer, “Different Variables,” 38–57; Enam al-Wer and Bruno Herin, “The Lifecycle of Qaf in Jordan,” *Langage et Société* 138 (November 2011): 59–76.

⁸⁸ al-Wer and Herin, “Lifecycle,” 69-72; Yasir Suleiman, *A War of Words: Language and Conflict in the Middle East* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004), 122-30; Joseph Massad, *Colonial Effects: The Making of National Identity in Jordan* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2001), 251-3.

⁸⁹ Philip Robins, *A History of Jordan* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004), 16-58.

regime's power base in the military and local tribal groupings.⁹⁰ The Hashemite monarchy continued to rule Jordan in the face of significant political and economic challenges, including regional conflicts such as the 1967 Six-Day War, in which Jordan lost control of the West Bank and Jerusalem, and the 1990-1 Gulf War; and pressures of economic liberalisation and continued reliance on foreign aid, in particular from wealthy Arab Gulf countries and the United States. These have all remained crucial factors in Jordanian economy and society to this day.⁹¹

Jordan controlled the West Bank and Jerusalem until 1967, and the Palestinian issue has remained hugely important for the country, even after formal disengagement from the West Bank in 1988 and the 1994 peace treaty with Israel.⁹² A significant amount of the population of Jordan can claim Palestinian origin, and scholars such as Joseph Massad have argued that these citizens have been systematically excluded from nation-building efforts on part of the Jordanian regime, compounded with forms of economic

⁹⁰ Robins, *History*, 79-104; Massad, *Colonial Effects*, 163-221; Tariq Moraiwed Tell, *The Social and Economic Origins of Monarchy in Jordan* (Basingstoke & New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2013), 113-29.

⁹¹ Robins, *History*, 105-204; Lamis Andoni and Jillian Schwedler, "Bread Riots in Jordan," *Middle East Report* 201 (October 1996): 40-42; Anne Mariel Peters and Pete W. Moore, "Beyond Boom and Bust: External Rents, Durable Authoritarianism, and Institutional Adaptation in the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan," *Studies in Comparative International Development* 44, no. 3 (September 2009), 267-79; Sean L. Yom, "The New Landscape of Jordanian Politics: Social Opposition, Fiscal Crisis, and the Arab Spring," *British Journal of Middle Eastern Studies* 42, no. 3 (2015), 295-9.

⁹² Massad, *Colonial Effects*, 260-75.

exclusion and absence from public offices.⁹³ There are, further, a number of ethnic, linguistic, and religious minorities in Jordan – including Circassians, Chechens, Armenians, Kurds, Jordanian Christians, Druze, and Baha'is – who are recognised and supported to different degrees by the Jordanian regime. There are, for example, quotas for seats in the lower house of the Jordanian parliament for Circassians, Chechens, and Christians, but not for the other minorities.⁹⁴ Other minority communities might also struggle to participate in public discourse or achieve visibility on the level of, for instance, the Circassians, whose historical role as supporters of Abdullah I in the early 20th century has led to their integration at various levels of government and state agencies, such as the military.⁹⁵

These historical and social factors have all affected what Tariq Tell has termed the “Hashemite compact” – a form of governance in which the Jordanian state ensures the loyalty of, in particular, ‘East Bank’ / Transjordanian citizens by means of economic support.⁹⁶ This system has, however, come under considerable strain in recent decades.⁹⁷ Economic hardship, such as subsidy reductions due to neoliberal economic policies, and demands for political liberalisation have been the cause of notable unrest and

⁹³ Massad, *Colonial Effects*, 250-69; Laurie A. Brand, “Palestinians and Jordanians: A Crisis of Identity,” *Journal of Palestine Studies* 24, no. 4 (May 1995): 46–61.

⁹⁴ Curtis R. Ryan, “Jordan’s Unfinished Journey: Parliamentary Elections and the State of Reform,” *Project on Middle East Democracy*, March 2013, 1–6.

⁹⁵ Seteney Shami, “Displacement, Historical Memory, and Identity: The Circassians in Jordan,” *Center for Migration Studies Special Issues* 11, no. 4 (November 1994): 189–201.

⁹⁶ Tell, *Social and Economic Origins*, 132.

⁹⁷ Peters and Moore, “Beyond,” 276-9; Yom, “New Landscape,” 289-99.

oppositional movements since the late 1980s – many of which cannot be mapped neatly onto lines of ‘Palestinian’ versus ‘East Bank’ Jordanians.⁹⁸ Most recently, the war in neighbouring Syria has resulted in a considerable influx of Syrian refugees to Jordan, as well as perceived threats of terrorism by Islamic extremists claiming allegiance to groups such as the so-called Islamic State (IS). Both of these have helped the Jordanian state to reinforce a “securitisation” paradigm in domestic politics, and have been accompanied by authoritarian retrenchment and crackdowns on regime criticism.⁹⁹

In this political environment, the Jordanian media scene, while relatively free in comparison to certain other countries in the region, has also been subject to various forms of legal limitations and restrictions on freedom of speech. As Naomi Sakr notes in a recent overview of the situation, the

⁹⁸ Andoni and Schwedler, “Bread Riots,” 40-2; Yom, “New Landscape,” 289-5; Curtis R. Ryan, “Identity Politics, Reform, and Protest in Jordan,” *Studies in Ethnicity and Nationalism* 11, no. 3 (December 2011): 564–578; Jillian Schwedler, “The Political Geography of Protest in Neoliberal Jordan,” *Middle East Critique* 21, no. 3 (September 2012): 259–270; Tariq Moraiwed Tell, “Early Spring in Jordan: The Revolt of the Military Veterans,” *Jadaliyya*, November 9, 2015, <http://www.jadaliyya.com/pages/index/23127/early-spring-in-jordan-the-revolt-of-the-military-> [accessed 9 November 2015]; Sean L. Yom, “Tribal Politics in Contemporary Jordan: The Case of the HIRAK Movement,” *The Middle East Journal* 68, no. 2 (2014): 229–47.

⁹⁹ Ziad Abu-Rish, “The Facade of Jordanian Reform: A Brief History of the Constitution,” *Jadaliyya*, May 31, 2016, <http://www.jadaliyya.com/pages/index/24563/the-facade-of-jordanian-reform-a-brief-history-of-> [accessed 16 February 2017]; Jillian Schwedler, “Jordan Drops the Pretense of Democratic Reform,” *Middle East Report Online*, April 28, 2016, <http://www.merip.org/jordan-drops-pretense-democratic-reform> [accessed 28 April 2016]; Sean L. Yom and Wael al-Khatib, “Inflating the Salafi Threat in Jordan,” *MENASource*, December 5, 2014, <http://www.atlanticcouncil.org/blogs/menasource/inflating-the-salafi-threat-in-jordan> [accessed 16 February 2017].

development of audio-visual media in particular has been highly affected by political factors. These include external political pressures, modernisation drives initiated by the Jordanian monarchy, absolutist governing practices, and the persistence of links between individuals in the business and bureaucratic sectors.¹⁰⁰ These factors have, in various ways, contributed to legal biases resulting in selective granting of broadcasting licences, along with persistent self-censorship and agreed-upon “red lines,” in addition to government intrusion into the reform of the national broadcasting corporation (*Mu’assasat al-idā’a wa-t-talafīzyūn al-’urduniyya*; the Jordan Radio and Television Corporation, or JRTV).¹⁰¹

Sakr’s concerns lie primarily with television, and she does not discuss radio beyond noting it as a segment of broadcasting that falls under the Jordanian regime’s regulatory purview. In Jordan, as in other Arab states, a sustained scholarly focus on radio is indeed somewhat lacking. Existing studies of Arab radio broadcasting have for the most part been historical, and tend to rely on a simplistic message transmission model of radio content – especially when considering it as a means of political mobilisation and potential change.¹⁰²

¹⁰⁰ Naomi Sakr, “‘We Cannot Let It Loose’: Geopolitics, Security and Reform in Jordanian Broadcasting,” in *National Broadcasting and State Policy in Arab Countries*, ed. Tourya Gaaaybess (Basingstoke & New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2013), 97-9.

¹⁰¹ Sakr, “‘We Cannot Let It Loose,’” 103-111.

¹⁰² Muhammad I. Ayish, “Foreign Voices as People’s Choices: BBC Popularity in the Arab World,” *Middle Eastern Studies* 27, no. 3 (March 1991), 382-3; Muhammad I. Ayish, “Radio Broadcasting in the Arab World,” in *Arab Media: Globalization and Emerging Media Industries*, ed. Noha Mellor et al. (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2011), 67, 70-2, 80-4; Douglas A. Boyd, “Development of Egypt’s Radio: ‘Voice of the Arabs’ under Nasser,” *Journalism & Mass*

Today, Jordanian radio forms a varied and vibrant media field. Radio broadcasting in Jordan proper can be traced back to the 1950s with the establishment of the regime-run Radio Amman; this later morphed into the 'radio' component of JRTV, under full government control, which held an effective monopoly on radio broadcasting within Jordan for the better part of the 20th century. The process of deregulating the radio sector was not initiated until the early 2000s, when the Ministry of Information was abolished and a (government-appointed) Audiovisual Commission (now the Jordan Media Commission) formed that would oversee private broadcasters.¹⁰³ By the end of 2005, the Commission had issued 14 licences for FM radio stations; in 2015, the total number of licenced stations was 38.¹⁰⁴

In the wake of this process, there have been optimistic comments on the positive effects the new multiplicity of radio voices would have on critical discussion and debate in Jordan.¹⁰⁵ But despite formal deregulation, radio broadcasting in Jordan does not quite provide a discursive space liberated

Communication Quarterly 52, no. 4 (June 1975): 645–653; Laura M. James, "Whose Voice? Nasser, the Arabs, and 'Sawt Al-Arab' Radio," *Transnational Broadcasting Studies* 16 (2006), <http://www.tbsjournal.com/James.html> [accessed 15 January 2014].

¹⁰³ Sakr, "'We Cannot Let It Loose'," 100-103.

¹⁰⁴ Sakr, "'We Cannot Let It Loose'," 105; Hay'at al-i'lām, "Dalīl al-šarikāt al-muraqqaša: maḥaṭṭāt al-baṭṭ al-idā'i," 2015, <http://mc.gov.jo/Pages/viewpage.aspx?pageID=30> [accessed 13 August 2015]. The 2015 number includes foreign radio broadcasters – BBC, Sawa, and Radio Monte Carlo – listed on the Media Commission's website.

¹⁰⁵ Rana F. Sweis, "A New Liberty Sweeps Through Jordan Radio," *The New York Times*, March 6, 2013, <http://www.nytimes.com/2013/03/07/world/middleeast/a-new-liberty-sweeps-through-jordan-radio.html> [accessed 15 January 2014]; Mahjoob Zweiri, "Jordan's Local Radio Revolution: Progress, Challenges and Possibilities," in *The New Arab Media: Technology, Image and Perception*, ed. Mahjoob Zweiri and Emma C. Murphy (Reading: Ithaca Press, 2010), 143-50.

from state and government control. The issue is not as much direct censorship as the not infrequent interventions on part of officials and political figures in cases of open media criticism. As a number of observers of Jordanian media have noted, journalists are often pressured informally or forced to issue public apologies for purported insults if they publicise critical reports or commentaries. The tacit red lines include direct criticism of the king and the Hashemite royal family, the security services, and the armed forces, as well as open discussions of sex and sexuality and critique of Islam or Muslim values. Journalists and other media workers usually avoid such criticism for fear of repercussions.¹⁰⁶ These form considerable legal barriers for free expression: as critical voices may be prosecuted on the grounds of defamation or threatening public order, and the government enforces strict licensing and journalist registration laws (such as the necessity to register with the Journalists Union in order to conduct “journalistic activity” legally) – a situation which has only deteriorated with the rise of securitisation and counter-terrorism discourses following the 2010-11 political transitions in the Arab world, and

¹⁰⁶ Layla Al-Zubaidi, “Walking a Tightrope: News Media and Freedom of Expression in the Middle East” (Berlin: Heinrich Böll Foundation, 2004), <http://www.lateledipenelope.it/public/arab.pdf> [accessed 16 January 2014], 13-4, 54-8; Basma Guthrie and Fida Adely, “Is the Sky Falling? Press and Internet Censorship Rises in Jordan,” *Jadaliyya*, October 31, 2012, <http://www.jadaliyya.com/pages/index/8102/is-the-sky-falling-press-and-internet-censorship-r> [accessed 15 January 2014]; Robert Siegel, “Jordan’s Fuzzy Definition Of Free Speech,” *NPR.org*, February 25, 2015, <http://www.npr.org/blogs/parallels/2015/02/25/388953916/jordans-fuzzy-definition-of-free-speech> [accessed 26 February 2015]; and Rana F. Sweis and Dina Baslan, “Mapping Digital Media: Jordan” (Open Society Foundations, October 10, 2013), <http://www.opensocietyfoundations.org/sites/default/files/digital-media-investigative-reporting-20110526.pdf> [accessed 31 January 2014], 74-5.

especially in light of the ongoing conflict in Syria.¹⁰⁷ Within the radio field, specifically, there are additional, more subtle inequalities at play, many of which stem from the connections between media personnel and regime and commercial interests, and the concentration of ownership of non-government radio stations in a limited number of holding companies linked to prominent families.¹⁰⁸

Despite these limitations, the Jordanian non-government radio field exhibits much diversity. A variety of interest groups and business models are represented, catering to different audiences and promoting distinct general agendas. A number of stations are owned and run under the auspices of state agencies, and tend to align with regime interests and viewpoints even if they are not formally defined as official government broadcasting institutions. These include the army-run Radio Hala, and the police-run Amen FM. Some stations uphold a more commercial orientation, playing contemporary Arabic pop music and supporting themselves through advertisements and private funding; these include, for example, Radio Rotana and Mazaj FM. There are also stations linked to non-governmental factions – for example, Hayat FM and Radio Husna, two stations offering Islamic religious content associated with two different factions of the Jordanian Muslim Brotherhood. Finally, a number of community-run, non-commercial stations concern themselves with local issues

¹⁰⁷ Guthrie and Adely, “Is the Sky Falling?”; Matt Duffy and Hadil Maarouf, “Journalism in Jordan: A Comparative Analysis of Press Freedom in the Post-Arab Spring Environment,” *Global Media Journal*, 2015, 1–24.

¹⁰⁸ Sawsan Zaidah, “Man yamluk al-i’lām fī al-urdunn?,” *Tiber*, September 13, 2015, <http://www.7iber.com/politics-economics/who-owns-media-in-jordan/> [accessed 20 September 2015].

or are directed at particular subgroups of the population. These include Radio al-Balad, an independent community radio station in Amman; the University of Jordan Radio Station, based at the University of Jordan in West Amman; Sawt al-Aghwar (“Voice of the Ghor”), a digital radio station based in the Jordan Valley; Sawt al-Kerak (“The Voice of Kerak”), based at Mu’tah University in the southern Jordanian town of Kerak; and al-Rasheed, a station run by and catering for the substantial numbers of Iraqi expatriates living in Amman.

Most of these stations broadcast mostly or exclusively in Arabic, and thus provide fertile ground for an exploration of the variability of contemporary media Arabic. Moreover, the nature of radio itself amplifies a focus on spoken language. In comparison to other forms of media, radio is distinctively limited to aural channels, and thus prioritises speech as a means of semiosis in human communication.¹⁰⁹ In addition to speech, sonic transmissions of course also include other semiotically salient elements, such as music, silence, and various ‘sound effects’ – as well as radio-specific sonic artefacts (such as call echoes or distortions). But spoken discourse nevertheless forms a central segment of radio broadcasts, one that is often the subject of heightened attention on part of both producers and consumers.¹¹⁰

¹⁰⁹ Daniel Fisher, “Intimacy and Self-Abstraction: Radio as New Media in Aboriginal Australia,” *Culture, Theory and Critique* 54, no. 3 (2013), 383-9; Dorothea Schulz, “Dis/Embodying Authority: Female Radio ‘preachers’ and the Ambivalences of Mass-Mediated Speech in Mali,” *International Journal of Middle East Studies* 44 (January 2012): 23–43; Kunreuther, “Technologies,” 324-6.

¹¹⁰ Andrew Crisell, *Understanding Radio* (London & New York: Methuen, 1986), 45, 58; Cook, “Dangerously Radioactive,” 65-71; Fisher, “Intimacy,” 389.

These factors further justify the choice of radio, in particular, as a source of data for studying Arabic in a mass-mediated setting. As far as Jordanian non-government radio is concerned, sociolinguistic issues, the complex socio-political situation, and the ambiguous status of non-government media are all important contextual factors – an understanding of which can be developed effectively through an extended period of field engagement. The next section discusses my data collection, selection, and analysis in more detail, and justifies the specific analytical and methodological choices made throughout this process, both during and after my fieldwork stay in Amman.

2.4 Data gathering and analysis of “units of interaction”

The 38 currently licenced radio stations in Jordan represent a number of “formats” – differentiated, following Jody Berland’s definition, through the type of programming they broadcast, in a way that “mediates and differentiates station and listener identities.”¹¹¹ The stations can first be divided according to the primary language of their broadcasts. A handful of stations broadcast entirely in English, such as Radio Bliss, a station founded in 2013 by the Jordanian armed forces to complement their existing Arabic-language station, Radio Hala.¹¹² The majority, however, broadcast entirely in Arabic. This

¹¹¹ Jody Berland, “Radio Space and Industrial Time: Music Formats, Local Narratives and Technological Mediation,” *Popular Music* 9, no. 2 (October 1990), 181.

¹¹² Petra News Agency, “Jordanian Armed Forces Launches Bliss 104.2,” *Jordan News Agency (Petra)*, October 7, 2013,

linguistic dividing line is clear and total, and covers on-air interactions by broadcasters as well as music programming – it is rare for a station whose hosts speak in Arabic to play any music with non-Arabic lyrics – and extends further to commercials, and interactions via digital media.

As my research aimed to explore Arabic use first and foremost, I limited my data acquisition to a subset of the available stations only. I excluded, first, English-language stations; these might form an intriguing object of study for a broader comparative perspective on contemporary Jordanian radio, but are only of secondary importance for an analysis focused on Arabic. I also excluded foreign-based stations such as BBC Arabic and Radio Sawa. Although these stations are licensed in Jordan, they broadcast the same programming in a large number of Arabic-speaking countries, and are thus not part of the Jordanian radio field proper from a production standpoint. They also do not deal with local Jordanian issues on a regular basis, or design broadcasts in an idiom aimed at Jordanian audiences specifically.

I also excluded the national broadcasting corporation's Jordan Radio. This was mostly because of JRTV's policies of promoting and using Standard Arabic. Non-government radio stations exhibited greater linguistic variety through using both Colloquial and Standard Arabic of different types and levels, and thus provided the opportunity to analyse a wider range of language ideologies spread across a greater number of programmes and station

http://petra.gov.jo/Public_News/Nws_NewsDetails.aspx?lang=2&site_id=1&NewsID=126537
[accessed 18 February 2017].

formats. While a study of the practices of Standard Arabic use on Jordan Radio would hold its own merits, for the purposes of this research, I decided that analysing a greater variety of speech styles would be more informative, and thus limited myself to language performance on non-government stations only.

During the course of listening to radio in Amman, I selected and recorded individual programmes in full. This allowed me to return to recordings of each programme, provide transcriptions, and analyse aspects of language use in much greater detail.

I initially developed a sense of the variety of programming available through ‘station-surfing’: listening to snippets of programming from each station available through the radio receiver on my mobile phone over specific one-hour periods, and making notes as to what different stations broadcast at different times of the day. Through this initial survey, I chose a number of stations that appeared indicative of the sub-formats of Arabic-language programming in Jordan. These I identified as follows:

1) *‘Nationalist’ stations*. Examples include Radio Hala and Nashama FM. These all have clear regime links, and play a notable proportion of Jordanian-produced “nationalist” or “patriotic” music (*aġānī waṭaniyya*) – rhythmic, often catchy songs performed with distinct (sometimes exaggerated) Jordanian accents, and customarily praising one or all of Jordan, the king, or a national institution or agency.

2) *Commercial stations*. These play contemporary Arabic-language pop music, primarily Lebanese and Egyptian artists. Examples include Radio Fann, Sawt al-Ghad, and Mazaj FM.

3) *Community radio stations*. These promote a community-oriented image that distances itself from both nationalism and commercialism. One example is the independent Amman-based Radio al-Balad, which does not feature commercial advertising, and broadcasts neither Arabic pop nor Jordanian patriotic music.

4) *Islamic stations*. Examples include Hayat FM, Radio Husna, and Yaqeen. These are dedicated entirely to Islamic religious programming. Although there is music, this is invariably either instrumental or features lyrics praising God or the Prophet Muhammad, and much airtime between live-hosted stretches is taken up by recordings of Qur'anic recitation (*taẓwīd*) or sermons by Islamic scholars.

Station	Sub-format	Notes
Radio al-Balad	independent / community	-
Radio Rotana	commercial	owned by Saudi prince Alwaleed Bin Talal
Mazaj FM	commercial	-
Radio Fann	commercial	-
JBC Radio	commercial	-
Sawt al-Ghad	commercial	Lebanese ownership and broadcasters
Radio Hala	patriotic / 'nationalist'	army-run
Nashama FM	patriotic / 'nationalist'	-
Hayat FM	Islamic	Jordanian Muslim Brotherhood 'hardliners' (<i>ṣuqūr</i> , "falcons")
Radio Husna	Islamic	Jordanian Muslim Brotherhood 'softliners' (<i>ḥamā'im</i> , "doves")
Yaqeen	Islamic	regime-linked

Table 2.1. Radio stations included in the analysis.

As evident from the table above, I chose to analyse programming on stations across all four formats. I recorded a range of programmes – morning call-in shows, daytime advice programmes, afternoon 'drive-home' programmes, and interview and discussion shows – broadcast from the early morning to evening. I recorded several consecutive episodes of each programme – on consecutive days, in the case of daily programmes, or whenever the episodes were broadcast according to the programme schedule (some programmes appear only on certain days of the week). My recording

practices were guided by a desire to collect a range of material that would be amenable to comparative linguistic analysis, but also personal convenience in terms of which days or weeks I decided to focus on which specific station or programme. Occasionally, I also recorded one-off broadcasts focusing on special events, such as the live broadcasts surrounding the execution of the Jordanian pilot Muath al-Kasasbeh by the IS in Syria.

I recorded the programmes using both my mobile phone, via its in-built radio receiver and sound recorder, and my laptop, accessing the radio station's livestream through a Web browser and recording it using the Audacity sound recording software.¹¹³ This produced a total of cca. 11 000 minutes (just over 185 hours) of audio material, recorded in the .mp3 format.

During the listening and recording process, I noted a number of aspects of language use that appeared prudent to pursue further. Over time, these coalesced into four major areas of interest:

1) the *media context* of language use. Notably, language use on radio was not limited to sonic transmission; digital media were heavily quoted and used by broadcasters on all the stations I listened to.

2) the *meanings* of using distinct linguistic variants, especially differences in colloquial language use between presenters. Often these mapped onto well-known variation patterns – for instance, the 'masculine' use of [g] for the

¹¹³ Audacity Team, *Audacity*, version 2.1.0, 1999, <http://audacity.sourceforge.net/> [accessed 18 February 2017].

phoneme /q/ – but there were also intriguing exceptions and border cases which called for detailed investigation.

3) the *character*, or persona, of radio broadcasters. There were often notable differences between broadcasters with regard to their language use, in particular in addressing their audiences and interacting with callers.

4) the role of *authoritative discourse* – in particular, Islam. In addition to the Islamic format stations, there were also dedicated ‘Islamic advice programmes’ on other radio stations; language use on the stations and programmes marked as ‘Islamic’ or ‘pious’ was often markedly different.

In the period immediately following my fieldwork, I first prepared outline summaries of all my recordings: I noted down the timestamps delimiting different sections of each programme, and summarised and indexed each section for further review and comparison. Although highly time- and labour-intensive, this very practice of transcription and indexing was a crucial step in my analytical process. As with other transcription-focused research practices in fields such as Conversation Analysis (CA), it enabled me to familiarise myself intimately with the body of data I had gathered, and begin to recognise how particular linguistic forms and strategies fit into interactional sequences in the radio programme context.¹¹⁴ Based on the four major themes of interest

¹¹⁴ Galina B. Bolden, “Transcribing as Research: ‘Manual’ Transcription and Conversation Analysis,” *Research on Language and Social Interaction* 48, no. 3 (2015), 277-8; Sidnell, *Conversation Analysis*, 23.

identified above, I was thus able to choose a number of shorter segments for detailed transcription, analysis, and presentation in the body of the thesis. I transcribed these segments using a modified International Journal of Middle East Studies (IJMES) transcription system with clear one-to-one phonetic mappings. This was, again, a labour-intensive procedure – though one carried out both with the goal of preserving sufficient phonetic detail and marking out conversation dynamics in ways that would aid my subsequent analysis, as well as enabling readers to review the data on their own terms as much as possible.

As linguistic anthropologists such as Mary Bucholtz and Elinor Ochs have pointed out, no transcription practice is simply a neutral reflection of spoken language: the transcription process is always shaped at least implicitly by the researcher's own agendas and ideologies.¹¹⁵ The transcription system I chose in this thesis preserves the phonetic form of the language of the recordings in a way that aims for accuracy while nevertheless not becoming mired in too much phonetic detail. This might make the transcripts less accessible to Arabic speakers not accustomed to reading their language in transcribed form; it also conceals certain relevant phonemic and lexical relationships – for example, using the same phonetic transcription [g] for a phoneme equivalent to Standard Arabic /q/ in certain Arabic dialects and /ʒ/ in others, or eliminating SA short vowel equivalents where these are omitted or collapsed into central vowels (e.g. [ə]) by speakers of Levantine Arabic

¹¹⁵ Mary Bucholtz, "The Politics of Transcription," *Journal of Pragmatics* 32, no. 10 (2000): 1439–1465; Elinor Ochs, "Transcription as Theory," in *Developmental Pragmatics*, ed. Elinor Ochs and Bambi B. Schieffelin (New York & London: Academic Press, 1979), 43–72.

dialects. But it has the distinct merit of maintaining minute phonetic distinctions, emphasising the variability of phonetic and lexical resources available to speakers of Arabic in Jordan today – which is, indeed, one of the major motivations behind this thesis.

Following Susan Philips, my methodology is best described as a form of “anthropological discourse analysis,” in which segments of speech – what Philips terms “units of interaction” – are compared and contrasted in terms of language use and variation.¹¹⁶ Based on the researcher’s knowledge of the socio-cultural context, particular attention is paid to both how language use is influenced by context, and how it itself makes relevant and produces particular contextually relevant meanings and ideologies.¹¹⁷ A number of instances of language use are then selected from the data available as case studies. These case studies can be either representative or anomalous – in Bent Flyvbjerg’s terminology, either “critical” or “extreme” – with regard to language use.¹¹⁸ But if they are carefully chosen by the researcher, and supplemented by sufficient contextual awareness, they will nevertheless provide valuable information regarding language performance in a specific setting.

Given that my data consisted mostly of recordings of spoken language, there are alternative methodologies I could have used. The recordings could have been transcribed and analysed on the model of variationist sociolinguistics, for example through analysis of phoneme frequencies, or

¹¹⁶ Philips, “Method,” 83.

¹¹⁷ Philips, “Method,” 84, 92-3.

¹¹⁸ Bent Flyvbjerg, “Five Misunderstandings About Case-Study Research,” *Qualitative Inquiry* 12, no. 2 (2006), 229-32.

comparing the usage of lexical items or grammatical structures. While I did make partial use of this method – in particular in Chapter 4, on indexical meanings of language – I decided to broaden the scope by situating my analysis on a more interpretive level. As discussed in my review of sociolinguistic studies of media Arabic above, a pure variationist study would be less able to take account of the specific context of each utterance, the multiple possible meanings of each linguistic token, and relevant ideologies of language use beyond statistically significant variation between speakers.¹¹⁹

Another productive method for dealing with large amounts of speech data is Conversation Analysis (CA). CA involves detailed transcription and analysis of spoken interaction between individuals with the aim of uncovering the tacit norms and understandings that govern it, as they emerge in the interaction process itself.¹²⁰ As demonstrated by the work of Ian Hutchby in particular, CA is an effective method in the study of media language as well, through using “the structures and patterns of ordinary conversation as a comparative basis for understanding other, more specialized or institutional forms of talk” – i.e., talk in mass media.¹²¹

CA is extremely potent for discovering rules and norms of language use that are internal to speech itself, while still acknowledging the impact of context – primarily through the impact of social and cultural norms on individuals’

¹¹⁹ Eckert, “Three Waves,” 94.

¹²⁰ Sidnell, *Conversation Analysis*, 12-4.

¹²¹ Ian Hutchby, *Media Talk: Conversation Analysis and the Study of Broadcasting* (Maidenhead: Open University Press, 2006), 15.

options and decisions in conducting spoken interaction.¹²² But using it as a basis for media language research simply assumes that “ordinary conversation” – or, more accurately, the *rules and norms of “ordinary conversation” as identified by foundational studies in CA* – forms some sort of “benchmark” against which the impact of the institutional context of mass media can then be evaluated.¹²³ As a holistic methodology, CA is therefore less suitable for considering meaningful aspects of language use not already identified in previous CA research. The latter, moreover, holds an intrinsic ethnocentric bias, given its insights are based predominantly on interaction in English. Thus, while I do draw on certain insights from CA in the chapters that follow, I have preferred to adopt anthropological discourse analysis as an interpretive methodology, since it allows the researcher much greater freedom in exploring the contextual implications of language use in the media.

As indicated above, my research involved a number of other methods and data sources in addition to anthropological discourse analysis of recordings and transcripts. I tabulated and compared phoneme frequencies in the speech of a number of broadcasters. During my stay in Amman, I produced fieldnotes including observations regarding radio programmes and listening contexts, my visits to two radio stations (Radio al-Balad and Farah al-Nas, both with an independent / ‘community’-oriented outlook), and interviews with broadcasters during those visits. I also engaged in productive discussions with Jordanians who were not radio professionals – in direct conversations and

¹²² Sidnell, *Conversation Analysis*, 246-50; Hutchby, *Media Talk*, 31-5.

¹²³ Hutchby, *Media Talk*, 25-7.

social media exchanges, but also through my personal online blog, where I posted observations on current events and preliminary analyses of topics that emerged as important during my fieldwork, and which engendered numerous stimulating comments and debates.¹²⁴ Finally, I also made ample use of existing sociolinguistic and dialectological literature on the use of Arabic in Jordan.

In the final analysis, this combination of methods allowed me to gain a more multi-dimensional perspective on language use on Jordanian non-government radio today, and produce an informed critical analysis of its relevance for contemporary Jordanian society and culture.

2.5 Ethical and reflexive issues

Researching language use on contemporary Jordanian radio in this manner also poses a number of issues related to research ethics and reflexivity. First and foremost, the question of consent is crucial whenever research with human subjects is involved. I was able to obtain informed consent orally from my interviewees during station visits, by explaining to them the outline of my research and the purposes to which the data gathered might be put. This was not possible, however, with the speakers featured on radio programme recordings. I argue that, since these programmes were publicly broadcast and widely available, a measure of consent is already involved on

¹²⁴ Jona Fras, "The Reluctant Arabist," WordPress blog, 2017, <https://areluctantarabist.wordpress.com/> [accessed 21 August 2017].

part of all participants. Still, given that ethical standards in the social sciences are always subject to negotiation, it remains the researcher's duty to use and present this data responsibly.¹²⁵

To that end, I have used pseudonyms for the names of callers to radio stations, in order to provide a semblance of anonymity – though I have not done so for radio broadcasters themselves, who are well-known public figures and easy to identify within Jordan.¹²⁶ This provides at least minimal protection to individuals when, for example, discussing controversial topics in the programme segments presented in the body of the thesis, which gain increased visibility and permanence as written transcripts compared to being merely broadcast 'live' by a radio station. I have also taken measures to safeguard the original data, storing the sound files on a separate external hard drive and not making them publicly available.

A second issue is my status as an outsider to Jordanian society, and my representation of the voices of Jordanians in a written piece of research. As a white European from a relatively privileged background, this is a problematic structural position. My research involved a significant degree of selectivity in terms of the media, programmes, and broadcast segments I have chosen to analyse, as well as the way the choices I made in transcribing, translating, and presenting them in my thesis. Further, my analytical choices were heavily biased towards Euro-American disciplinary traditions – including

¹²⁵ Barrie Thorne, "‘You Still Takin’ Notes?’ Fieldwork and Problems of Informed Consent," *Social Problems* 27, no. 3 (November 1980), 285, 291-5.

¹²⁶ Sjaak van der Geest, "Confidentiality and Pseudonyms: A Fieldwork Dilemma from Ghana," *Anthropology Today* 19, no. 1 (April 2003), 16-7.

linguistic anthropology, which despite its efforts at cross-cultural analysis retains at least a genealogical bias towards scholarly theories and frameworks produced in Western academic contexts. As Noha Mellor has pointed out, this does not mean that such theories are inapplicable to “non-Western” empirical contexts – such as the Arabic-speaking Middle East – but they nevertheless need to be approached with a degree of reflexivity, and refined in accordance with the data rather than being unilaterally imposed upon it.¹²⁷

I have thus drawn on my period of field research as a source of cultural knowledge and sensitivity that enabled me to identify aspects of my data with broader social relevance, as well as directing and shaping my theoretical and analytical choices. I have also been guided by ongoing discussions on these topics with Jordanian friends and acquaintances throughout and beyond my fieldwork period. Needless to say, the present research does not claim to be the ultimate authority on language on Jordanian radio, or the meanings language use on Jordanian radio has. Rather, it provides one viewpoint on a select number of moments of language use which appear to have broader relevance, and whose meaning can, and should, be discussed and contested.

As already noted, this was also my reasoning behind providing, as much as possible, extended portions of transcribed data in the original Arabic, in addition to English translations. A reader with knowledge of the language and its social context will be able to provide alternative judgments and interpretations based on this data. Although some bias in terms of data

¹²⁷ Noha Mellor, *Modern Arab Journalism: Problems and Prospects* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2007), 4-6.

selection and presentation is probably unavoidable, I thus hope the above measures have helped to minimise its impact. The rest, as in any academic enterprise, remains open to debate and discussion.

#

This chapter has examined the existing sociolinguistic literature on the use of Arabic in media contexts, and provided an alternative theoretical position of language as *performance* that is better suited to take account of the context of language use than the frameworks used by existing studies. It has then reviewed the methodological and ethical issues of this thesis, including the choice and context of my field research in Amman, Jordan; the process of selecting and analysing radio programme transcripts; and issues of consent and the position of the researcher.

It has, finally, identified the four major themes that emerged during the data analysis process, and which will shape the remainder of this thesis: the media context of language use; the indexical meanings of different language varieties and styles; the role of broadcaster persona; and the authoritative discourse of Islam. The following chapter takes up the first of these themes, media context. Before taking the discussion of Jordanian radio language any further, it is namely crucial to understand how language is affected by the fact it is circulated through *radio*. And not just any kind of radio – but rather radio designed for contemporary, digitally literate audiences, whose schedules may

allot just as much time browsing through their smartphones as any other form of entertainment.

#

3. Radio Language in Jordan: Sonic Exclusivity, Temporal Linearity, and Remediation

In the late evening of Tuesday, 3 February, 2015, Jordan was shaken by a video released by the so-called Islamic State (IS), in which the Jordanian fighter pilot Muath al-Kasasbeh – whose plane had crashed in Syria in December 2014 – was executed by burning. The video reverberated widely in Jordan, making King Abdullah II cut short a visit to the United States, and the Jordanian government promise to intensify military operations against the IS in Syria. Media outlets were flooded with news and commentary regarding the incident. In the radio field, many stations suspended their regular programmes in mourning, and only broadcast Jordanian patriotic music for several days, or ran in-depth discussion programmes on the video and its implications.

But probably the most dramatic statement of the Jordanian radio field's commitment to the national cause was a special programme, *Şawtunā wāḥid* ("Our Voice Is One"), which a number of non-government radio stations broadcast for the entirety of their daytime programming on 5 February 2015. The programme – a mix of interviews on the topic of Kasasbeh's martyrdom, conversation between hosts, and background patriotic music – was broadcast live from the studios of Radio Hala in Amman, but hosts and technical personnel came from a number of different stations.

The fact that more than a dozen different media outlets could agree to suspend their programming and produce a unified broadcast on such short notice is striking in itself. But the *Şawtunā wāḥid* programme is also

remarkable for what it tells us about how radio as a medium is understood in Jordan today. In order for radio to perform national unity in the wake of Kasasbeh's martyrdom, what needed to be shared between stations was precisely their circulation of sound – which, since radio is limited to sonic transmission, was able to iconically represent a more general unity as well. *Şawtunā wāḥid* thus unified the Jordanian radio field, making the radio stations “one” quite literally by unifying their broadcasts.

In this chapter, I explore the implications that the mediating features of radio have for language use on Jordanian non-government radio today. I examine two features of radio – what Ian Hutchby terms “affordances,” or the “possibilities for action” enabled by the technological aspects of a mass medium – that are especially relevant for radio language: the impact of schizophonia, or radio's limitation to sonic transmission; and the evanescent nature of its broadcasts, proceeding linearly through time with no in-built means of recovery.¹ These features lead to the use of specific linguistic techniques on part of broadcasters to accomplish their discursive goals. To perform national unity, for example, *Şawtunā wāḥid* broadcasters used stylistic manipulation of dialectal features, stock phrases with intertextual references attributed to authoritative governmental sources, and the performative downplaying of individual station identity. But these strategies were effective only because they were used in a *radio* setting, sonically exclusive and temporally linear.

¹ Ian Hutchby, “Technologies, Texts and Affordances,” *Sociology* 35, no. 2 (2001), 447.

On the other hand, the Kasasbeh programme also demonstrated that contemporary Jordanian non-government radio broadcasting seeks to go beyond these limitations – in particular, through the use of digital media, such as webcams and social media websites. These are not only provided by radio stations for media consumers to access, but are also continuously referenced in radio programmes in quite explicit terms. In morning call-in shows, especially, references to digital media – which, drawing on media studies, I conceptualise as *remediating* links – emerge prominently in broadcasters’ linguistic performance. They produce, first, a unique kind of addressivity in which radio audiences are signified as collectivities through reference to digital media; and, second, they allow hosts to draw a much greater number of participants into an interaction than would be possible through spoken exchanges alone.

There is, therefore, a constant tension in contemporary Jordanian non-government radio between the classic view of radio as a sound-based, temporally linear medium, and the remediating links that enable speakers to transcend these limitations. How the particular *form* of a medium affects the language transmitted through it is a question that has rarely been considered in studies of media in Arabic-speaking contexts – with a handful of exceptions such as Flagg Miller’s work on audiocassette-transmitted poetry in Yemen, and Charles Hirschkind’s studies of Islamic sermons mediated by audiocassette and YouTube.² But rather than a medium being a neutral vessel for

² Miller, *Moral Resonance*, 280-441; Charles Hirschkind, *The Ethical Soundscape: Cassette Sermons and Islamic Counterpublics* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2006); Charles

transmission of content, I demonstrate that the ways in which media forms are locally understood have an observable effect on linguistic performance – and, in particular, the ways in which speakers invoke and define broader social and cultural ideologies through language. In the final part of the chapter, I introduce two theoretical concepts – public addressivity, and participation frameworks – which enable us to effectively analyse these links in the case of the *Şawtunā wāḥid* broadcast and other examples of radio-mediated interaction considered in this chapter. These two concepts, which also provide the theoretical background for the remainder of the thesis, are central to understanding the significance of mass media language, in radio and beyond.

3.1 Linguistic performance on radio: the case of *Şawtunā wāḥid* and Muath al-Kasasbeh's martyrdom

Şawtunā wāḥid, “Our Voice Is One,” was an initiative that brought together radio hosts from a number of stations into a single, day-long live broadcast, honouring the memory of the Jordanian fighter pilot Muath al-Kasasbeh. The programme ran from 10 AM to 7 PM on Thursday, 5 February 2015, and throughout these nine hours, anybody who tuned into one of the ten-odd participating radio stations would hear the very same broadcast: hosts chatting with each other, interacting with listeners via social media, fielding

Hirschkind, “Experiments in Devotion Online: The Youtube Khuṭba,” *International Journal of Middle East Studies* 44 (January 2012): 5–21.

phone calls from well-known Jordanians, and giving regular updates on events honouring Kasasbeh.

This was just one among many performances of unity that flooded Jordanian media after the video of Kasasbeh's execution-by-burning was published on 3 February 2015, following his capture at the hands of the Islamic State (IS; also known as ISIS / ISIL, or customarily by the acronym Daesh (*dā'īš*) in Arabic) in Syria the previous December. The video – allegedly already a month old at the time of its release – capped a prolonged mediatised drama around the supposed negotiations for Kasasbeh's release in exchange for Sajida al-Rishawi, an Iraqi national found guilty of participating in bomb attacks on several hotels in Amman in 2005, and awaiting her death sentence in a Jordanian prison. After the video of Kasasbeh's death was released, al-Rishawi – along with Ziyad al-Karbouli, convicted of the same charges – was promptly executed, and Kasasbeh declared a “martyr [in the line] of duty” (*šahīd al-wāžib*).

The response from both government and non-government channels was overwhelming. King Abdullah II himself decided to cut short an official visit to the United States in order to re-join his people, and the Jordanian army promised a severe response against the IS. In radio circles, Radio al-Balad was the first to respond, with an entirely off-schedule broadcast on the late evening of 3 February where Muhammad al-Irsan – host of the station's afternoon call-in show, Rainbow – fielded calls from listeners pitching in with condolences and their views on how this most recent development might affect

Jordan's stance against the IS.³ In the following days, Kasasbeh's death was the most prominent topic of public discussion in Amman. T-shirts were printed with slogans honouring the martyr; huge crowds gathered in Amman's city centre on Friday, 6 February, in a show of solidarity with Kasasbeh, and there were similar marches in other cities in Jordan, including Zarqa and Ma'an.⁴

Such responses were lauded as "spontaneous" outbursts of solidarity and patriotism in regime-friendly media – a narrative taken at face value by many external commentators, and argued to be indicative of Jordanian 'public opinion' now turning to support full-out war against the IS.⁵ Spontaneous or not, they certainly did not come in a vacuum. Protests demanding action to secure Kasasbeh's release had begun immediately after the pilot's capture at the end of December 2014, and the government and the military likewise

³ "Mawḏa maftūḥa li-l-ḥadīṯ 'an istiṣhād al-ṭayyār al-urdunnī mu'āḍ al-kasāsiba" (Amman: Radio al-Balad, February 3, 2015), [MR009], author's archive.

⁴ Muhammad Hamid, "Al-malika rānyā tataqaddam masīra fī 'ammān ḥāmila ṣūrat mu'āḍ al-kasāsiba," *Elwatan News*, February 6, 2015,

<http://www.elwatannews.com/news/details/656953> [accessed 24 August 2015]; Jfra News, "Masīra fī ma'ān 'aṣr al-yawm "kullunā mu'āḍ",," *Jfra News*, February 7, 2015, <http://goo.gl/oisE14> [accessed 24 August 2015]; Jamal Alyan, "Masīra ḥāšida fī al-zarqā' intiṣāran li-l-šahīd al-baṭal mu'āḍ al-kasāsiba," *Anba al-Watan*, February 5, 2015, <http://goo.gl/G44T9S> [accessed 24 August 2015].

⁵ Alice Su, "It Wasn't Their War," *The Atlantic*, February 5, 2015, <http://www.theatlantic.com/international/archive/2015/02/jordan-isis-pilot-response/385199/> [accessed 24 August 2015]; Sheera Frenkel, "Pilot's Brutal Murder Brings Calls For ISIS Blood In Jordan," *BuzzFeed News*, February 4, 2015, <http://www.buzzfeed.com/sheerafrenkel/pilots-brutal-murder-brings-calls-for-isis-blood-in-jordan> [accessed 24 August 2015]. For a more critical assessment, see Ziad Abu-Rish, "Manufacturing Silence: On Jordan's ISIS War, Arab Authoritarianism, and US Empire," *Jadaliyya*, February 14, 2015, <http://www.jadaliyya.com/pages/index/20856/manufacturing-silence-on-jordans-isis-war-arab-aut> [accessed 15 February 2015].

issued communiqués that framed Kasasbeh as a national security issue and warned media against criticising the military’s actions with respect to it.⁶ Non-government radio also played its part in publicising the topic. Hosts of morning programmes mentioned Kasasbeh regularly, typically declaring their hope for his safe return; occasional call-ins asked for the same, and some stations even set aside time in their advertising blocks for clips asking for the pilot’s safety.⁷

But on 5 February, with *Şawtunā wāḥid*, Jordan’s radio stations demonstrated a whole new level of dedication to Kasasbeh. From 10 AM onwards, normal programming on all participating stations was suspended in favour of a “unified broadcast” (*baṭṭ muwaḥḥad*) from Radio Hala’s studios in King Hussein Business Park in West Amman. The schedule was divided into hour-long slots, each co-hosted live by broadcasters from two or three different stations, speaking with each other on al-Kasasbeh’s martyrdom and its aftermath. Production and sound engineering staff were likewise shared.⁸ There were a number of phone guests – mostly Jordanian public personalities of various degrees of prominence, including journalists, singers, and

⁶ Roya News, “Masīra taḍāmuniyya ma’a al-ṭayyār al-baṭal mu’āḍ al-kasāsiba,” *Royanews.com*, December 26, 2014,

http://www.royanews.com/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=32788:-----q-q-&catid=45:local&Itemid=239 [accessed 24 August 2015]; Abu-Rish, “Manufacturing.”

⁷ For a call-in asking for Kasasbeh’s safety, see e.g. “Wasaṭ al-balad, 18 January 2015,” *Wasaṭ al-balad* (Amman: Radio Fann, January 18, 2015), [RR046], author’s archive, 1:39:48-1:41:17. For the recorded spot, see e.g. “Şawt al-muwāṭin, 26 January 2015,” *Şawt al-muwāṭin* (Amman: JBC Radio, January 26, 2015), [RR071], author’s archive, 17:39-17:59.

⁸ Roya TV, “#Mu’āḍ_şahīd_al-ḥaqq: taqrīr ‘an mubādarat al-idā’āt al-urdunniyya ‘şawtunā wāḥid,” YouTube, (February 5, 2015), https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IJSNmXeS_Ew [accessed 24 August 2015].

Parliament deputies – giving condolences to al-Kasasbeh’s family and the Jordanian people, but most airtime was occupied by broadcasters talking amongst themselves: reaffirming Jordanian unity, vilifying the IS, and giving updates on the latest developments in Jordan’s “war against terrorism,” such as air strikes on IS positions in Syria.

For a researcher of Arabic media language, the linguistic aspects of this broadcast were of obvious interest. On the surface, the language of broadcasters during *Ṣawṭunā wāḥid* exhibited little difference from their performance during normal, everyday broadcasts. Stylistically, a relatively elevated variant of spoken Ammani Arabic was used, with a significant admixture of Standard Arabic lexical items, grammatical constructions, and stress and vowel patterns. One particularly prominent feature of this radio broadcaster style is the gender-linked pronunciation of certain phonemes, such as /q/ and /ʒ/, which Enam al-Wer has identified as typical of the Ammani speech variety that has emerged over the past decades.⁹ /q/ and /ʒ/ are, namely, pronounced differently by male and female broadcasters: /q/ is normally realised as [g] by males in more colloquially marked lexical items, where females tend to use [ʔ] (glottal stop) instead; and male broadcasters often use the variant [dʒ] for /ʒ/, whereas female broadcasters use [ʒ] overwhelmingly.¹⁰

⁹ Enam al-Wer, “The Formation of the Dialect of Amman,” in *Arabic in the City: Issues in Dialect Contact and Language Variation*, ed. Catherine Miller et al. (London & New York: Routledge Curzon, 2007), 55–76.

¹⁰ Salam Al-Mahadin, “Gendered Soundscapes on Jordanian Radio Stations,” *Feminist Media Studies* 17, no. 1 (2016), 108-10.

But the *Şawtunā wāḥid* broadcast also pointed to broader issues regarding the circulation of language by means of radio in particular. There is an allusion to this in the very title of the programme, as well as the manner of its transmission – that is, unifying the actual sound broadcasts of all participating radio stations. For radio stations to perform unity in the face of the national tragedy of Kasasbeh’s death, a unification of sound broadcasts is, indeed, all that is required – since radio “voice,” its broadcast of sound as sound alone, is what defines radio as a distinct medium in the first place.

Authors such as Andrew Crisell and Susan Douglas have therefore argued that radio is a medium defined fundamentally by its non-visibility. In the U.S. and Europe, throughout the 20th century, the development of radio discourse has involved strategies for either overcoming or playing on this limitation, primarily via various verbal (and other sonic) means that enable the human imagination to compensate for the absent visual stimulus.¹¹ According to Crisell, radio’s “blindness” is a basic technological limitation, or *affordance*, that needs to be grappled with, and has had significant effects on the radio and broadcasting practice.¹² This includes language: as Paddy Scannell has pointed out, the development of radio, at least in Anglophone contexts, required broadcasters to modify their language in ways that addressed a multitude of listeners while giving the impression that they are speaking to

¹¹ Crisell, *Understanding*, 5-15, 56-8; Susan J. Douglas, *Listening In: Radio and the American Imagination* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2004), 6-8, 26-30, 100-123.

¹² Hutchby, “Technologies,” 441–56. “Blindness” is Crisell’s term; see Crisell, *Understanding*, 7. Douglas, whose work is more listener-focused, invokes “invisibility” instead; see Douglas, *Listening*, 6.

each individual in an authentic, immediate setting – what Scannell terms “for-anyone-as-someone structures.”¹³

These effects are usefully captured through the media studies term *schizophonia*. Originally developed by R. Murray Schafer to describe modern acoustic environments, a ‘schizophonic’ medium is one that transmits sound to a site where its source is not visible.¹⁴ Schafer was highly censorious of this “sundering of sound and scape” made possible by recording media as disturbing the holism of the acoustic environment – the “soundscape” – but it is possible to approach the term more neutrally, as a convenient label to describe aurally limited technological affordances.¹⁵ In this way, radio, like most sound-based recording media such as the gramophone, is a prototypical schizophonic medium. Unlike, for example, television, which also involves visual transmission, radio works exclusively by aural channels, and provides no means of ‘seeing’ where the voices issuing from the speaker are actually originating.

In contemporary Jordan, the background understanding of radio transmissions as essentially schizophonic is made evident by practices which attempt to reconstitute the originary context of broadcast production – to minimise, as it were, the ‘schizophonic gap,’ the effects of the sundering so decried by Schafer, and invite listeners to imagine and engage with the real

¹³ Scannell, “For-anyone-as-someone Structures,” 9-12.

¹⁴ R. Murray Schafer, *The Soundscape: Our Sonic Environment and the Tuning of the World* (Rochester, VT: Destiny Books, 1994), 90.

¹⁵ David W. Samuels et al., “Soundscapes: Toward a Sounded Anthropology,” *Annual Review of Anthropology* 39, no. 1 (2010), 331.

'scape' of the broadcast beyond disembodied broadcaster voices. But they achieve this entirely through *sonic* means. Morning call-in shows – probably the most popular programme genre on Jordanian radio today – are replete with sonic fragments that emphasise the origin of the broadcast in the environment of a broadcast studio. In the prominent host Muhammad al-Wakeel's programme on Radio Hala, the presenter's speech is constantly punctuated by raspy coughs and the clinking of coffee cups, brought to him by junior employees at regular intervals. Hani al-Badri, the host of the morning show on Radio Fann, uses hand gestures to good effect, and makes no effort to conceal the tapping noises of his hands on the studio desk as he develops a particularly important point. Rose al-Soqi, who hosts a hybrid morning / mid-morning programme on Mazaj FM, is engaged in constant exchanges with sound engineers and other members of the live studio team – whose slightly muted responses can then actually be heard on air, due to propitious spatial arrangements as well as microphone settings. All these techniques function to re-naturalise sound, to dismantle – or at least appear to dismantle – the camouflaging of the sonic source enabled by schizophrenic mediation.

During *Şawtunā wāḥid*, however, this limitation to sound was not necessarily subject to concealment. Rather, it was embraced, and its effects on language used creatively by broadcasters in their broader goal of performing national unity. One aspect of this was direct stylistic manipulation of the accustomed norms of broadcast language – for example, with the two main pronunciations of the phoneme /q/, [g] and [ʔ]. As outlined above, these are primarily gender-linked; however, they also hold implications for ethnic

identity. Although [g] is generally considered “masculine,” it also functions as a symbol of “Jordanian-ness,” given its prominence in many non-urban Jordanian dialects in the speech of both men and women.¹⁶ As Salam al-Mahadin has argued, invoking these dialects in the context of radio thus also serves to perform cultural authenticity and an exclusive form of Jordanian ethnic nationalism, amplifying masculinity and Bedouin values.¹⁷

One of the *Şawtunā wāḥid* presenters, Randa Karadsheh, who normally uses [ʔ] in her broadcast speech, thus mobilised [g] in one particularly poignant segment – excerpted below, where she discusses a statement from “a military source” announcing that the Jordanian Air Force has begun air strikes on IS positions in Syria with her co-host, Sameer Masarweh:

[MR012]: [05:00]

SM: *al-ān aṭ-ṭā'irāt al-urduniyye taqṣif*
ma'āqil wa-mawāqī' hā'ulā'i l-džirdān fī awdžārihā
iḍan šey' yab'aṭ'ala l-ḥamās
yā rētnī ṭayyār

RK: *'ademnā gāsī yā*
samīr

SM: *yā rētnī ṭayyār*

[05:17]

RK: *iḥna ayḍan ra'eynā ((uh)) mažmū'a min aṭ-ṭā'irāt el-ḥarbiyya*
allatī ḥallaqat ((uh)) fawq el-kerak

¹⁶ al-Wer and Herin, “Lifecycle,” 60-5.

¹⁷ Al-Mahadin, “Gendered Soundscapes,” 108-9.

fawq beldet 'ayy

li-tuḥayyi ahl aš-šahīd al-kasāsbe

li-tuḥayyi žalālet sayyidnā bi-hāda l-wuḏūd

SM: [*na'am*]

RK: [((uh))] *wa-hāda el- el- el- el-*

intiṣār illi [*'imlū*]

SM: [*na'am*]

RK: *ba'd mā ḍarabū ṭil'ū fōg 'ayy*

[MR012]: [05:00]

SM: Jordanian aircraft are now bombing

The sites and positions of these rats, in their dens

Something that inspires enthusiasm

If only I was a pilot

RK: Our absence is difficult –

Sameer

SM: If only I was a pilot

[05:17]

RK: We have also seen a group of military aircraft

That had flown over Kerak

Over the town of Ayy

To salute the family of the martyr al-Kasasbeh

To salute Our Majesty (the King) with this presence

SM: [Yes]

RK: [((uh))] And this –

Victory which [they have accomplished]

SM: [Yes]

RK: After they'd hit they rose up over Ayy¹⁸

In this excerpt, Masarweh uses the Standard Arabic version [q] throughout. Karadsheh, on the other hand, switches to [g] for two lexical item tokens – *gāsī* “hard, difficult” and *fōg* “above” (though she produces the Standard version of this, *fawq*, as well).

As a departure from Karadsheh’s customary use of [ʔ], this switch signals a closer alignment with language marked as both masculine and exclusively Jordanian. It thus performs a patriotic stance on her part, and positions her firmly with all other Jordanians putatively unified in mourning Kasasbeh’s death. But in the schizophonic setting of radio, Karadsheh is able to achieve this through sound alone, by manipulating her phonetic realisations – in other words, her sonic output, as the sole aspect of performance that can be circulated by the medium.

For *Şawṭunā wāḥid* broadcasters, another common way of performing unity was the use of stock phrases describing various events and actors in the narrative of Kasasbeh’s martyrdom. The execution was branded a “disgusting crime” (*žarīma bašī’a*), and the IS as “criminals” (*mužrimīn*), as were the executed prisoners al-Rishawi and al-Karbouli – who had, prior to the post-Kasasbeh media frenzy, normally been referred to as “terrorists” (*irhābiyyīn*) or “extremists” (*mutaṭarrifīn*). The phrase “Muath’s blood will not be spent in vain” (*dam mu’āḍ lan yaḍhab hadran*) – traceable to a statement by the army’s

¹⁸ “Şawṭunā wāḥid” (Amman: Radio Hala, February 5, 2015), [MR012], author’s archive, 05:00-05:14, 05:17-05:35.

official spokesperson, Mamdouh al-Ameri, but also taken up by other key figures speaking on the topic such as the king – was also continuously repeated, as were promises for an “earth-shaking” (*muzalzilān*) response to the execution, and wishes for al-Kasasbeh to reach “eternal paradise” (*ǧannāt al-ḳuld*).¹⁹

Though mediated, ultimately, by broadcast sound, the semiotic associations of these phrases went beyond the confines of the broadcast alone. Each of them formed what William Hanks has termed an “intertextual series”: segments of discourse, both spoken and written, brought together referentially through the common, shared occurrence of these very phrase-tokens.²⁰ Using these phrases, subsequently, invoked the texts and contexts in which they had previously occurred.²¹ It clearly marked out the speaker as taking a position honouring the martyrdom, while also condemning IS and conveying the stance that the Jordanian state should wage war in revenge.

A few of the phrases can be traced directly to their original sources – such as al-Ameri’s communiqué, or statements made by King Abdullah II or the Jordanian government spokesperson Muhammad al-Momani – all of which are linked closely to centres of political power, and therefore carry particular

¹⁹ Petra News Agency, “Al-malik: dam mu’āḍ lan yaḡhab hadran,” *al-Dustour*, February 5, 2015, <http://goo.gl/PZijDb> [accessed 25 August 2015]; Muhammad Abu Ghosh, “Masīrat al-ḡusaynī: dam mu’āḍ lan yaḡhab hadran,” *al-Ghad*, February 7, 2015, <http://www.alghad.com/articles/851888> [accessed 25 August 2015].

²⁰ William F. Hanks, “Authenticity and Ambivalence in the Text: A Colonial Maya Case,” *American Ethnologist* 13, no. 4 (November 1986), 727.

²¹ Hill, “Intertextuality,” 113, 123.

potency whenever they are subsequently invoked.²² Others possess more generally interdiscursive, rather than intertextual, links – referring in a broader sense to a context of production, rather than any particular instance of language use; these include standard phrases used when talking about martyrs (e.g. *ilā žannāt al-ḵuld* “to eternal paradise”).²³ Yet for all these phrases, it was remarkable how pervasive they were during *Şawtunā wāḥid*. Each of the twenty hosts who spoke on the air throughout the day used at least a few of them; a point also noted, reflexively, by Rose al-Soqi, who after co-hosting one of the segments remarked in an interview that “today we are all using the same terms (*nafs al-muṣṭalaḥāt*)”.²⁴ Including such phrases in one’s talk was, then, a widespread way of asserting a unified standpoint through the sonic means of spoken language.

Intertextual token	English translation	Origin
<i>žarīma bašī’a</i>	“a disgusting crime”	(unidentifiable)
<i>damu lan yaḡhab hadran</i>	“his blood will not be spent in vain”	communiqué by Armed Forces spokesperson Mamdouh al-Ameri ²⁵
<i>ilā žannāt al-ḵuld (yā mu’ād)</i>	“to eternal paradise (Muath)”	interdiscursive; customary phrase when extolling martyrs

²² Michael Silverstein, “Axes of Evals: Token versus Type Interdiscursivity,” *Journal of Linguistic Anthropology* 15, no. 1 (May 2005), 11-12.

²³ Silverstein, “Axes,” 7.

²⁴ Roya TV, “#Mu’ād_šahīd_al-ḡaqq.”

²⁵ Gerasa News Agency, “Al-quwwāt al-musallaḡa tatawa“ad “dā’iš”: dam mu’ād lan yaḡhab hadran,” *Gerasa News*, February 3, 2015,

<http://www.gerasanews.com/index.php?page=article&id=174165> [accessed 25 August 2015].

<i>aš-šahīd al-baṭal mu‘āḍ al-kasāsbe</i>	“the heroic martyr Muath al-Kasasbeh”	(unidentifiable)
<i>raddan ḥāziman wa-muzalzilan wa-qawiyyan</i>	“a decisive, earth-shaking and mighty response”	statement to JTV by Government spokesperson Muhammad al-Momani ²⁶
<i>ša‘b multaff ḥawl qiyādathu (al-ḥakīma, al-hāšimiyya)</i>	“a people rallied around its (wise, Hashemite) leadership”	interdiscursive; frequent idiom when describing the Jordanian people / regime
<i>(al-wuqūf) šaffan wāḥidan amām al-miḥan wa-š-šadā'id</i>	“(standing) as a single rank against trials and adversity”	statements by King Abdullah II ²⁷
<i>zumra</i>	“gang” (in reference to the IS)	statements by King Abdullah II ²⁸
<i>mužrimīn</i>	“criminals” (in reference to Sajida al-Rishawi and Ziyad al-Karbouli, and the IS)	(unidentifiable)

Table 3.1. Tokens forming intertextual series used by *Şawtunā wāḥid* broadcasters.

Ultimately, however, *Şawtunā wāḥid* aimed for an even more literal unification of voices – one that sought to take full advantage of the sonic exclusivity of radio. In this way, broadcasters attempted to neutralise, or at

²⁶ al-Quwwāt al-musallaḥa al-urdunniyya, “Al-urdunn yu’akkid anna raddahu sayakūn ḥāziman wa-muzalzilan wa-qawiyyan ‘alā iḡtiyāl al-šahīd al-kasāsiba,” *al-Quwwāt al-musallaḥa al-urdunniyya*, February 3, 2015, <http://jaf.mil.jo/NewsView.aspx?NewsId=137> [accessed 25 August 2015].

²⁷ Petra News Agency, “Al-malik: wāḥib žamī‘ abnā’ al-waṭan al-wuqūf šaffan wāḥidan fi muwāzahat al-šadā'id wa-l-miḥan,” *al-Ghad*, February 3, 2015, <http://goo.gl/NTKdHn> [accessed 25 August 2015].

²⁸ Petra News Agency, “Al-malik: wāḥib.”

least subsume, the particular identities of radio stations by referring to their temporary broadcast homogeneity, as in the following exchange between Hiba Jawhar and Rami Salkham:

[MR012]: [23:37]

HJ: *kāmlīn ma'akum min əstudyōhāt šōtnā wāḥad*
ma'akum hiba žawhar min idā'et farah an-nās

RS: *wa-ma'akum ((uh)) rāmī salḵam ((uh)) min aḥlā idā'a mazāž ef em*
el-yowm el-idā'āt el-mušārike – el-mušārike fī mubādaret ((uh))
hāštāg şawtunā wāḥad
lāzim nəḥkīhā akīd hiba lə-kull en-nās l-yowm 'am-byisma'ūnā
lə-ennu şawt al-urdun wāḥad

[MR012]: [23:37]

HJ: We're continuing with you from the 'Our Voice Is One' studios
Hiba Jawhar is with you from Farah al-Nas

RS: And Rami Salkham is with you from 'the nicest radio station,' Mazaj

FM

Today the shared – the *participating* stations in the initiative – the
hashtag "Our Voice Is One"

We have to mention them of course, Hiba, to everyone listening
today

Because Jordan's voice is one²⁹

²⁹ "Şawtunā wāḥid," [MR012], 23:37-23:55.

Jawhar refers to the broadcast as taking place from the “*Şawtunā wāḥid studios*” – rather than, as it in fact did, from the studios of Radio Hala. Salkham, similarly, after asserting his ‘home’ station’s identity by quoting its promotional catchphrase (“the nicest radio station (*aḥlā idā’a*), Mazaj FM”), quickly turns to mention all the *other* participating stations. After the segment transcribed above, Jawhar and Salkham also proceeded to list the names of these stations – further reinforcing the idea that the participation of multiple stations is indicative of national unity even as their individual identities remain distinct.³⁰

Broadcasters also made more implicit efforts to unify the medium through audience address. Here as well, sonic homogeneity was utilised as an iconic measure of unity – as in this exchange between Rose al-Soqi, Ammar Madallah, and Shorouq al-Hijazi:

[MR010]: [21:19]

RS: *el-yōwm yōwm muḳtalif*
yəmkīn ((uh)) kul muzī’ am-bəḥiss el-yōwm ennu awwal marra byiṭla’
u-byiḥkī u-byo”od wara l-māyk
ma’a ennu mā šā’ allā l-kull ‘endu ḳibra ṭawīle w-madīde
bi-‘ālam el-ə’lām
bas el-yōwm lə-ennu l-yōwm
muḳtalif
lə-ennu l-ḥadaṭ muḳtalif
wā- lə-ennu al-wāqa’ muḳtalif el-yōwm ‘aleynā žamī’an ke-urduniyyīn

³⁰ “*Şawtunā wāḥid*,” [MR012], 24:10-24:35.

bdī ʿarahḥeb bi-zumelēṭ šurūq l-əḥžāzī wa-‘ammār madaḷḷā
raḥ ʾankūn ((uh)) ma‘a ba‘aḍ ((uh)) ḍəmən el-fetra el-muḡbile
ahla w-sahla fīkum

AM: *ahlan šurūq ((uh))*

SH: [*akīd*]

AM: [*ṣabāḥ*] *al-ward ((uh)) ṣabāḥ al-ḵēyr rōz* [*ahlan(??)*]

SH: [*ṣabāḥ*] *al-ḵēyr ((uh))*

‘ammār ṣabāḥ al-ḵēyr le-ilek ((uh)) kemān rōz ((uh))

w-biddi ʿṣabbeḥ ‘ala kull al-mustami‘īn wa-kull al-aṣḍiqā’ illi ‘am-

bisma‘ūnā ‘aber kull al-idā‘āt al-urduniyye le-l-yōwm

[MR010]: [21:19]

RS: Today is a different day

Every broadcaster might feel today it's the first time that they're
coming up and talking and sitting behind the microphone

Even though, thank God, everyone has a long and extensive
experience

In the world of media

Only today because today is

Different

Because what is happening is different

And – because reality is different today, for all of us as Jordanians

I wish to welcome my colleagues, Shorouq al-Hijazi and Ammar
Madallah

We will be together throughout the following period

Hello and welcome to you

AM: Hello Shorouq

SH: [For sure]
AM: [Good morning], good morning Rose [Hello (??)]
SH: [Good morning]
Ammar, good morning to you as well Rose
And I want to say good morning to all listeners and all friends who
are listening to us, on all Jordanian radio stations today³¹

al-Hijazi's claim to addressing listeners on "all Jordanian radio stations" is contestable. Although a large number of non-government radio stations participated in *Şawtunā wāḥid*, many did not. Nevertheless, this kind of address can only be made from a position of *imagined* unity of such stations. This is effected by the unification of sound, since sound is – here, as in classic concepts of radio as a medium – radio's sole means of semiosis. Similarly, al-Soqi spends considerable effort asserting that *Şawtunā wāḥid* is a special occasion – not only as an exclusive rupture in the routine flow of broadcasting, but a profoundly different experience for broadcasters as well. Unlike the day-to-day exchanges with each broadcaster's particular audience – their "long and extensive experience in the world of media" – mourning al-Kasasbeh requires a much broader, indeed nationwide, addressivity. And unifying the voice of the broadcast makes this possible – but only because the voice is all there is.

In *Şawtunā wāḥid*, the sonic exclusivity of radio thus enabled the use of certain aspects of linguistic performance – including stylistic manipulation, intertextual references, and audience address – in order to demonstrate unity.

³¹ "Şawtunā wāḥid" (Amman: Radio Hala, February 5, 2015), [MR010], author's archive, 21:19-21:56.

But in classic conceptions of radio as a media form, sonic exclusivity is joined by another, equally important feature: the temporal linearity of its broadcasts. Unlike sound recording media that are able to store sound for later listening or re-circulation, radio broadcasts are “evanescent,” broadcast live and not recoverable for most listeners.³² For Paddy Scannell, the fact that this temporality is regularised by radio broadcasters into clearly delineated daily schedules is precisely what links the everyday “present” of individual listening contexts into larger social groupings, such as nations.³³ Less romantically, temporal linearity also surfaces as an important feature in Spitulnik’s work on Zambian broadcasting. Faced with the challenge of providing airtime for each of Zambia’s seven official languages, since radio cannot broadcast in multiple languages simultaneously, Spitulnik demonstrates that the only way to achieve some sort of linguistic parity was to split the schedule linearly. This set aside a separate temporal segment for each language, a technique which, effectively, “map[ped] social divisions” between speakers of different languages onto the very schedule of the broadcasts.³⁴

In contemporary Jordan, broadcast schedules likewise provide the most basic evidence that temporal linearity is considered to be an important feature of radio as a media form. Dividing the day into discrete, time-bounded broadcasting segments would not be necessary unless radio broadcasting is

³² Douglas, *Listening*, 29-31.

³³ Scannell, “For-Anyone-as-Someone Structures,” 19-22.

³⁴ Debra Spitulnik, “Mediating Unity and Diversity: The Production of Language Ideologies in Zambian Broadcasting,” in *Language Ideologies: Practice and Theory*, ed. Bambi B. Schieffelin, Kathryn A. Woolard, and Paul V. Kroskrity (New York & Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998), 181; 170-4.

governed by an essentially *linear* temporal logic that does not allow for simultaneous broadcasting or delayed listening.

The overall structure of radio programming schedules in Jordan is strikingly similar, even across format borders. Radio Hala's broadcasting schedule (see Table 3.2 below) provides a good general template. On a typical weekday (excluding the Friday-Saturday 'weekend,' when there is no live programming), there are usually three to four, 1- to 3-hour-long segments hosted by broadcasters speaking live from the studio. The day begins – after some time customarily dedicated to playing songs by the Lebanese singer Fayrouz – with the morning programme, aimed at commuter crowds and often featuring the station's most high-profile host (Muhammad al-Wakeel, in Hala's case). This usually involves live call-ins – often in the "service programme" (*barāmiž ḳadamātiyya*) genre, discussed in more detail in Chapter 5 – along with reviews of the morning news, often effected easily by reading out headlines from the websites of Jordan's major daily newspapers.

From about 10 AM onwards, this is followed by the mid-morning slot – aimed, ostensibly, at a more markedly female, stay-at-home audience, and marked by discussion of 'lighter' topics such as personal health, entertainment, and child-rearing. Afternoons are more varied, though in most cases involve some kind of programme aimed at 'drive-back' commuters. Quizzes and other kinds of prize draws – often bolstered with a heavy dose of in-programme advertising by the live host – are frequent, as are music requests (Randa Karadsheh's afternoon slot on Hala involves both of these). Late evenings

might involve special programmes broadcast on a particular day on a weekly basis, or simply music.

Time	Programme	Host
00:00 – 7:00	miscellaneous / music	-
7:00 – 10:00	<i>barnāmiž al-wakīl</i> (morning call-in 'service programme')	Muhammad al-Wakeel
10:00 – 13:00	<i>'a-ṣ-ṣəbḥiyye</i> (mid-morning programme)	Nisreen Abu-Dayyeh
13:00 – 15:00	miscellaneous / music	-
15:00 – 16:00	<i>irmi hammak</i> (Islamic advice programme)	Muhammad Nouh al-Qudah
16:00 – 17:00	<i>ḳallīk zayn</i> (afternoon call-in; sponsored)	Randa Karadsheh
17:00 – 19:00	<i>yā halā</i> (afternoon call-in)	Randa Karadsheh
19:00 – 00:00	miscellaneous / music	-

Table 3.2. Radio Hala's weekday broadcasting schedule in December 2014.

This schema provides some pointers as to the kind of audience that Jordanian non-government radio stations seek to address. Ideal listeners are assumed to have particular class and gender features: they are car-based commuters, driving to work and back, and listening to the radio during this time – and, if they are not, stereotypically female (this being the assumed audience

of the mid-morning segment).³⁵ Format distinctions may come into play beyond this, and invoke listeners of a specific station as pious, or patriotic, or one preferring to communicate primarily in English; but the normative programming schema still unifies the field in a general sense.

The English-language Radio Bliss, for example, has no mid-morning slot – which itself suggests certain class prejudices about English-speaking listeners – but the two parts of the day it does fill with regular live programming are the morning ‘drive-to’ and afternoon ‘drive-back’ segments, again suggesting a commuting audience. Radio al-Balad has more regular once-per-week programmes during the day – dealing with issues such as the economy, traffic, and Syrians in Jordan – but is nevertheless fastened firmly into the schema by its daily morning show, and puts its flagship call-in discussion programme (Rainbow) in the afternoon drive-back slot. The Islamic station Hayat FM is similar; though its own call-in religious programme (*Fatāwa*, “Fatwas”) is broadcast in the early afternoon, it still has the customary morning-afternoon commuter anchors, and its 4-5 PM afternoon programme is even named *tarwīḥa* (“Returning Home”).

³⁵ Audience surveys, such as are publicly available, in fact suggest that radio listening is split almost equally between ‘home’ and ‘car’ contexts for most listeners – though peak listening is in the morning, which is also when the majority of the most popular hosts and programmes (i.e., the service programmes) are on the air. See e.g. Jordan Media Strengthening Program, “Jordan Media Survey 2008,” February 2009, http://www.irex.org/sites/default/files/mdd-JMS_2009%20_ALL-Sections-Mar1.pdf [accessed 31 January 2014], 58-60, 65-8; and Jordan Media Strengthening Program, “Jordan Media Survey - Radio,” March 2010, <http://www.sehetna.gov.jo/Research/%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%A7%D8%B9%D9%84%D8%A7%D9%85%20%D9%88%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%A7%D8%AA%D8%B5%D8%A7%D9%84/Jordan%20Media%20Survey-Radio-2010.pdf> [accessed 31 January 2014], 34-49.

The logic of temporal linearity also surfaced during *Ṣawṭunā wāḥid*, though less as an aspect of mediation amenable to exploitation through linguistic performance than a technical limitation that broadcast unification needed to engage with. Still, it demonstrated that this aspect of radio transmission is a crucial affordance affecting the design and structure of radio talk.

If the broadcast was to serve as icon of radio station unity, each of the stations involved needed to participate. But with a single stream of sound available for transmission, the only possibility for mapping this participation onto a linear timescale was – as in Spitulnik’s example of Zambian languages quoted above – to divide the schedule.³⁶ Table 3.3 below demonstrates how this was done in practice: the broadcast day was split into hour-long slots, with teams of co-hosts from distinct stations taking up each slot in order to allow everyone to participate.

³⁶ Spitulnik, “Mediating,” 170-4.

Time	Hosts
10:00 – 11:00	Nisreen Abu Dayyeh (Radio Hala) Jessy Abu Faisal (Sawt al-Ghad)
11:00 – 12:00	Rose al-Soqi (Mazaj FM) Shorouq al-Hijazi (Amman FM) Ammar Madallah (Nashama FM)
12:00 – 13:00	Saleh Kishta (Farah al-Nas) Diyala Dabbas (Nashama FM)
13:00 – 14:00	Farah Yaghmour (Global FM) Lina Abu Ghazaleh (JBC Radio)
14:00 – 15:00	Zayd al-Masri (Radio Hala) Abd al-Kareem al-Shudayfat (Ayyam FM)
15:00 – 16:00	Sameer Masarweh (University of Jordan Radio) Randa Karadsheh (Radio Hala)
16:00 – 17:00	Hiba Jawhar (Farah al-Nas) Rami Salkham (Mazaj FM)
17:00 – 18:00	Hala Yaghmour (Mazaj FM) Haytham al-Wakeel (Nashama FM)
18:00 – 19:00	Osama al-Jiltawy (JBC Radio) Hussam al-Manaseer (Amman FM)

Table 3.3. The *Şawtunā wāḥid* broadcast schedule, 5 February 2015.

The fragmentation of the broadcasting flow was countered on the level of each particular temporal segment, with co-hosting – measured conversational exchanges between broadcasters, marked by mutual support and cooperation rather than debate – providing a measure of reintegration. Nonetheless, the basic ideals of radio as a temporally linear – as well as schizophonic – media form were retained.

And yet, in certain respects, *Şawtunā wāḥid* also sought to go beyond the affordances of radio talk. Most prominently, the presenters' language included constant references to digital media, in particular social media websites such as Twitter and Facebook. These are neither sonically exclusive or schizophonic – indeed, they can only be accessed visually, through a computer or phone screen – nor temporally linear or evanescent, since contributions made through them remain accessible after they are posted.

Şawtunā wāḥid was itself framed as a “hashtag” – by Rami Salkham in the excerpt quoted on p. 64-5 above, as by many other hosts on the day of the broadcast – and the broadcasters continually encouraged listeners to publish their own tweets and Facebook statuses marked by the programme's name. Here, the hashtag functioned as a form of “performative coding” that would signal that these tweets and statuses are to be interpreted as a part of the broader *Şawtunā wāḥid* effort.³⁷ Digital content was also read out regularly during the broadcast, including tweets and messages from listeners and Jordanian politicians and entertainers. Hosts were especially eager to mention “spontaneous” (*afawiyye*) outbursts of patriotic emotion in honour of al-Kasasbeh – as in the case of a sixth-grade pupil who had sent in a drawing of the pilot, mentioned in the following exchange between Hala Yaghmour and Haytham al-Wakeel:

[MR013]: [21:38]

³⁷ Yarimar Bonilla and Jonathan Rosa, “#Ferguson: Digital Protest, Hashtag Ethnography, and the Racial Politics of Social Media in the United States,” *American Ethnologist* 42, no. 1 (2015), 5.

HY: *izan el-hāštāg er-rasmī lə-tətwāšalū ma'nā*
min wēyn mā kuntu
'aber mawāqj' t-tawāšul l-ižtimā'ī
we-taḥdīdan twiter wa-šōtnā wāḥed 'am-bižīnā
 ((uh)) *'ala hād el-hāštāg el-muwaḥḥad 'abr el-izā'āt el-urduniyya*
mušārakāt min kull il-a'mār
'am-biḳabbrūnā abli šweyy ennu ṭifle bi-š-šaff es-sādis ismhā bān el-
quṭub
'am-btib'at resme 'ale l-hāštāg
šukran ilek yā bān
ya'nī l-yōwm ((uh)) el-kull 'am-by'abbər bi-ṭarī'tu l-ḳāša
al-muğannī ḡannā
 š-šā'er ((uh))

HW: *ṣaḥīḥ*

HY: ((uh)) *katab* ((uh)) *wā- raṭā*

[*mu'ād al-kasāsbe*]

HW: [*ṣaḥīḥ ṣaḥīḥ*]

HY: *wa-l-aṭfāl 'am-byirsifū – el-*

byirsimū el-kull ya'nī

mašā'er muwaḥḥade bi-l-mužtama' al-urdunī

HW: *ya'nī ṭ-ṭifle bi-š-šaff es-sāz- s-sādis*

'abbarat

'an

ḡaḍabhā wā- 'an waqfethā ma'a š-ša'b el-urdunī

bi-rasma basīṭa džiddan w-hēy bta'nīlnā iṣī kṭīr kbīr

[MR013]: [21:38]

HY: So the official hashtag for you to be in touch with us
From wherever you might be
Over social networking websites
And in particular Twitter, and 'Our Voice Is One,' we are getting
On this hashtag unified across Jordanian radio stations
Contributions from all ages
They have (just) informed us that a girl in sixth grade, Ban al-Qutb
She has sent a drawing to the hashtag
Thank you Ban
Today, well, everyone is expressing (themselves) in their own way
The singer has sung
The poet –

HW: True

HY: Has written and, well, elegised

[Muath al-Kasasbeh]

HW: [True, true]

HY: And children are –

They are drawing, everyone (has), well

Unified emotions in Jordanian society

HW: Well, the girl in – sixth grade

She expressed

Her anger and her stance alongside the Jordanian people

With a very simple drawing, and this means a huge lot to us³⁸

³⁸ "Şawṭunā wāḥid" (Amman: Radio Hala, February 5, 2015), [MR013], author's archive, 21:38-22:18.

Such digital references also served unifying purposes – in particular, framing Jordanian society as universally patriotic and united in mourning for Kasasbeh. In the digital realm, however, the participating radio stations were not as unified as their joint broadcast might suggest. This was made clear to anyone who actually took up the broadcasters’ call to transcend radio’s schizophonia and temporal evanescence, and engage with the *Şawtunā wāḥid* hashtag by means of a digital screen. The most visually prominent posts using the tag were those published by radio stations themselves, with attached graphics – such as calligraphic renderings of the *Şawtunā wāḥid* slogan – or pictures of broadcaster pairs and trios in-studio as they prepared to begin their co-hosted segments. These photos, however, broke any illusion of an actual unity lying behind the broadcast’s unification: the studio was that of one particular station, Radio Hala, and little effort was made to conceal this fact.³⁹

More than this, despite putative unification of social media posts via the hashtag, these were all made via the ordinary profiles of the participating radio stations. Mazaj FM published its own stream of posts; so did Hala, Sawt al-Ghad, and so on. The digital extensions of the radio stations remained fully separate agents here. There was no attempt to overcome the even most basic differentiation of their accustomed images by, for example, changing the profile images of the stations’ accounts – a simple, and potentially powerful, gesture of unification on a visual level.⁴⁰ Instead, the stations retained their own

³⁹ A huge Radio Hala logo is also visible in the background of the Rose al-Soqi interview during Roya TV’s report on the programme; see Roya TV, “#Mu’āḍ_şahīd_al-ḥaqq.”

⁴⁰ Reem Abd Ulhamid, “Palestinianness on Facebook: Portrayals, Profiles, and Encoding the Self,” *Jadaliyya*, September 5, 2014,

distinctive logos and identities, a visual fragmentation which may have challenged the shared broadcast's endeavour of sonic synthesis.

If the main goal of *Şawṭunā wāḥid* was to perform unity, the question then remains why its presenters mentioned digital media so pervasively – even at the risk of fragmentation. In the following section, I demonstrate the underlying functions that links to digital media play in linguistic performances on Jordanian non-government radio today, before turning to a theoretical discussion on audiences and participation which will reveal the underlying logic of links between media form and language use in a more general sense.

3.2 Digital media and remediation

In recent years, media scholars have begun to acknowledge the use of digital media in the context of radio – in particular, combining sonic with visual transmission, for example through the use of webcams; and the use of social media to enhance radio broadcasts, draw in more listeners, and increase listener engagement.⁴¹ In Jordanian non-government radio today, digital media are likewise omnipresent – not only for one-off media events such as

http://www.jadaliyya.com/pages/index/19079/palestinianness-on-facebook_portrayals-profiles-an [accessed 30 January 2015].

⁴¹ Richard Berry, "Radio with Pictures: Radio Visualization in BBC National Radio," *The Radio Journal* 11, no. 2 (2013): 169–84; Douglas A. Ferguson and Clark F. Greer, "Local Radio and Microblogging: How Radio Stations in the U.S. Are Using Twitter," *Journal of Radio & Audio Media* 18, no. 1 (2011): 33–46; Wendy Willems, "Participation – In What? Radio, Convergence and the Corporate Logic of Audience Input through New Media in Zambia," *Telematics and Informatics* 30, no. 3 (August 2013): 223–31.

Ṣawṭunā wāḥid, but on a day-to-day basis as well. This challenges the idea that radio can only ever be sonically exclusive and temporally linear medium, in a number of ways.

Digital media can, first, simply reconstitute the visual directly. Most of Jordan's major non-government radio stations – including Hala, Fann, Sawt al-Ghad, and others – place digital video cameras in their studios, which are turned on constantly and transmit live video feeds to the Internet via the station's website or dedicated phone applications (together with their audio streams).⁴² Usually, there are at least two cameras: one located in the studio, directed at the seat and microphone into which the live host speaks, and another in the adjacent control room where the sound engineer and production team are located.

These webcams do not just languish in a forgotten reach of the Internet, to be accessed only by overenthusiastic fans. Assertions that the live broadcast can be *seen* are a constant part of on-air presenter talk as well. The possibility to “watch us live” is mentioned several times per hour by every host whose station offers the option, and they often direct specific greetings to those listeners who may be watching online. Radio Hala's own internal promotional jingles also mention the possibility to watch via their website, inviting members of the audience to “listen to us and watch us” (*isma'nā u-šūfnā*).⁴³ At times the webcam's visual affordances enter programming even more directly: Jessy

⁴² Each station offers its own “app,” accessible for free from at least the two biggest online stores (Apple's and Google's) providing smartphone content.

⁴³ “Barnāmiž al-wakīl, 7 December 2014,” *Barnāmiž al-wakīl* (Amman: Radio Hala, December 7, 2014), [RR027], author's archive, 31:35-31:50.

Abu Faisal, host of an established morning programme on Sawt al-Ghad, ran a series of quizzes in February 2015 where for a cash prize callers needed to describe objects inside the studio that could only be identified by watching the video feed.⁴⁴

Radio's temporal linearity and evanescence are, likewise, regularly challenged in Jordanian non-government radio broadcasts. One widespread method is publishing sound recordings of shows or programme segments on websites that allow video sharing, including YouTube and Facebook. Particularly memorable moments may be uploaded, as with the recording which documented Muhammad al-Wakeel breaking into tears on the air over the story of a girl whose father could no longer provide for his family through his job as a driver due to an eye disease.⁴⁵ But there are also more quotidian recordings: the Islamic advice programme *Fatāwa* on Hayat FM is regularly uploaded, for example, as are on-air interviews from morning shows of presenters such as al-Badri and Abu Faisal.⁴⁶

⁴⁴ "Jessy Live, 24 February 2015," *Jessy Live* (Amman: Sawt al-Ghad Jordan, February 24, 2015), [RR093], author's archive, 1:51:34-2:28:45.

⁴⁵ Alwakeel news, "Qiṣṣat al-fatāh allatī abkat al-i'lāmī muḥammad al-wakīl," YouTube, (August 31, 2014), <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=58gW5wL4UhQ> [accessed 17 August 2015].

⁴⁶ Hayat FM, "Fatāwā 'alā al-hawā' ma'a al-duktūr ibrahīm al-žarmī 15-3-2015, ḥayāt af am," YouTube, (March 16, 2015), https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Uoh2kiQIE_0 [accessed 17 August 2015]; wasatalbalad naser, "D hānī wa-l-ṣaḥafī ražā ṭalab fī ḥiwār ḥawla al-isā'a li-l-rasūl al-karīm fī barnāmiž wasaṭ al-balad," YouTube, (January 13, 2015), <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zXHdaNrAFk0> [accessed 17 August 2015]; Sawt El Ghad 101.5 FM – Jordan, "Muqābalat dżesī ma'a al-ṭifla dānyā," Facebook, (February 12, 2015), <https://www.facebook.com/video.php?v=1048396228520142&set=vb.353647117995060> [accessed 17 August 2015].

Such recordings permit radio stations not only to reach audiences beyond the live broadcast – listeners who might miss their favourite programmes and check up on them later, for example – but also to transcend the customary linear temporalities of radio circulation, and allow for delayed access and re-circulation in other kinds of digital media. Links to broadcast recordings on YouTube and Facebook are regularly re-posted on the stations' social media pages, where they can be browsed and commented upon by users at any time. Notably, though these are nominally videos, the visual aspect tends to be neutralised; often, the screen shows only a generic still image of the station logo, or a photograph of the broadcaster. The emphasis is on the sonic component, though one captured from the evanescent moment of the live broadcast and stored in a permanently browsable medium that defies radio's temporal limitations.

Such digital linkages, both visual and temporal, certainly provide new kinds of possibilities for radio communication. But it is less clear precisely what kind of challenge such linkages pose to the classic concept of radio as a medium. Here, it is crucial to distinguish between a medium's affordances as conditioned technologically, and what Ilana Gershon has termed the *media ideologies* of such affordances and how they make one medium distinct from another.⁴⁷ Most radio stations in Jordan today are, indeed, able to transcend the *technical* limitations by digital means. But importantly, whenever such links are made, there is evidence from linguistic performance that they involve a

⁴⁷ Ilana Gershon, "Media Ideologies: An Introduction," *Journal of Linguistic Anthropology* 20, no. 2 (November 2010), 283-4.

crossing over into a different medium – suggesting that, ideologically at least, the boundaries of radio remain clear.

Radio audiences are addressed as “listeners” (*mustamiʿīn*) or “those listening to us” (*illi byismaʿūnā*), and are continuously invited to engage with radio live as it airs: via phone-ins, or social media, or merely by “staying with us” for the duration of the broadcast. None of this would be necessary if digital audio storage was favoured as a way of accessing radio. By contrast, when listeners are told to click (*ikbisū* or *əʿmilū klik*) or link (*ušbukū*) to a website, digital media usage is always identified as a separate activity, rather than an integral part of the experience of engaging with radio.

This may be contradicted by the case of radio stations that broadcast exclusively via online feeds. Radio al-Balad, the first station breaking the Jordanian regime’s broadcast monopoly, in fact began broadcasting via the Internet in 2000; and currently, there are community radio stations such as Sawt al-Aghwar that also have exclusively online sound feeds. In all such cases, however, radio producers appear to consider the situation less than ideal. Radio al-Balad sought to add a terrestrial broadcast frequency as soon as it could – via transmitters in Palestine in the first instance, and later in Jordan when it managed to obtain a broadcast licence. Sawt al-Aghwar, similarly, has the same ultimate goal, but does not have the financial capabilities to pay licencing fees.⁴⁸

In any case, even with digital listening, once the sound stream has been accessed, listening requires no further visual engagement, and the broadcast

⁴⁸ Zaidah, “Man yamluk.”

is just as linear as if it were received via 'classic' radio technology. Digital social media and websites such as Facebook, by contrast, presuppose fundamentally different sensory experiences and temporalities. Radio itself is still considered as a primarily aural, primarily evanescent medium, even as discursive links to media that function on fundamentally different grounds constantly challenge this conception. Digital links, whatever mark they might leave on radio discourse, ultimately refer to a distinct mode of communicative engagement.

In media studies, efforts to understand the principles by which such links are made – especially as concerns digital media and the Internet –include concepts such as Henry Jenkins' "media convergence" and Roger Fidler's "mediamorphosis."⁴⁹ These scholars, however, focus mostly on the infrastructural properties of message transmission when media links are multiplied – including relations between media 'producers' and 'consumers,' explicit 'regulation' of media content, and the economics of media ownership – and devote less attention to the ways in which links between media might impact the discursive and linguistic dynamics of mediated communication itself.

One approach which better attends to such dynamics is David Bolter and Richard Grusin's concept of *remediation*. Remediation is a flexible term, but refers most broadly to situations in mediated communication when claims

⁴⁹ Roger Fidler, *Mediamorphosis: Understanding New Media* (London & Thousand Oaks, CA: Pine Forge Press, 1997); Henry Jenkins, "The Cultural Logic of Media Convergence," *International Journal of Cultural Studies* 7, no. 1 (2004): 33–43.

and references are made to other media – that is, when media “[present] themselves as refashioned or improved versions of other media,” or claim greater legitimacy for themselves by referring to such media.⁵⁰ Such claims are animated by two contradictory dynamics: on the one hand, the multiplication of media – what Bolter and Grusin term *hypermediacy* – as more and more links are made to more and more other media in order for a particular type of mediated communication to be justified on their grounds; and, on the other, the desire to arrive at a ‘real,’ ‘authentic’ experience that would erase the need for mediation altogether – what Bolter and Grusin call *immediacy*.⁵¹

The remediation framework is useful for analysing references to digital media in linguistic performance on Jordanian non-government radio, with a few reservations. First, Bolter and Grusin focus primarily on visual media – from painting, to film, to television, to various (visual) digital media today. However, in doing so, they focus exclusively on “Western” (i.e., Anglophone and Western European) practices of visual representation. While they acknowledge that other cultural contexts might value the twin dynamics of immediacy and hypermediacy in different terms, they never abandon them as universal principles of mediated representation.⁵²

Perhaps more troubling, Bolter and Grusin also keep unexamined the assumption that the reason for remediation will always be *competition* between different kinds of media. Though they disavow assigning agency to “media” as

⁵⁰ J. David Bolter and Richard Grusin, *Remediation: Understanding New Media* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1999), 15.

⁵¹ Bolter and Grusin, *Remediation*, 5-6.

⁵² Bolter and Grusin, *Remediation*, 21, 65-8.

clearly separable entities, their argument nevertheless presupposes a market-like schema of media networks scrambling for limited attention on part of consumer audiences, and seeking to displace other media in the process.⁵³ While this may be, indeed, how many media personnel – at least in the contemporary Anglophone contexts that Bolter and Grusin privilege – envision the situation, this should again be considered as a culturally contingent aspect of media ideologies, rather than a necessary property of mediated communication itself. On the contrary, as media studies and journalism scholars such as Kevin Kawamoto and Mohan Dutta-Bergman have shown, *complementarity* of media types with different kinds of temporal and sensory engagement properties may be just as important a motivation in introducing digital media as perceived media competition.⁵⁴

Such complementary remediation is, I argue, precisely what is happening in Jordanian non-government radio today. References to digital media are not just a desperate effort to reassert radio's relevance in a competitive media market, or an attempt to transform its affordances by activating the visual. Rather, they also affect radio language in very particular ways, as they are used by broadcasters to make particular claims about audiences and participation. I now draw on the linguistic performance of two

⁵³ Bolter and Grusin, *Remediation*, 67-8, 77-8.

⁵⁴ Kevin Kawamoto, "Digital Journalism: Emerging Media and the Changing Horizons of Journalism," in *Digital Journalism: Emerging Media and the Changing Horizons of Journalism*, ed. Kevin Kawamoto (Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield, 2003), 10-12, 26-7; Mohan J. Dutta-Bergman, "Complementarity in Consumption of News Types Across Traditional and New Media," *Journal of Broadcasting & Electronic Media* 48, no. 1 (2004), 42-8.

morning show hosts, Muhammad al-Wakeel and Hani al-Badri, which exhibit this dynamic quite clearly.

Muhammad al-Wakeel's obsession with the number of his Facebook followers is but one striking example of these links. al-Wakeel, a former presenter and newsreader on Jordanian national television, and currently the host of the *Barnāmiž al-wakīl* ("Al-Wakeel's Programme") morning show on Radio Hala, is probably the most famous contemporary Jordanian radio broadcaster. References to social media activity are a constant feature of his programmes; they include social networking websites such as Facebook and instant messaging applications such as WhatsApp – both accessed predominantly through mobile phones, and serving as Internet-based platforms used for direct communication and sharing content generated by users, with varying degrees of public-ness and privacy.⁵⁵

In the context of Facebook, in particular, users may choose to 'follow' updates of a public figure such as al-Wakeel, via this figure's public 'Page.' During 2014, the number of such 'followers' on al-Wakeel's Page first exceeded 1 million, and subsequently only kept climbing. When the number 4 million was finally reached on 13 January 2015, al-Wakeel (and his marketers) wasted no time in announcing this – both on al-Wakeel's programme, with dedicated jingles during commercial breaks, as well as on social media itself.

⁵⁵ danah m. boyd and Nicole B. Ellison, "Social Network Sites: Definition, History, and Scholarship," *Journal of Computer-Mediated Communication* 13, no. 1 (2007), 211; Jared McCormick, "The Whispers of WhatsApp: Beyond Facebook and Twitter in the Middle East," *Jadaliyya*, December 9, 2013, <http://www.jadaliyya.com/pages/index/15495/the-whispers-of-whatsapp-beyond-facebook-and-twit> [accessed 15 January 2014]. In what follows, I refer to content from such sites that is made available to users without privacy restrictions.

One particularly striking collage, published on al-Wakeel's Facebook page, featured the broadcaster's well-known visage along with the number four million and a large graphic rendering of the thumbs-up symbol representing a "Like" action on Facebook.⁵⁶

The number alone is impressive, and would add up to approximately half of the current estimate of the entire population of Jordan if each Facebook profile stood for a unique individual. This may not necessarily be the case: one person may have multiple profiles, or several people may use the same profile; profiles are also created, sold, and 'bought' for commercial purposes.⁵⁷ Still, the sense of a real, identifiable human being behind each profile remains a core aspect of the media ideology of the website – the assumption, in other words, that users utilise their profiles as digital extensions or proxies of themselves, for a range of purposes, from following news sources to communicating with others to creative self-expression.⁵⁸ And this assumption is central to the *reflexive statements about media interaction* that emerge from al-Wakeel's linguistic performance, and affects the way he addresses his audience.

⁵⁶ Mohammad Al Wakeel, "Şafhat al-i'lāmī muḥammad al-wakīl taḥtafī bi-l-miliyūn al-rābi'," Facebook, January 13, 2015, <https://www.facebook.com/MohammadAlwakeelshow/photos/pb.195486037149957.-2207520000.1421818664./1243833018981915/> [accessed 12 August 2015].

⁵⁷ I thank both Ebtihal Mahadeen and Marc Hudson for this point.

⁵⁸ Abd Ulhamid, "Palestinianness"; Caleb T. Carr, David B. Schrok, and Patricia Dauterman, "Speech Acts within Facebook Status Messages," *Journal of Language and Social Psychology* 31, no. 2 (2012): 176–96; Shanyang Zhao, Sherri Grasmuck, and Jason Martin, "Identity Construction on Facebook: Digital Empowerment in Anchored Relationships," *Computers in Human Behavior* 24, no. 5 (2008): 1816–36.

One example is the 2 December, 2014 episode of his programme. While al-Wakeel’s number of Facebook followers had not quite reached 4 million by that point, he nevertheless invoked the website explicitly to legitimise himself as an influential radio host. One of the day’s topics on which he had been giving an extended monologue were fuel prices – a constant, and safe, topic of on-air discussion and criticism in Jordan – which were at that time decreasing, though without a concomitant decrease in public transport fares. al-Wakeel then directed his ire at the Ministry of Transportation, specifically their apparent inability to respond to variations in fuel prices, as well as the government more generally for ordaining a decrease disproportionate to worldwide oil price decreases. “The Jordanian people are not convinced by this,” he claimed; “not because they are stupid, but because they are smart.”

And if anybody was entitled to speak for “the Jordanian people,” it was al-Wakeel himself, with his (nearly) 4 million followers:

[RR025]: [1:15:45]

MW: *anā banqul džess nabđ aš-šār’ al-urdunī*
miš min ‘endī miš mətfalsaf min ‘endī
kullu hāđa n-nās təşşannī iyyāh
‘ašān uwaşşəl lə-ħađarātkum
mas’ūlīn aşhāb qarār

[1:16:41]

MW: *š-šağle l-ğarībe lli bətsīr ya’nī l-’ān hey kull š-ša’b al-urdunī ‘ala*
şafhetnā ‘a-l-fēsbūk
kull iš-ša’b al-urdunī ‘ennā

arba'a melyōn illā mītēyn alf 'ennā

kull iš-ša'b al-urdunī 'ennā

[1:17:22]

MW: *be-hēy š-ša'b al-urdunī be-'egrū yā ḥukūma*
aḷlāh lā yiklif 'alēyku ida bta'milū lāyk
ə'milū lāyk li-š-ṣafḥa bas 'ašān tigrū t-ta'līqāt
ba'dēyn ḥāfəḏhā anā bi-l-īnglizī hēy
ə'milū ānlāyk
bas igrū t-ta'līqāt əḷla'ū minhā
biddīš tkūnū fīhā anā ašlan ya'nī
bas ((uh)) aḷlāh lā yiklif 'alēyku idā kamā bidku tgūlū mā- ūww-
((pffsht))
'andu ṣafḥa ḏaḳma
la' hāy le-š-ša'b al-urdunī miš ilku

[RR025]: [1:15:45]

MW: I'm passing on the pulse of the Jordanian street
Not from me, I'm not philosophising for myself
All of this, people are sending me
So I can pass it on to you
Officials and decision-makers

[1:16:41]

MW: The strange thing is, well – now all of the Jordanian people are on
our Facebook page
We have all the Jordanian people
We have four million, less two hundred thousand
We have all the Jordanian people

[1:17:22]

MW: And this, the Jordanian people – Government, (you should) read it
God will not reward you if you (only) make a ‘like’
Make a ‘like’ on the page, but only to read the comments
Then – and I’m keeping this in English
Make an ‘un-like’
Read the comments, then leave it
I don’t want you to be on it in the first place
But God will not reward you if, as you might say – ((pffsht))
‘He has a huge page’
No, this is for the Jordanian people, not for you⁵⁹

There are many interesting aspects to al-Wakeel’s linguistic performance here, from his apologetic stance towards using the customary English term for a social media interaction to his chummy, if admonitory, address to officials. But what deserves particular attention is how seamlessly the number of Facebook followers is invoked when al-Wakeel needs to bolster his claim as a representative of “the Jordanian people” (*aš-ša‘b al-urdunī*). Facebook is, here, remediated in the context of a radio programme – though not by being absorbed into radio discourse itself, or invoked in a way suggesting radio would be irrelevant without it. Rather, the reference to social media serves a particular discursive function: it is, namely, a *reflexive* move allowing al-Wakeel to claim representation of what would otherwise be a

⁵⁹ “Barnāmiž al-wakīl, 2 December 2014,” *Barnāmiž al-wakīl* (Amman: Radio Hala, December 2, 2014), [RR025], author’s archive, 1:15:45-1:17:44.

largely shapeless audience of radio broadcast listeners. Digital media enable him to directly *enumerate* this audience – via the number of ‘likes’ his page enjoys; but he can also make its concerns manifest to outside observers such as government officials through the ‘comments’ posted by users on said page, making it a veritable mouthpiece of the “Jordanian people.”

This is not quite an ideal example of Bolter and Grusin’s remediation. There is no sense of inter-medium competition; if anything, al-Wakeel is positioning himself against other radio programmes with less numerous followings, and certainly government officials, rather than media threatening to dislodge radio. Absorption of the other medium’s technological features is also minimal. These are still links *across* media, based on the reputation of a single broadcaster, not claims to the greater legitimacy of ‘radio’ as such as it absorbs the visual and temporal potentials of the Internet. Still, it involves reference to another medium – hypermediacy, in Bolter and Grusin’s sense of the word – in the service of immediacy and authentication: making radio’s reach more palpable, and also available for examination beyond the temporal context of the broadcast, as al-Wakeel portrays officials browsing through the Facebook page comments.

In addition to such reflexive statements, media also affect Jordanian radio language more implicitly when hosts read out users’ comments on the air. This is a staple of any live broadcast on non-government stations in Jordan. Morning programmes in particular are filled with references to people “in touch” (*mətwāṣṣīn*) via Facebook, WhatsApp, and Twitter, and hosts often apologise for not being able to read out all the messages they are receiving.

Single-line greetings – such as “good morning” (*ṣabāḥ al-khēyr*, *ṣabāḥ al-ward*, etc.) or “greetings” (*taḥiyātī*) – are the most common; hosts usually rattle off and respond to as many of these as they can. In such speech acts, naming the listener is just as important than the greeting itself. Comments on websites such as Facebook and Twitter provide the user’s profile name automatically, but when a service such as mobile texting or WhatsApp (which, like texting, is essentially a two-way form of communication) is in play contributors need to sign their names – and are called out by hosts when they do not, often told to “give us our name so we can say good morning to you.”⁶⁰ This focus on naming, again, invokes the ideology of discrete individuals behind each user profile.

Apart from this phatic flow of bare sociability, there are also more substantial messages. Listeners might send in their comments on topics that the hosts discuss, and broadcasters delight in reading out especially eloquent or sarcastic messages and giving their own comments in turn. The most popular call-in shows, known in Jordan as “service programmes” (*barāmiḥ ḵadamātiyya*; al-Wakeel’s programme is one of these), requests for assistance are also frequent: these might include transmitting a problem noted by locals

⁶⁰ As Jared McCormick has noted for Lebanon, WhatsApp is easily accessible to, and widely used by, anybody with a smartphone – which by now amounts to the majority of mobile phone users in many Arabic-speaking countries – and generous mobile data plans also make it work out much cheaper than sending text messages; McCormick, “Whispers.” The situation in Jordan is similar; notably, however, WhatsApp in the country is subject to oversight by government security services, and messages sent through the application can be monitored for contentious content. (I thank Ebtihal Mahadeen for this point.)

to the responsible authorities, or asking other listeners for financial support or help in finding a job.

Another such ‘service programme’ where both phatic and service messages are frequent is *Wasaṭ al-Balad*, on Radio Fann, hosted by another former television presenter, Hani al-Badri. When not taking calls or giving his own, often sarcastic, comments on the day’s developments, al-Badri interacts with listeners directly by reading and responding to their remediated messages. When specific requests sent in via WhatsApp (or text messages) are involved, this usually takes the form of mere acknowledgment – most often, a simple *ḥāḍirīn* (idiomatically, “we’re on it”) – but at times the interactions turn more complex. On the 21 January, 2015 episode, for example, a listener sent in a question regarding her application for a government post being processed by the Civil Service Bureau (*dīwān al-ḵidma al-madaniyya*), a frequent topic of discussion on service programmes. al-Badri’s curt on-air acknowledgment of the message was apparently not enough, since the listener sent another message a few minutes later asking whether the host had even read her question. al-Badri promptly read out the first message in full, then followed on to defend his procedure – not without sarcasm:

[RR049]: [1:17:00]

HB: *al- al-mawḍū‘ miš qirā’at el-*
l-mesēdž
hiyya el-
mutāba’et al-mawḍū‘
‘ašān hēk gulnā

lāzim ʔntābiʔ ʔašān ʔnšūf dīwān el-ḳidme l-medeniyye wēyn waššal
dōrek
al-qišša miš qiššet qirāʔa
lā tkūni mʔtfakkire mudīr raʔs dīwān el-ḳidme l-medeniyye
ṭūl nhāru gāʔid bismaʔ el- ((uh)) mesēdžāt en-nās
((laughter)) ((hand-thump))
ʔa-rāy iḳwānnā fī mašʔr elbek abyad

[RR049]: [1:17:00]

HB: The issue isn't reading the –
The message
It's
Following up on the problem
That's why we said
We need to follow up (on it) so we can see to where the Civil Service
Bureau has advanced
Your application
The story isn't reading (it)
Don't think that the head – the president of the Civil Service Bureau
keeps on listening to people's messages all day
((laughter)) ((hand-thump))
As our brothers in Egypt would say, 'your heart is white'⁶¹

⁶¹ "Wasat al-balad, 21 January 2015," *Wasat al-balad* (Amman: Radio Fann, January 21, 2015), [RR049], author's archive, 1:17:00-1:17:18.

The idiom “your heart is white” (*‘elbek abyad*; explicitly marked out by al-Badri as “Egyptian” with the use of the glottal stop, [ʔ] (ʔ), where one would expect [g] for a male speaker in Jordanian colloquial or [q] in Standard Arabic) invokes the listener’s naïveté, signalled by her insistence that al-Badri read her message out loud. Really, it does not matter; officials are not listening in any case. It is al-Badri who needs to call them up in order to get results.

The implied contrast is, of course, that al-Badri *is* listening; and, more important, responding. In such exchanges, digital media are used to demonstrate the radio host’s responsiveness to immediate interactional prompts, and confirm that the broadcast truly is ‘live.’ This leads to what can be termed the ‘*ḥāḍirīn* effect’: the impression that, whenever a listener decides to contact the host, there will at the very least be an acknowledgment, a reassurance that “we’re on it” – distinguishing radio, not least, from staid and inert government agencies. But to achieve this, the broadcaster’s language must also adapt in turn. al-Badri is no longer addressing a model listener, the “anyone-as-someone” of classic radio audiences, but rather a specific, named individual.⁶² There is a similar sense of intimacy and authenticity as in classic radio address; but this is achieved through communication with individual listeners which the rest of the audience is invited to overhear, rather than addressing this audience in a general sense.

Phone calls are an even more vivid example of direct interactivity – and I discuss call-ins on service programmes in more detail in Chapter 5 – but what digital media allow for is, crucially, a greater density of interaction. A

⁶² Scannell, “For-Anyone-as-Someone Structures,” 9-12.

broadcaster can only take a limited number of calls in a three-hour programme, but the amount of people that can be greeted in response to Facebook or WhatsApp is much greater. Messages arriving in during the broadcast are not transmitted as they come; rather, they are “temporally compressed” – passed on in groups, with enough time for the host to craft an appropriate response to each message.⁶³ The perceived live interactivity of embedded social media comments is thus an effect of alignment across two quite different temporal frames: the persistent timeframe of digital media, which collapse the history of interactions into a stored narrative that can be accessed as a whole at any time, and the evanescent-yet-immediate timeframe of live talk radio.⁶⁴ Media ideologies presuppose that unique individuals stand behind each social media profile and phone number; what broadcaster responsiveness to digital messages testifies to is precisely the live, immediate nature of their links to these individuals.

In the context of Australian Aboriginal radio stations, Daniel Fisher has noted very similar techniques of digital reference that enable radio to use digital media technologies to good effect to produce a greater effect of immediacy.⁶⁵ This is a prototypical remediating move: multiplying the media involved in interaction – in the Jordanian case, by adding various social media to a live radio broadcast – so as to represent the interaction as *less* mediated, more live, more authentic. Again, this is less a form of inter-media competition

⁶³ Fisher, “Intimacy,” 388.

⁶⁴ Agha, “Recombinant Selves,” 325-30.

⁶⁵ Fisher, “Intimacy,” 387-90.

than a development of potentials that already exist in the evanescence of radio. In the linguistic interactions of Jordanian non-government radio hosts, digital media neither supersede nor are absorbed into radio. Rather, they complement it, through their own specific affordances.

Undoubtedly, there are other motives as well. Some degree of sensual supplementing or inter-media competition cannot be excluded. Without at least an implicit sense that radio is visually and temporally deficient, such intense use of digital media would not be perceived as necessary in the first place. There may also be little choice for radio broadcasters when it comes to engaging with digital media: social media are enormously popular channels for communication in Jordan today, and a digital presence may be considered crucial for contemporary audiences to be sustained.⁶⁶ But such presence also brings out radio's temporal and visual deficiencies – maintaining the tension between radio's traditional affordances as sonically exclusive and temporally evanescent, and digital media that are able to transcend these affordances.

As we have seen, both classical digital and radio affordances affect linguistic performance on Jordanian non-government radio today, as evident from examples from *Şawtunā wāḥid* and morning programmes. In the final section of this chapter, I conceptualise this impact of media context on radio language in terms that can simultaneously account for both traditional conceptions of radio and the use of digital media, as well as the broader relevance of details of linguistic usage in mass media settings.

⁶⁶ I thank Ebtihal Mahadeen for this point.

3.3 Broadening the scope: publics and participation in radio language

For *Şawtunā wāḥid* broadcasters, as we have seen, the performance of national unity through sound was a major goal. This performance was, however, directed at a very specific audience. Listeners were not only assumed to recognise the symbols of patriotic nationhood performed by the broadcasters – such as Karadsheh’s targeted use of [g], or the use of intertextually shared phrases – but were also directly addressed as a united people on a national scale, as in references made by Rose al-Soqi and Shorouq al-Hijazi to “all listeners and all friends,” and “all of us as Jordanians.”

These forms of address define listeners as part of a collectivity constituted through the spoken language of broadcasters. They thus bear a close resemblance to Michael Warner’s concept of a *public*: an audience addressed as a group of indefinite strangers brought together by linguistic acts of address alone.⁶⁷ Publics are a primarily performative and discursively organised phenomenon. Nevertheless, they require some sense of the language actually being circulated among individuals imagined as members of this collectivity, even if they might never meet face to face.⁶⁸ In the case of *Şawtunā wāḥid*, as well as Jordanian non-government radio more generally, this (in Warner’s words) “path for the circulation of discourse” is provided by sonic transmission of a broadcast from a studio to an audience of listeners –

⁶⁷ Warner, *Publics*, 8-16, 67-96.

⁶⁸ Warner, *Publics*, 90-2, 103-6; Lee and LiPuma, “Cultures,” 192-3.

defined as a national public, as “all Jordanians,” through the linguistic performance of broadcasters alone.⁶⁹

Warner’s concept of publics has an explicitly linguistic focus, and can thus be used productively to analyse It also does not simply take for granted a rational-critical or liberal organisation of a what is called the ‘public sphere’ in English-language scholarship – namely, the familiar ideal from the early work of Jürgen Habermas defining “the public” as a collectivity whose sovereignty inheres in its capacity for ‘rational’ deliberation along bourgeois liberal norms.⁷⁰ As Peter Lunt and Sonia Livingstone among others point out, in contemporary media studies, this notion has largely been superseded by a focus (more recently acknowledged by Habermas itself) on discursive and communicative norms that enable deliberation and inclusion of diverse participants.⁷¹ Similarly, while Warner is concerned to some extent with the political potential of publics organised via discursive self-reference, his concept of publicity is flexible, and due to its linguistic focus can also be used productively to analyse forms of mediated linguistic communication beyond the often fetishized ‘reading public’ of Euro-American bourgeois liberalism.

On Jordanian non-government radio today, such communication normally takes place within a sonically exclusive and temporally linear context. Digital media, as we have seen, pose a challenge to these affordances through

⁶⁹ Warner, *Publics*, 92.

⁷⁰ Warner, *Publics*, 46-55.

⁷¹ Peter Lunt and Sonia Livingstone, “Media Studies’ Fascination with the Concept of the Public Sphere: Critical Reflections and Emerging Debates,” *Media, Culture & Society* 35, no. 1 (2013), 88-90, 92-5.

their capacity for remediation. But when viewed through the lens of Warner's theory of publics, they are in fact revealed to play a very similar role to sonically-centred address. On *Ṣawṭunā wāḥid*, references to the social media hashtag and the digital contributions expressing "unified emotions in Jordanian society" were mobilised to define a united, patriotic public. In al-Wakeel's obsession with social media followers, public-making strategies are likewise central: Facebook brings together a grouping of social media users, united by 'following' al-Wakeel's page, which is performatively addressed – continuously so, by al-Wakeel, on every single episode of his morning show – but claimed to have a degree of social reality. This is only bolstered by the fact that each listening individual possesses a palpable digital extension recognised "as a real path for the circulation of discourse" via comments, messages, and other types of social media interactions.⁷² As Asif Agha has pointed out, moments of mass mediation are usually both "*preceded* and *followed*" by other, less 'mass' interactions – equally important in giving social meaning to mass-mediated communication as such communication itself.⁷³

Like strategies for taking advantage of radio's schizophonia, remediating moves therefore have a real effect on radio language by allowing particular kinds of public construction. Ideologies of social media validate each user as a unique, discrete individual as member of an audience; and it is the presence of remediation links between the radio programme and the social medium that allows al-Wakeel, like so many other Jordanian radio hosts, to

⁷² Warner, *Publics*, 92.

⁷³ Agha, "Recombinant Selves," 326. Emphasis in original.

claim he speaks to, and for, a public unified by nothing more than the discursive addressivity of a radio broadcast. This is not to say that radio by itself would be considered less real; but social media references do provide an additional vivid possibility for signifying this path of circulation than, for instance, findings from audience research surveys.

As much as *Şawtunā wāḥid* involved address of a specific, national public, it sought to convey unification on part of participants as well. The individual identities of the broadcasters, and the radio stations that they had come from, remained distinct – but subsumed under the single brand or “initiative” (*mubādara*) of *Şawtunā wāḥid*. Even as Rami Salkham declared himself to come from the “nicest radio station,” all other radio stations deserved mention as well; and Hiba Jawhar’s reference to the “*Şawtunā wāḥid*” studios suggested that, for the duration of the programme at least, there was a strongly shared common goal on part of the participants – a unified role performed, ultimately, through the aural medium of speech.

These aspects of language can be usefully analysed with respect to the work of Erving Goffman – in particular, his work on participation frameworks, or the multiplicity of roles any particular speaker may be playing with respect to their talk.⁷⁴ Goffman disaggregates the concept of ‘speaker’ into distinct roles depending on their relationship to the discourse they produce, which he terms the *production format* of this discourse. He identifies three main roles involved in any act of speech: the “animator,” or the person actually speaking or performing the discourse; the “author,” or the person who created the

⁷⁴ Goffman, *Forms*, 144.

discourse in the first place; and the “principal,” or the person or entity holding formal responsibility for the discourse and its implications.⁷⁵

Although a single language user may play all three roles simultaneously, acts of linguistic performance also often involve their disaggregation and distribution across distinct individuals or entities. This is clearly evident in mass media settings – such as, for instance, news broadcasts, where there are distinct roles played by editorial staff (principal), writers of individual bulletins (author), and the newsreader or anchor-person (animator).⁷⁶ This is often the case even for apparently unscripted, ‘fresh’ talk in live radio broadcasts: Espen Ytreberg has pointed out that, while such broadcasts often seek to convey the impression that the three roles are shared by the programme host, this can come “under strain” with shifts in footing – for example, when the host turns to speak to the studio team instead of the audience, amplifying the “authorial” function at the expense of the “animating” one.⁷⁷

Goffman’s framework can also reveal the subtle participation dynamics at play within *Şawtunā wāḥid* broadcasts. In Rami Salkham and Hiba Jawhar’s performance, as indeed that of other *Şawtunā wāḥid* hosts, broadcasters hold distinct roles as *animators*: they retain their individual identities and voices, and cooperate as separate individuals in delivering the programme. However, the function of formal responsibility for the discourse – the role of *principal* – is

⁷⁵ Goffman, *Forms*, 144.

⁷⁶ Ytreberg, “Erving Goffman,” 493.

⁷⁷ Ytreberg, “Erving Goffman,” 494.

more blurred. The efforts at sonic unification of stations, for declaring a single, common goal of memorialising Muath al-Kasasbeh, suggest they seek to act as a single entity in this respect. Broadcasters from a multiplicity of stations were thus unified sonically during the *Şawtunā wāḥid* programme – transferring the role of shared principal to the Jordanian radio field, and, ultimately, the Jordanian nation which it iconically stands for in the programme’s discourse.

This sense of unified responsibility is only amplified when digital media are brought into the picture. Shared usage of the *Şawtunā wāḥid* hashtag signalled a common commitment even on part of individually distinct social media profiles, and unified contributions by social media users – such as Ban al-Qutb’s drawing mentioned in one of the excerpts above – who, although they are distinct animators and authors, nevertheless shared in the nationwide celebration of Kasasbeh’s martyrdom.

The manipulation of production format is likewise a central concern in practices such as Hani al-Badri’s reading-out of social media comments. al-Badri, like other radio broadcasters who read out comments traceable to named profiles on social media, here remains an *animator* alone. Although the broadcasters’ sonic mediation – through actually reading out the comments on the air – is crucial for the remediation of digital media by radio broadcasts, they do not claim ultimate authorship of such comments. Such authorship is, rather, distributed to the discrete audience members that are imagined to stand behind each social media profile. In this way, reference to digital media directly

affects the production format of radio talk, and allows the entry of a multiplicity of participants as *authors* in speech *animated* by the voice of the host.

Public addressivity and participation frameworks are thus two central aspects of language use affected by the media context in which language is performed. While a tension between classic affordances of radio and the potential of digital remediation remains, a focus on publics and participation reveals that these two aspects of media form have similar discursive effects. They can be used to unify, strategically, segments of audiences addressed in radio broadcasts; and they define particular roles for participants involved in various stages of the production of live on-air language.

An interpretive analysis of mediated language, focused on broadcast excerpts and informed by both linguistic anthropological theory and local contextual knowledge, is uniquely placed to discover these strategies. There is, therefore, broader relevance to such an analysis as well. Public address can unify and include certain groups and audience segments; but it simultaneously excludes and disregards others. Individuals can contribute to mass media as participants, but the mechanisms of this participation can restrict them to certain roles only, and limit the extent to which they can be truly equal actors in the production of public discourse. This demonstrates the urgency of studying not only media language in a general sense, but also the specific mechanisms through which it operates.

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This chapter has explored the impact of media form on language in non-government radio programming in Jordan today. Radio does not just neutrally transmit linguistic content; the media context affects language use in specific ways. This includes both the classic affordances of radio – schizophonia and temporal linearity – and the use of digital media to overcome such affordances. Radio broadcasters perform shared footing through intertextual references, or downplay station identity through sonic means, as in the case of the *Şawtunā wāḥid* programme. The temporal linearity of radio also calls for broadcast division in the form of a schedule, whether in order to draw (and define) distinct audiences – as with daily broadcast schedules – or to allow a greater number of participants to perform unity, as with *Şawtunā wāḥid*. On the other hand, attempts to overcome these affordances through digital media involve specific remediation strategies in linguistic performance, multiplying the media types involved with the goal of producing a greater sense of “immediacy” in communication. Hosts address audiences as distinct individuals behind social media profiles unified through their “following” a Facebook page; and they incorporate quotations from social media contributions in order to amplify the effect of live, “immediate” communication with listeners.

Media form should thus be closely attended to when studying linguistic data, as differences in media types can affect linguistic performance in meaningful ways. Contemporary scholarly work on media Arabic has yet to acknowledge this dynamic in detail. Studies such as Hachimi’s examination of dialect ideologies in reality TV and Bassiouney’s work on language in Egyptian

popular culture provide a welcome focus on ideological issues.⁷⁸ But they also tend to simply assume that ideologies and identities are being reproduced through language, and do not provide analytical tools for dealing with the ambiguities and nuances implied by the use of different media forms for ideological ends. Hopefully the present chapter will contribute to remedying this lack.

The final section of this chapter has introduced *publics* and *participation frameworks*, two concepts helpful in considering the shared impact of different features of media context of linguistic performance. The remainder of this thesis will develop these ideas further, in particular as a way of conceptualising the broader impact of radio language. The next chapter will thus explore a topic of central interest to linguists studying Arabic in mass-mediated settings: the phonetic details of the varieties of Arabic used on Jordanian non-government radio, and their particular social and ideological implications.

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⁷⁸ Hachimi, "Maghreb-Mashreq Language Ideology," 281-8; Bassiouney, "Dialect," 614-33; Bassiouney, "Religion," 38-60.

4. Sociolinguistic Variation in Jordanian Radio Broadcasting: Identities, Ideologies, and Indexicalities

Norms of language use play an important role in shaping radio discourse – all the more so because of radio's status as a sound-based medium, with spoken language as a primary means of semiosis. In this chapter, I explore how ideological conceptions about colloquial Arabic spoken in Jordan shape language use on non-government radio stations, with particular reference to the broader socio-cultural meanings – most prominently, social identity categories – indexed by sociolinguistic variables. Reference to such meanings, in turn, construes the communicative context of radio as including particular kinds of participants in validated speaker and audience roles, while excluding others. My aim is, in other words, to provide a description of what kind of colloquial Arabic is used on contemporary Jordanian non-government radio, and determine why this is so. I focus, on the one hand, on the habitual use of sounds and words that are stereotypically considered as 'authentically' Jordanian to various degrees; but I also examine contingent usages that challenge these stereotypes, showing that radio participants have considerable scope for creativity and agency in determining just *which* meanings their language will invoke.

In contemporary linguistic anthropology, the concept of *indexicality* has been mobilised to define meanings carried by elements of language beyond direct referential meaning.¹ Speakers of any language use different linguistic

¹ Bucholtz and Hall, "Identity," 593-4; Silverstein, "Indexical Order," 194-5.

forms – on phonological, morphological, syntactic, and lexical levels – that function as ‘indexes’ for ideological meanings about the nature of the code, the speaker, or other aspects of communication. Further, language use does not merely reflect such meanings from some stable prior social reality. Rather, it invokes and co-constitutes them in ongoing communicative interaction. Many cases of indexical invocation where identity stereotypes do not quite ‘match up’ with actual usage, suggesting some additional discursive process is involved – such as using contingent, and fluid, gender assignments by transgender individuals in India explored by Kira Hall and Veronica O’Donovan, or the appropriation of African-American Vernacular English (AAVE) by Korean-American men analysed by Elaine Chun.² In line with such research, I thus understand categories such as ‘identity’ as ideological labels grounded in linguistic performance, without necessarily making claims either to external sociological groupings or supposed internal feelings of belonging on part of individuals.³

Scholars analysing radio discourse have long recognised the role of language ideologies in structuring public addressivity and participation roles. In live talk radio, studying meanings linked to sociolinguistic variables is

² Kira Hall and Veronica O’Donovan, “Shifting Gender Positions among Hindi-Speaking Hijras,” ed. Victoria L. Bergvall, Janet M. Bing, and Alice F. Freed (London: Longman, 1996), 228–66; Elaine W. Chun, “The Construction of White, Black, and Korean American Identities through African American Vernacular English,” *Journal of Linguistic Anthropology* 11, no. 1 (2001): 52–64.

³ Mary Bucholtz and Kira Hall, “Language and Identity,” in *A Companion to Linguistic Anthropology*, ed. Alessandro Duranti (Malden, MA & Oxford: Blackwell, 2004), 376-82; Bucholtz and Hall, “Identity,” 587-93.

important as the language used by broadcasters inevitably involves the selection of particular linguistic forms understood to be appropriate for simulating 'everyday' or spontaneous talk.

In Arabic-speaking contexts, the situation is further complicated by the ideology of diglossia, which classifies linguistic forms according to their appropriateness to primarily spoken, vernacular contexts (the 'Low' code), versus those appropriate for primarily written and formal contexts (the 'High' code). But equal attention should also be given to variability within the codes that diglossia black-boxes into distinct poles. In particular, I demonstrate that choices *between* sociolinguistic variables within the colloquial Arabic used by Jordanian broadcasters are highly meaningful, as they invoke distinct ideologies which project particular kinds of identities for broadcasters.

I examine linguistic variability in the talk of four morning programme hosts – Muhammad al-Wakeel, Muhammad Fraij, Jessy Abu Faisal, and Rose al-Soqi – in order to explore the links made in habitual language use between sociolinguistic variables and stereotypes of identity on Jordanian non-government radio. Broadcasters use variants that coincide with stereotypes of speech associated with identity categories of gender and geographic origin. This linguistic performance, however, addresses a public that is not only familiar with this kind of colloquial Arabic, but also recognises it as a plausible performance of everyday talk appropriate to the communicative context of live talk radio in Jordan in particular. Moreover, it has particular implications for female presenters whose stereotypical linguistic variants are closer to pan-

Levantine than distinct Jordanian forms, and whose Jordanian identity is thus implicitly compromised.

But patterns of habitual use associated with speech stereotypes, such as ‘Jordanian’ or ‘masculine’ speech, are not the only way in which identity and other categories of sociocultural meaning enter into interaction. Other indexical processes, such as explicit mention of identity categories, implicature and presupposition, and evaluative orientations or stances, can be equally relevant.

I examine three cases of live radio interaction – including a metalinguistic discussion of speaker origin; an exchange playing on implicated stereotypes of class and urban/rural provenance; and a stance-performing segment involving a non-normative use of linguistic variable that typically indexes speaker gender – in which broadcasters creatively invoke identity categories through more contingent indexical processes than broader stereotype-linked usage norms. All these invocations have particular consequences for public addressivity and the nature of participant roles on Jordanian non-government radio, which confirms the importance of a context-grounded approach to media discourse sensitive to finer points of indexical meaning.

4.1 The performance of everyday language in broadcasting

Language circulated through a medium such as radio is characterised by particular practices of language use. These are affected not only by media

form – such as sonic exclusivity and temporal linearity in the case of radio broadcasts – but also crucially by *language ideologies*: beliefs about language structure and use linked in a non-referential manner to minute aspects of linguistic form, such as the pronunciation of particular sounds or grammatical particles.⁴ These aspects of language then emerge as locally salient *variables* of speech, and their ideological implications have particular consequences with regard to the social identities they imply for participants in linguistic interaction – including both the producers of language (e.g., radio broadcasters) and those whom these producers address (e.g., the audiences of broadcast interaction).

Insofar as such ideological links proceed from elements of speech, they are accessible primarily through sonic means. Language ideologies can, of course, also centre on other modes of linguistic communication, such as writing. Likewise, other semiotic channels apart from speech – such as bodily movement, gesture, dress, and so on – also function as indexes of identity categories.⁵ Nevertheless, my purpose in this chapter is to demonstrate that, in the Jordanian radio setting, strictly speech-bound linguistic signs can still invoke relevant identity categories, and have particular consequences for public address and participant roles, independently of such non-sonic channels.

With the exception of news bulletins – always read in impeccable Standard Arabic – the performance of language by Jordanian non-government

⁴ Woolard, “Introduction,” 3–47; Kroskrity, “Regimenting,” 1–34.

⁵ Eckert, “Variation,” 456; Eckert, “Three Waves,” 97.

radio broadcasters involves a relatively elevated variant of Colloquial Arabic with Levantine and Jordanian dialectal features. Although the admixture of Standard Arabic lexical items, grammatical structures, and stress and vowel patterns is considerable, there is nevertheless a sense that broadcasters aim to resemble interpersonal communication in face-to-face contexts – producing an effect of ordinary, spontaneous, ‘everyday’ conversation whenever they communicate with their audiences, their guests, and each other.

But as analysts of media communication such as Paddy Scannell and Ian Hutchby have pointed out, in the mass media, such performances also need to adapt language for an audience that is absent at the time of broadcast.⁶ While linguistic performance in general is always conducted with an awareness of audiences – the “audience design” of language, in Allan Bell’s terms – the mass media setting is specific in that the overhearing audience, the listenership or viewership of the broadcast, is not co-present.⁷ Rather, it is imagined and implied – indeed, constructed – in the semiotic form and content of the transmission.⁸ Broadcasters, therefore, need to use language in such a way that their interactional “footing” takes account of a multitude of anonymous recipients – a broadcast ‘public’ – while at the same time reproducing the

⁶ Hutchby, *Media Talk*, 12; Paddy Scannell, “Public Service Broadcasting and Modern Public Life,” in *Culture and Power: A Media, Culture and Society Reader*, ed. Paddy Scannell, Philip Schlesinger, and Colin Sparks (London: Sage, 1992), 330-5; Paddy Scannell, “Introduction: The Relevance of Talk,” in *Broadcast Talk*, ed. Paddy Scannell (London: Sage, 1991), 1–13.

⁷ Bell and Gibson, “Staging,” 560.

⁸ Bell and Gibson, “Staging,” 563-4.

impression of face-to-face conversational intimacy, of speaking *to* individual listeners rather than a crowd.⁹

‘Spontaneous’ media talk thus does not just occur naturally. It is, rather, strategically produced by broadcasters, and involves particular choices made with awareness of a mass audience.¹⁰ These choices are, in turn, closely intertwined with issues of both public addressivity and participation roles in interaction. The participant role of broadcaster projects an ideal speaker that is able to produce the target language in a seemingly spontaneous manner in the first place. Moreover, given that such language is always *addressed* to a certain listenership, it has implications for audience inclusion as well: the publics they address are those who can recognise such language as a performance of natural, spontaneous, face-to-face talk.

In the context of Arabic-language media, this issue is complicated further by the linguistic ideology of diglossia, which fundamentally shapes local perceptions of informal, everyday speech. Diglossic situations involve a linguistic system where two distinct sub-varieties or codes – ‘High,’ or “standard” in the case of Arabic; and ‘Low,’ or “colloquial” – coexist side by side, believed to be varieties of the same language but appropriate for different social situations and communicative functions.¹¹ As scholars such as Steven Caton and Niloofar Haeri have demonstrated, this classification is in an

⁹ Scannell, “For-Anyone-as-Someone Structures,” 5–24; Goffman, *Forms*, 128; Ian Hutchby, “Frame Attunement and Footing in the Organisation of Talk Radio Openings,” *Journal of Sociolinguistics* 3, no. 1 (January 1999), 42-3.

¹⁰ Cook, “Dangerously Radioactive,” 59–80; Hutchby, “Frame Attunement,” 43-8; Kunreuther, “Transparent Media,” 342-7.

¹¹ Ferguson, “Diglossia,” 2-10.

important sense an *ideology* – not insofar as it would be a false description of linguistic facts on the ground, but rather since it is a belief that crucially *shapes choices of language use* on part of speakers.¹² In particular, it involves convictions about the appropriateness of either code for specific communicative contexts: ‘formal’ ones, such as political speeches, religious lectures, government announcements, or newscasts for the ‘High’ code, and ‘informal’ ones – including everyday conversational exchanges – for the ‘Low’ code.

Diglossia is, without a doubt, an extremely important factor in Arabic language use. Scholars working on Arabic spoken in the media, however, have focused almost exclusively on this particular ideology to the exclusion of others. This has resulted in authors effectively black-boxing either diglossic pole, with variability *within* both Standard and Colloquial Arabic receiving little attention compared to variability *across* the diglossic dividing line. The salient linguistic resources are typically categorised according to a binary diglossic frame – as if the classification of a linguistic form as either ‘Standard’ or ‘Colloquial’ was the only relevant consideration in language use.¹³ Even studies that acknowledge the existence of a continuum of linguistic forms tend to locate it along a single Standard-Colloquial axis, rather than considering the possible multidimensionality of linguistic forms and their evaluations.¹⁴

¹² Caton, “Diglossia,” 144-7; Haeri, *Sacred Language*, 1-21; Ferguson, “Epilogue,” 57, 59-60.

¹³ Al Batal, “Identity,” 112-3; Albirini, “Sociolinguistic Functions,” 537-62; Bassiouney, “Identity,” 97-121; Eid, “Arabic,” 403-34.

¹⁴ Hary, “Importance,” 69-90; Holes, “Uses,” 15-7.

By contrast, I agree with more recent work by Atiqa Hachimi, Becky Schulthies, and others that looking at the *kind* of Colloquial Arabic used in broadcasts is of critical importance for understanding mass-mediated linguistic performances of Arabic.¹⁵ On contemporary Jordanian non-government radio, most language – apart from that which occurs in news bulletins – can generally be classified as a form of Colloquial Arabic. Stretches of Standard language do occur, in contexts such as reading out news stories and headlines, or the use of particular idiomatic phrases or quotations. But as I show below, this is matched by a notable degree of variability in the colloquial language as well – variability which has particular consequences for public addressivity and participation roles that emerge in broadcast talk. This variability, and the socio-cultural meanings and discursive claims it implies, would be erased by an analytical approach which took diglossia as the single most important linguistic ideology in Jordanian Arabic.

To an extent, the Jordanian context may be atypical in this respect. Socio-political changes throughout the 20th century – including the rapid growth of the capital Amman from a small settlement of Circassian colonists into the capital of a newly emergent nation-state, as well as the massive influx of Palestinians – have left Jordan’s local media without an established regional prestige colloquial variety, such as can be identified in Egypt or Lebanon. In these latter contexts, a detailed examination of the Colloquial pole is perhaps

¹⁵ Hachimi, “Maghreb-Mashreq Language Ideology,” 269–96; Schulthies, “Do You Speak Arabic?,” 59–71; Bassiouney, “Dialect,” 614–33; Faust, “Style Shifting”; Magidow, *Sawayt Laha Poke*.

less immediately interesting, as its normative features can already be assumed to be stabilised. In Jordan, by contrast, Enam al-Wer has described the Ammani dialect, in particular, as a local prestige variety – though one which is still in the “process of formation”: a form of “koine” whose use in the national media is, as Alexander Magidow notes, an emergent phenomenon, with a prestige status still subject to redefinition and interrogation.¹⁶

This is, in part, a result of competing evaluations of linguistic forms. The various meanings assigned to different realisations of /q/ are but one example. In addition to its Standard Arabic form, [q] (uvular stop), the variable can also be realised as [ʔ] or [g] in contemporary Ammani speech, depending on a number of factors. The [ʔ] pronunciation holds implications of urbanity, refinement, and pan-Levantine usage, but is also associated with femininity and Palestinian identity. By contrast, [g] is associated with rural and Bedouin speech, but also masculinity, and also serves as an index of “Jordanian-ness” due to its generally being characteristic of Jordan within the broader Levantine dialect area.¹⁷ If local norms of language use are subject to such competing pressures, this could then contribute to greater variability in language use in the media, as broadcasters grapple with the issue of what particular language forms are appropriate to simulations of everyday speech in a mass-mediated context.

But unsettled norms are not the only possible reason for variability in colloquial language. With a variety of linguistic resources at their disposal,

¹⁶ al-Wer, “Formation,” 73; Magidow, *Sawayt Laha Poke*.

¹⁷ al-Wer, “Formation,” 66-7; al-Wer and Herin, “Lifecycle,” 72.

speakers can choose – consciously or not – linguistic forms on the basis of the social values and cultural meanings that they project. In al-Wer and Herin’s terms, the forms are “valuable commodities” which can be used to accomplish particular communicative goals.¹⁸ While the “linguistic market” – to use Pierre Bourdieu’s felicitous phrase – thus formed may not necessarily be focused on strictly *economic* competition mirrored in language use, it nevertheless implies a spectrum of *values* that differentiates the utility of different linguistic forms for different purposes.¹⁹ This is, I argue, the main reason for colloquial linguistic variability in Jordanian non-government radio, as choices between sociolinguistic variables make different kinds of identity categories relevant for broadcasters.

In the following section, I examine the realisations of sociolinguistic variables used regularly by four Jordanian radio hosts. In their performance of everyday, ‘spontaneous’ talk on the air, the habitual choices these broadcasters make between different reflects of sociolinguistic variables associate them with different identity categories. These, in turn, imply specific kinds of identities not only for broadcasters, but also for audiences – addressed, in radio talk, as publics who understand a very specific form of language as everyday and spontaneous.

4.2 Habitual indexical invocations of identity

¹⁸ al-Wer and Herin, “Lifecycle,” 72.

¹⁹ Bourdieu, *Language*, 39.

In sociolinguistics, variation in language has traditionally been studied by observing correlations between two categories of variables: linguistic – most often, phonological – differentiation on the one hand, and differentiation of speakers according to pre-established sociological categories – such as gender, class, age, and ethnicity – on the other.²⁰ Studies in this tradition, such as those of William Labov in the U.S. and Peter Trudgill in England, have provided relevant insights regarding general patterns of linguistic stratification.²¹ They have, however, also been criticised for forcing externally determined categorical affiliations onto speakers, rather than exploring what social categories or cultural ideologies may be locally relevant.²²

More recent research in linguistic anthropology has supplemented variationist sociolinguistics with a focus on indexicality.²³ The concept of “index” has been borrowed into linguistic anthropological usage from the semiotic theory of C. S. Peirce, and refers to signs which stand for, or “index,” meanings through persistent co-occurrence, rather than referentially (as symbols) or through physical resemblance (as icons).²⁴ An indexicality-

²⁰ Eckert, “Three Waves,” 90-1; William Labov, “Phonological Correlates of Social Stratification,” *American Anthropologist* 66, no. 6, part 2 (April 1964), 164-6.

²¹ Labov, “Phonological Correlates,” 164–76; William Labov, *The Social Stratification of English in New York City* (Washington, D.C.: Center for Applied Linguistics, 1966); Peter Trudgill, *The Social Differentiation of English in Norwich* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1974).

²² Eckert, “Three Waves,” 90-1.

²³ Eckert, “Three Waves,” 93-4.

²⁴ Charles Sanders Peirce, *Collected Papers of Charles Sanders Peirce, Volume II: Elements of Logic*, ed. Charles Hartshorne and Paul Weiss (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1932), 143-4, 170-2.

focused approach to linguistic variation, then, assumes that the use of sociolinguistic variables in any particular context of interaction invokes various non-referential meanings. This includes membership in social identity categories, ideologically mediated through the *stereotypes of speech* associated with individuals belonging to these categories.²⁵

Crucially, such use does not merely reflect some prior social reality of categorical affiliation or belonging, or a compulsive “habitus” necessitating an immutable structure of social differentiation.²⁶ Rather, it is itself interactionally contingent, and potentially creative.²⁷ Speakers, in other words, actively articulate links to identity categories in interaction – and, through this, make them relevant for themselves and others, in ways that go beyond mere classification in categories of gender, class, age, or ethnicity.

Building on these insights, a sociolinguistically framed analysis of language variation can therefore also be useful for studying the language of Jordanian non-government radio broadcasters. It can identify broader regularities of use for select sociolinguistic variables – though with the awareness that such regularities are build-ups of contingent interactional performances, rather than simple reflections of speaker identity. As noted, the habitual use of a specific sociolinguistic variable does not necessarily mean

²⁵ Elinor Ochs, “Indexing Gender,” in *Rethinking Context: Language as an Interactive Phenomenon*, ed. Alessandro Duranti and Charles Goodwin (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992), 335–58; Agha, “Social Life,” 233-42; Asif Agha, “Voice, Footing, Enregisterment,” *Journal of Linguistic Anthropology* 15, no. 1 (May 2005), 47-9, 52-3; Silverstein, “Indexical Order,” 216-222.

²⁶ Bourdieu, *Language*, 52.

²⁷ Eckert, “Three Waves,” 93-7; Eckert, “Variation,” 455-71.

categorical membership in a clearly defined social identity group. Rather, it indexically invokes such a group in ongoing interaction, through the use of language ideologically, or stereotypically, associated with its members.²⁸ A broadcaster's use of salient sociolinguistic variables thus also has broader consequences for media language. The social identities invoked presume the address of a specific kind of public – one that recognises these identities, or is indeed defined by them – as well as affecting participation frameworks, through implying specific identity characteristics for the speaker performing in broadcaster role.

The language situation in Jordan includes several salient lines of variation that are also of relevance for talk in local broadcast media. Received wisdom in Arabic dialectology divides the dialects of colloquial Arabic spoken in Jordan and surrounding areas of the Levant into three basic types: “urban,” which includes dialects spoken in larger urban centres in the Levant (for instance, Jerusalem and Damascus); “rural,” which includes all non-urban “sedentary” (i.e., non-“Bedouin”) dialects; and “Bedouin,” or dialects used by traditionally nomadic and pastoralist inhabitants of Arabic-speaking areas.²⁹ Features such as reflexes of the interdental /θ/ and /ð/, the phonemes /q/, /k/, and /ʒ/, maintenance of exclusive gender distinctions, verbal aspect particles, and morphology of negation have all been identified as distinctive variables for

²⁸ Eckert, “Variation,” 463-4.

²⁹ Ray L. Cleveland, “A Classification for the Arabic Dialects of Jordan,” *Bulletin of the American Schools of Oriental Research* 171 (1963): 56–63; Bruno Herin, “Do Jordanians Really Speak like Palestinians?,” *Journal of Arabic and Islamic Studies* 13 (April 2013): 99–114; Heikki Palva, “A General Classification for the Arabic Dialects Spoken in Palestine and Transjordan,” *Studia Orientalia* 55, no. 18 (1984): 359–76.

classifying a speech style in one of these three groups or their various subgroupings.³⁰

In contemporary Jordan, however, colloquial language defies these classifications somewhat. Both rural-urban migration within Jordan and the influx of immigrants and refugees from elsewhere in the Arab world – in particular, Palestine – have contributed to the development of linguistic ideologies and stereotypes that do not quite accord with traditional lines of dialectal division. The kind of colloquial Arabic spoken in contemporary Amman, in particular, exhibits features of both rural and urban dialects, to varying degrees, as particular linguistic variables have been ideologically re-analysed to invoke a range of social identities, beyond implications of origin in an area or social group associated with a specific “dialect.”³¹ Thus, while classic dialectological divisions might define the [ʔ] realisation of /q/ as ‘urban’ and the [g] realisation as ‘rural Jordanian’ or ‘Bedouin,’ respectively, both occur in contemporary Ammani speech. Such features, in turn, provide ideologically salient points of variability in colloquial Arabic spoken in the Jordanian capital.

Gender is the first main identity category invoked by these variables. This includes, in particular, /q/, which in contemporary Amman has two colloquial realisations, [ʔ] and [g], stereotypically associated with female and male speakers respectively; and, likewise, /ʒ/, for which the stereotypical

³⁰ Palva, “General Classification,” 362.

³¹ Abd-el-Jawad, “Emergence,” 54-5, 57-61; al-Wer, “Formation,” 55-8; al-Wer and Herin, “Lifecycle,” 61-6.

realisations are [ʒ] for female and [dʒ] for male speakers.³² During my time in Amman, I encountered local ideological explanations that define these pronunciations as strong or forceful, for the male-linked realisations, versus weak or refined, for the female-linked realisations. Stereotypical characteristics of masculinity and femininity are, therefore, linked to ideas about language, in particular as to what constitutes habitual ‘everyday’ language for individuals of different genders.³³

Cutting across these gender-linked ideologies, however, are considerations regarding the geographic origin of speakers as indexed by their speech. Crucially, these also hold implications for ethnic belonging and class distinctions: certain pronunciations may mark out individuals as urban Ammanis, rural Jordanians, Bedouins, coming from elsewhere in the Levant, or being originally of Palestinian origin. Thus, in addition to their gender-linked meanings, /q/ and /ʒ/ can also be diagnostic of speaker origin: Jordanian rural dialects, as well as Bedouin ones, traditionally realise these phonemes as [g] and [dʒ], but they are generally [ʔ] and [ʒ] in prestigious urban Levantine dialects, including urban Palestinian.³⁴ Pronunciation of interdental /θ/, /ð/, and /dʎ/~ /ðʎ/ as stops or sibilants as opposed to fricatives is, likewise, considered an urban feature, and has been identified by al-Wer as typical of contemporary Ammani speech distinguishing it from other Jordanian

³² Abd-el-Jawad, “Emergence,” 55-61; al-Wer, “Different Variables,” 47-8; al-Wer, “Formation,” 63-7; al-Wer and Herin, “Lifecycle,” 62-5.

³³ al-Wer, “Different Variables,” 41-2.

³⁴ al-Wer, “Formation,” 63-7; al-Wer and Herin, “Lifecycle,” 62-5.

varieties.³⁵ The phoneme /k/ also has a variable pronunciation, [tʃ], which is associated with Bedouin speech, but also rural Jordanian and Palestinian varieties.³⁶

Origin-linked tokens also include morphological distinctions, such as variability in the second person plural bound pronoun; this is realised as *-ku* in most Jordanian dialects, but *-kun* or *-kən* elsewhere in the Levant, and *-kum* in contemporary Amman.³⁷ There is also the maintenance of plural gender distinctions in verbs and pronouns, present in most Levantine rural and Bedouin varieties – which include distinct forms such as *inten* “you (fem. pl.)” vs. *intu* “you (masc. pl.)”, and *akal-en* “they (fem. pl.) ate” vs. *akal-u* “they (masc. pl.) ate” – but not in urban ones, where such gender distinctions are neutralised.³⁸ Finally, there is variability on the lexical level, for example in colloquial versions of deictic adverbs: these include the adverb “here,” realised as *hōn* in urban and some rural dialects, but *hān* in other rural and Bedouin ones; and the adverb “now,” with a variety of forms such as *halla'* (urban), *hassa'* (rural and Bedouin), and *halḥīn* (Bedouin).³⁹

Speech broadcast on live talk radio, as noted above, is a targeted linguistic performance construed to be heard as everyday, face-to-face conversation. This assessment was, indeed, also confirmed directly as a basic

³⁵ al-Wer, “Formation,” 66.

³⁶ Abd-el-Jawad, “Emergence,” 55-61; Palva, “General Classification,” 363-6.

³⁷ Enam al-Wer, “New Dialect Formation: The Focusing of *-kum* in Amman,” in *Social Dialectology: In Honour of Peter Trudgill*, ed. David Britain and Jenny Cheshire (Amsterdam: John Benjamins, 2003), 59–67; al-Wer, “Formation,” 70-3.

³⁸ al-Wer, “Arabic,” 257-8; Palva, “General Classification,” 367.

³⁹ Palva, “General Classification,” 369-70.

norm for radio talk in my interviews with Jordanian broadcasters. As far as radio hosts are concerned, the prevailing values for on-air speech outside news bulletins are “spontaneity” (*‘afawiya*) or speaking in an “instinctive manner” (*bi-ṭarīqa ġarā’iziyya*) – terms that invoke properties of everyday, relaxed, and non-rehearsed everyday communication.⁴⁰

The question remains, however, as to which specific linguistic resources broadcasters use to achieve this effect. In an Arabic-speaking context, one would expect such resources to be drawn predominantly from Colloquial Arabic, given that the ‘Low’ diglossic pole is the one covering situations of daily face-to-face interaction. But as we have seen, Jordanian broadcasters have a variety of Colloquial options at their disposal in broadcast talk. While some of these options could presumably be devalued or stigmatised – such as forms signalling femininity, or rural or non-Jordanian origins – their ideological associations are never entirely clear-cut; and even stigmatised forms can enter into contexts of mass-mediated language use as forms of “covert prestige,” potentially valuable in contingent interactional situations.⁴¹ Hence, linguistic elements identifiable in radio talk will inevitably need to be *chosen* from among a range of locally available colloquial variants, each with its particular ideological associations. These choices, and the

⁴⁰ Hiba Jawhar and Rawan Khrais, [F103], interview by Jona Fras, Farah al-Nas Radio, Amman, February 3, 2015; Muhammad Fraij, [F102], interview by Jona Fras, Radio al-Balad, Amman, January 21, 2015.

⁴¹ Juan Antonio Cutillas-Espinosa and Juan Manuel Hernández-Campoy, “Script Design in the Media: Radio Talk Norms behind a Professional Voice,” *Language & Communication* 27 (March 2007), 147-9; Paul B. Garrett, “‘Say It like You See It’: Radio Broadcasting and Mass Mediation of Creole Nationhood in St. Lucia,” *Identities* 14, no. 1–2 (2007), 143-51.

different socio-cultural meanings that they invoke for speakers and listeners, will then also have implications for *what kind of speakers* the broadcasters project themselves to be, and *whose* colloquial, everyday speech they are performing.

Throughout my experience of listening to Jordanian non-government radio programming, the style of Arabic used by broadcasters in conversational settings was, generally speaking, Colloquial – though with notable presence of Standard Arabic elements, including lexical items, grammatical constructions, and stress and vowel patterns that contrast between Jordanian / Levantine Colloquial and Standard Arabic forms. Importantly, the use of one variant over another did not quarantine the discussion of ‘serious’ topics, such as regional and international politics, to Standard Arabic, as Noha Mellor notes is the case for what she terms (following John Swales) the “discursive community” of international Arab journalism.⁴² Rather, both Standard and Colloquial Arabic were used to discuss a full range of topics – from international and national current affairs to local issues of social and economic relevance – conforming broadly to the patterns of diglossic switching that authors such as Albirini and Holes have identified as typical of contemporary media Arabic usage: Standard Arabic covered functions such as direct quotations, assigning an air of importance to a stretch of talk, and emphasis.⁴³

⁴² Mellor, *Modern Arab Journalism*, 88-92; John Swales, *Genre Analysis: English in Academic and Research Settings* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990), 24.

⁴³ Holes, “Uses,” 14-33; Albirini, “Sociolinguistic Functions,” 540-57.

But there was also variability within forms labelled as ‘Colloquial.’ I identified four variables in particular whose realisation in Jordan varies extensively, but which also appeared relevant for broadcasters’ identity projections in linguistic performance on radio:

1. (q). Realised in Standard Arabic as the voiceless uvular stop [q], its primary reflects in Amman are the voiced velar stop [g] and the glottal stop [ʔ]. [g] is associated with male speech, as well as rural Jordanian and Bedouin dialects; [ʔ] has feminine associations, though is also a marker of urban Levantine dialects, and prominent in prestigious Palestinian, Syrian, and Lebanese (as well as Egyptian) urban colloquial varieties more generally.⁴⁴

2. (ž). The realisation of this variable in Standard Arabic varies between the voiced post-alveolar fricative [ʒ], the equivalent voiced affricate [dʒ], and the voiced velar stop [g] (this latter primarily in Egypt). In Jordan, the two relevant realisations are [ʒ] and [dʒ], with ideological associations fairly similar to those of [ʔ]/[g] respectively: [ʒ] is associated more with female speech and prestigious non-Jordanian urban Levantine dialects, while [dʒ] has masculine, rural Jordanian, and Bedouin associations, as well as being present in the Arabic of Jordanian Circassians.⁴⁵

⁴⁴ Other colloquial reflects of (q) relevant to the broader region include [q] in Galilee, [k] in certain rural Palestinian dialects, and [dʒ] or [dz] in certain Bedouin dialects; see Palva, “General Classification,” 363-4. These do not, however, occur in the speech of Jordanian radio broadcasters I have been considering.

⁴⁵ I thank Ebtihal Mahadeen for this point.

3. The second-person plural bound pronoun (**-kum**), a morpheme which occurs attached as a possessive pronoun to nouns, and as an object pronoun on verbs and prepositions. The Standard Arabic variant is *-kum*; in Jordan, its realisation varies between the “koine-ised” Ammani variant *-kum* and the more typically rural Jordanian *-ku*, while the variants *-kun* and *-kən* are associated with non-Jordanian Levantine colloquial variants in Palestine, Syria, and Lebanon.⁴⁶

4. The temporal deictic adverb (“**now**”). The most widely used Standard Arabic variant is *al-'ān*; in Jordan, the two most prominent colloquial versions are *halla'* – which is also used in urban Levantine colloquial varieties – and *hassa'*, with rural Jordanian and Bedouin associations.⁴⁷

⁴⁶ al-Wer, “New Dialect Formation,” 59-66.

⁴⁷ Palva, “General Classification,” 369-70.

Variable	SA reflect(s)	Colloquial reflects	Associated identity categories and other ideological meanings
(q)	[q]	[g]	masculine; rural Jordanian; Bedouin
		[ʔ]	feminine; (urban) Levantine; Palestinian; Egyptian
(ž)	[ʒ], [dʒ], [g]	[ʒ]	feminine; (urban) Levantine
		[dʒ]	masculine; rural Jordanian; Bedouin
(-kum)	-kum	-kum	Standard Arabic; Ammani “koine”
		-ku	rural Jordanian
		-kun	non-Jordanian Levantine
(“now”)	(e.g.) <i>al-’ān</i> ⁴⁸	<i>halla’</i>	(non-Jordanian) Levantine
		<i>hassa’</i>	(rural) Jordanian; Bedouin

Table 4.1. Overview of the variables chosen for frequency analysis.

These variables occur frequently enough to provide meaningful data for frequency analysis – unlike, for example, exclusive feminine verbal morphology, which, although highly ideologically marked as a rural Jordanian feature, occurs only a handful of times in my database of radio recordings. They can also be easily isolated in linear textual transcriptions, and are more readily identifiable than complex phonological changes such as vowel pattern transformations.⁴⁹ They provide data across a range of linguistic levels – phonology, morphology, and lexis – rather than being limited to the phonological level alone, as variationist sociolinguistic studies often are.

⁴⁸ There are other nouns and phrases in Standard Arabic translatable as “now,” but *al-’ān* is the most frequent in the data.

⁴⁹ Palva, “General Classification,” 366-7.

Finally, they are all associated with salient identity stereotypes of gender and geographic origin, which they invoke when they occur in a radio broadcaster's speech – with consequences for the nature of 'everyday' language used in this setting.

I analysed the relative frequencies of these variables in the speech of four morning programme hosts: Muhammad Fraij, Muhammad al-Wakeel, Rose al-Soqi, and Jessy Abu Faisal. Fraij, in addition to being a presenter on the community station Radio al-Balad, is also this station's Programme Director, with considerable experience in community media education and training. al-Wakeel, a former television presenter, is probably the most well-known morning radio host in Jordan; his flagship morning service programme had been broadcast on Radio Rotana for several years before moving to the army-run Radio Hala in 2014. al-Soqi began working at the commercial station Mazaj FM in her early 20s, after passing an internal "broadcaster examination," and has been running her morning programme at the station for almost a decade.⁵⁰ Abu Faisal is a Lebanese presenter who has lived and worked in Jordan for many years, but still cultivates a distinct image on the Lebanese-owned commercial station Sawt al-Ghad, as well as holding the distinction of being the first female morning programme host in the country.⁵¹

⁵⁰ Farayhan al-Hassan, "Rōz al-sōqī tatasallal bi-riqqa ma'a iṣrāqat kull ṣabāḥ ilā nufūs mustami'ī 'kāfiyīn," *al-Ghad*, October 18, 2009, <http://alghad.com/articles/673465--روز-السوقي> [accessed 22 March 2017].

⁵¹ Rama Mahmoud al-Rawash and Muhammad Zaki Daqasmeh, "Al-i'lāmiyya al-lubnāniyya dżēsī: hunāk ṣu'ūba fī wużūd muḍī'at 'rādyō' nāziḥa," *Ammon News*, July 2, 2007, <http://www.ammonnews.net/article.aspx?articleNO=6735> [accessed 19 February 2015].

With two female and two male hosts, as well as one host of Lebanese origin, this selection provides a range of possibilities for considering the relevance of both gender- and origin-linked variables. It also considers several sub-formats of Arabic-language non-government radio stations – the army-run, regime-linked Radio Hala, the independent community station Radio al-Balad, and the commercially-oriented Mazaj and Sawt al-Ghad – and could suggest contrasts between them in terms of language use. Finally, al-Wakeel, Fraij, al-Soqi, and Abu Faisal are all hosts of morning programmes with fairly similar structures, featuring a mixture of audience-directed talk, chatter directed at the broadcasters’ colleagues within the studio, and direct on-air interaction with callers. This makes their linguistic performance roughly comparable in terms of interactional setting.

Name	Gender	Origin	Station	Programme
Muhammad Fraij	male	Jordanian	Radio al-Balad	<i>ṭallet ṣubeḥ</i> (weekdays; 7:30 – 9:30)
Muhammad al-Wakeel	male	Jordanian	Radio Hala	<i>barnāmiž al-wakīl</i> (weekdays; 7:00 – 10:00)
Rose al-Soqi	female	Jordanian	Mazaj FM	<i>kāfiyīn</i> (weekdays; 9:00 – 11:00)
Jessy Abu Faisal	female	Lebanese	Sawt al-Ghad	<i>Jessy Live</i> (weekdays; 7:30 – 10:30)

Table 4.2. Broadcasters selected for frequency analysis.

I selected 15 two-minute excerpts of speech from each host to serve as a sample of their habitual language on their morning programmes, using a random number generator.⁵² All recordings of each broadcaster's programme in my database were added together, for a total of 598 minutes for Fraij, 891 minutes for al-Wakeel, 605 minutes for al-Soqi, and 907 minutes for Abu Faisal. A number between 0 and 1000 was then generated, and used to choose the starting minute from which selected speech would begin. If the generated number exceeded the total number of broadcaster minutes, the total number was subtracted from the generated number.

For comparability purposes, only parts of the recording containing the broadcaster's speech were counted towards the two-minute limit. Stretches of talk generated by other speakers, music, or advertisement blocks were all disregarded; I paused the two-minute count for the duration of any such segment, and only resumed when the broadcaster's talk occurred again. I also excluded contexts in which the host was reading Standard Arabic out loud – in particular, segments where broadcasters read out news headlines – but included all other situations regardless of primary addressee (mass audience, studio colleagues, studio guests, or phone guests / callers). In other words, only those segments where 'spontaneous' Colloquial Arabic was performed were included in the analysis.

⁵² Randomness and Integrity Services Ltd, "Random.org – True Random Number Service," *Random.org*, 2015, <https://www.random.org/> [accessed 15 October 2015].

The random number generation provided comparable 30-minute stretches of speech for each of the four broadcasters, which I extracted from my recording database and transcribed. I then counted the occurrences of all variants for each of the four variables listed above – (q), (ž), (-kum), and (“now”) – and calculated the percentage frequencies for each variant over the total number of occurrences of the variable. I summarise and discuss the results below.

4.2.1 Use of (q)

Name	Total (q) tokens	[q]	[g]	[ʔ]
Fraj	267 (100%)	247 92.5%	19 7.1%	1 0.4%
al-Wakeel	319 (100%)	198 62.0%	118 37.0%	3 1.0%
al-Soqi	246 (100%)	113 45.9%	- -	133 54.1%
Abu Faisal	198 (100%)	35 17.7%	1 0.5%	162 81.8%

Table 4.3. Frequency of different (q) pronunciations across the four hosts.

There is considerable variability between the four broadcasters in terms of pronunciation of (q) – in particular, the rate of realising it as the uvular stop [q] in line with Standard Arabic. Fraj has an especially high rate of [q] realisations (92.5%), followed by al-Wakeel (62.0%) and al-Soqi (45.9%), with the lowest proportion (17.7%) exhibited by Abu Faisal.

A major factor affecting this variability is a phenomenon known as *lexical conditioning*, in which certain words – primarily those associated with technical fields and topics associated with formal contexts and education, and less tied to domestic or everyday contexts – are more likely to be pronounced with formal or ‘High’ phonological realisations, even when the morphological and syntactic environment remains primarily ‘Low’ or colloquial.⁵³ Fraij’s programme, in particular, involves a high proportion of discussions of topics using specialised Standard vocabulary – including law, politics, and economics – which may explain his extremely high rate of [q] pronunciations. The other three programmes, by contrast, all include less conversation on topics that would trigger the use of Standard lexical items. This suggests an influence of programme orientation on topic choice, with the community station Radio al-Balad’s host choosing to discuss weightier topics than the other hosts – implying the addressed public as one for whom such topics are relevant, as well as projecting the broadcaster himself as a person capable (and willing) of discussing them.

In addition, the different rates of [q] reflects are also influenced by varying *standards* for lexical conditioning. As Hassan Abd-el-Jawad and Saleh Suleiman have shown, Arabic lexical tokens fall under a “*continuum of susceptibility*” to lexically conditioned phonological variation: while certain words will always be pronounced with their Standard (or Colloquial) pronunciations, for others both Standard and Colloquial pronunciations are

⁵³ Hassan R. Abd-el-Jawad and Saleh M. Suleiman, “Lexical Conditioning of Phonological Variation,” *Language Sciences* 12, no. 4 (1990), 291-5.

equally valid, and can thus vary in their realisations even within the speech of a single speaker.⁵⁴

English	Fraj	al-Wakeel	al-Soqi	Abu Faisal
“site, website” (always Standard-conditioned)	<i>mawqaʻ</i>	<i>mawqaʻ</i>	<i>mawqaʻ</i>	<i>mawqaʻ</i>
“decision”	-	-	<i>qarār</i>	<i>ʔarār</i>
“time”	<i>waqt</i>	<i>waqt</i>	<i>waqt ~ waʔt</i>	<i>waʔt</i>
“way, manner”	<i>ʔarīqa</i>	<i>ʔarīqa</i>	<i>ʔarīʔa</i>	<i>ʔarīʔa</i>
“he / it says” (never Standard-conditioned)	<i>bigūl</i>	<i>bigūl</i>	<i>biʔūl</i>	<i>biʔūl</i>

Table 4.4. Typical realisations of select tokens with the (q) variable, exhibiting different standards of lexical conditioning for different hosts.

The hosts apply different standards to where the line between Standard and Colloquial pronunciations of (q) should be drawn. Some words, such as *mawqaʻ* “(web)site,” are indeed conditioned to occur with [q] for all broadcasters (see Table 4.4 above). Other examples, however, suggest that al-Wakeel and Fraj are much less tolerant of non-[q] pronunciations in words in which both Abu Faisal and al-Soqi would normally use [ʔ] – for instance *ʔarīʔa* for *ʔarīqa* “way, manner.” al-Soqi, in turn, sometimes varies in her use of [q]

⁵⁴ Abd-el-Jawad and Suleiman, “Lexical Conditioning,” 299, 306-7; A. M. Sallam, “Phonological Variation in Educated Spoken Arabic: A Study of the Uvular and Related Plosive Types,” *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies* 43, no. 1 (April 1980), 82.

and [ʔ] in words where Abu Faisal's [ʔ] pronunciations are more absolute, such as *qarār* versus *'arār* "decision" and *waqt* versus *wa't* "time."

A relatively higher rate of colloquial (q) realisations, as indeed other phonemes with distinct colloquial forms, may be typical of urban Levantine dialects – such as the Arabic used in Lebanese media, which would accord with Abu Faisal's Lebanese identity projection.⁵⁵ al-Soqi's usage reflects this trend to a lesser degree, though likely with more gender-based rather than geographic implications, since many features typical of urban Levantine varieties are, in Jordan, also distinctly associated with female speech.⁵⁶ It may also be linked, in part, to a greater tendency to align to Colloquial prestige norms – rather than Standard Arabic ones – for female speakers compared to males, observed for Arabic by linguists such as Muhammad Ibrahim and Murtadha Bakir.⁵⁷

Beyond the complex influences of lexical conditioning, however, whenever a colloquial realisation of (q) does occur, there is a virtually absolute division in gender terms. The male broadcasters, Fraij and al-Wakeel, use [g] almost exclusively; the handful of cases of [ʔ] used as a reflect of (q) are all quotative – one is a quote from an Egyptian film, the others titles of Lebanese songs. al-Soqi, on the other hand, never uses [g] as a reflect of (q) in the data considered, while the single instance of Abu Faisal's use of [g] is again an

⁵⁵ Sallam, "Phonological Variation," 92-3; Hassan R. Abd-el-Jawad and Mohammad Awwad, "Reflexes of Classical Arabic Interdentals: A Study in Historical Sociolinguistics," *Linguistische Berichte* 122 (1989): 259–82.

⁵⁶ al-Wer and Herin, "Lifecycle," 69-72.

⁵⁷ Ibrahim, "Standard and Prestige Language," 116-20; Bakir, "Sex Differences," 4-6.

other-voiced utterance – namely, the quotation of a colloquial Jordanian idiom. For these four broadcasters at least, [g] appears to be the overwhelming norm for a male Jordanian host, while [ʔ] projects either a female or a Lebanese identity.

4.2.2 Use of (ž)

Name	Total (ž) tokens	[ʒ]	[dʒ]
Fraij	219 (100%)	57 26.0%	162 74.0%
al-Wakeel	266 (100%)	2 0.8%	264 99.2%
al-Soqi	199 (100%)	192 96.5%	7 3.5%
Abu Faisal	175 (100%)	141 80.6%	34 19.4%

Table 4.5. Frequency of different (ž) pronunciations across the four hosts.

Both the available realisations of (ž) – the fricative [ʒ] and the affricate [dʒ] – are, as noted, acceptable in Standard Arabic. Lexical conditioning does not therefore come into play. The gender division, however, again emerges particularly clearly. For al-Soqi and Abu Faisal, [ʒ] is normative; all occurrences of [dʒ] are instances of English quotation, including personal names (e.g. “Jack”) and loanwords (e.g. “jingle”). al-Wakeel uses [dʒ] universally, apart from two isolated instances – one in quoting the title of a

song by a Lebanese artist, another where (ž) occurs as the initial consonant of a cluster.

Fraij's use of [dʒ] is less absolute (74.0%), though it still appears to be a general tendency in his speech. His use of [ʒ] does not follow any discernible pattern – although it does seem to be relatively more frequent in cases where (ž) is the initial consonant of a cluster, such *mažlis* “council / Parliament,” *mužtama* “society.” Speculatively, it may involve partial divergence from the masculine Jordanian norm and alignment towards the prestigious urban Levantine associations of [ʒ] – again, perhaps due to the station's orientation towards a public for whom weightier topics are relevant, as well as the projection of a more sophisticated or educated identity on part of the speaker, or one that attempts to be more cross-reaching or pan-Levantine than a straightforward [dʒ]-linked male Jordanian identity. Still, like (q), norms of (ž) variability appear to be to a large extent gender-patterned.

4.2.3 Use of (-kum)

Name	Total (-kum) tokens	<i>-kum</i>	<i>-ku</i>	<i>-kun</i>
Fraij	38 (100%)	36 94.7%	2 5.3%	- -
al-Wakeel	79 (100%)	65 83.3%	13 16.7%	- -
al-Soqi	31 (100%)	31 100%	- -	- -
Abu Faisal	28 (100%)	- -	- -	28 100%

Table 4.6. Frequency of different (-kum) realisations across the four hosts.

Geographic origin is a major factor in the patterning of (-kum) realisations. The Lebanese Abu Faisal is the only broadcaster to use the non-Jordanian Levantine version *-kun*, and uses this version exclusively. al-Soqi, by contrast, uses exclusively *-kum*, which is both the Standard Arabic and Ammani normative pronunciation. Both male broadcasters use predominantly *-kum*, although they both exhibit *-ku* as well, with a general tendency to use *-kum* when addressing a mass audience and *-ku* when interacting live with callers and phone guests – though neither Fraij nor al-Wakeel do so exclusively.

As with lexical conditioning of (q), this pattern suggests some interaction between gender norms and certain geographically marked variants – in particular, the use of non-Ammani Jordanian *-ku* by male, but not female

speakers. In any case, the choice for a speaker projecting a Jordanian identity appears to be between *-kum* and *-ku* alone, with no tendency to align towards the urban Levantine dialectal norm *-kun* – unless a non-Jordanian origin is implied, as in Abu Faisal’s case. With an available form (*-kum*) that does not have rural Jordanian implications, it is thus unnecessary for a female speaker such as al-Soqi to converge towards urban Levantine norms, while still maintaining a contrast between her own linguistic usage and that of her male counterparts.

4.2.4 The adverb “now”

Name	Total (“now”) tokens	<i>al-’ān</i>	<i>halla’</i>	<i>hassa’</i>
Frajj	6 (100%)	6 100%	- -	- -
al-Wakeel	19 (100%)	15 78.9%	- -	4 21.1%
al-Soqi	13 (100%)	- -	13 100%	- -
Abu Faisal	23 (100%)	- -	23 100%	- -

Table 4.7. Frequency of different versions of the adverb “now” across the four hosts.

Finally, the adverb “now” also exhibits a notable split in terms of gender. Both male broadcasters exhibit a preference for the Standard Arabic version. al-Wakeel uses the Jordanian-marked *hassa’* a handful of times, but never the

Levantine *halla'*. Fraij only ever uses the Standard Arabic *al-'ān*, never *hassa'* or *halla'* – or indeed, any other possible colloquial version of the adverb. His usage, however, may also be influenced by stylistic choices at the syntactic level; unlike the other broadcaster, Fraij also never uses “now” as a sentence-initial discourse marker.

al-Soqi and Abu Faisal, by contrast, both use *halla'* relatively frequently – and exclusively – in this role. This, again, suggests some interaction between gender identity and alignment towards local Jordanian versus regional Levantine speech norms. While it may simply be an invocation of norms of prestige urban Levantine speech, the impact of this ideology is difficult to disaggregate, given how deeply many of these norms are linked to specifically female-marked linguistic practices in contemporary Jordan.

4.2.5 Habitual language use: discussion

This variability in the Colloquial Arabic use of four morning programme broadcasters shows that ideological associations of sociolinguistic variables with identity categories are highly relevant for the production of ‘everyday’ language on Jordanian non-government radio. Use of variables such as (q) and (ž) is highly gender-patterned, with the two male hosts using the male- and Jordanian-marked variants [g] and [dʒ], while the female hosts use the female- and urban Levantine-marked [ʔ] and [ʒ], respectively. Lexical conditioning of [q] variants for (q) for Fraij, as well as his non-absolute use of [dʒ], might suggest some influence of station orientation – in particular,

address to a public that welcomes discussions of issues requiring more sophisticated Standard Arabic lexical items, as well as projecting the identity of the broadcaster as a speaker who can handle such discussions. Generally speaking, however, the patterns are consistent with broadcasters' gender and geographic identity categories.

The same is true, to a lesser extent, of versions of the adverb "now," although the male broadcasters both seem to prefer a Standard Arabic over a colloquial form in this case. Finally, use of the second person plural bound pronoun (-kum) also exhibits gender-linked and geographic patterning – though while the association between 'maleness' and 'Jordanian-ness' is borne out by both male hosts using the Jordanian rural form *-ku* in certain contexts, the same is not necessarily true for the link between 'femaleness' and 'urban Levantine' speech, as the contrast between al-Soqi's and Abu Faisal's usage shows.

The patterns of gender differentiation correlate quite closely with the kinds of patterns that Enam al-Wer has observed for the colloquial Arabic of contemporary Amman, including a clear tendency for distinct phonetic variants – such as the [q] and [ʔ] pronunciations of (q) – to align along gender lines.⁵⁸ In this pattern, the gender-linked variants are also linked to stereotypes of geographic origin, with the male versions (i.e., [g] and [dʒ]) associated with rural Jordanian and Bedouin speech in particular, while female versions (i.e., [ʔ] and [ʒ]) are shared with prestigious urban colloquial varieties elsewhere in the Levant.

⁵⁸ al-Wer, "Formation," 66-7; al-Wer and Herin, "Lifecycle," 67-70.

The range of variants shared between female and urban Levantine speech is limited, however, which enables consistent differentiation in terms of geographic origin for female speakers as well. This is well demonstrated by the case of Abu Faisal – who, in addition to the abovementioned *-kun*, also exhibits numerous other Lebanese-marked features that further differentiate her from Jordanian-origin hosts. These include lexical distinctions, such as *ġaniyye* versus *uġniye* “song,” *tmēne* versus *tamāniye / tamāniye* “eight,” etc.; phonetic differences, such as fronting and de-rounding the short /u/ vowel to [i], e.g. *ʔilt* versus *gult / ʔult* “I / you (masc.) said,” and morphological alternations, such as the use of *-un* as the 3rd person plural bound personal pronoun as opposed to *-(h)um*.

The choices hosts make among the available colloquial variables, then, draw to a large extent on local linguistic ideologies about how speech produced by individuals belonging to certain identity categories – female, male, Jordanian, Lebanese – should sound like. A broadcaster’s linguistic performance tends to match up with their external identity categorisation, according to ideological stereotypes of how members of such identity categories speak when they are speaking colloquial Arabic.

For the Jordanian-origin broadcasters, however, observable regularities of use suggest that the kind of ‘everyday’ language they perform aligns to Ammani speech norms in particular. Ammani Arabic, in this context, may be functioning as a local, nation-level colloquial prestige norm – coming to play a similar role in Jordanian media as, for instance, Cairene Arabic does in Egypt

and Tunis Arabic in Tunisia.⁵⁹ In these contexts, features of colloquial Arabic stereotypically associated with speakers in the capital have come to be considered as the prestige or unmarked form of colloquial language on a national level, and have come to dominate mass media as representative of, for instance, “Egyptian” and “Tunisian” Colloquial Arabic more generally.⁶⁰ A comparable process may be occurring in Jordan, with Ammani speech emerging as representative of a more generally Jordanian colloquial Arabic in local media contexts, and hence preferred by radio broadcasters addressing a generalised Jordanian audience.

In its effort to gain listeners, non-government radio may thus be aiming to reproduce a form of authentic locality that transnational Arabic media – such as transnational satellite channels, websites, and film and TV productions – are less able to accomplish. Katharina Nötzold and Judith Pies have characterised this “going local” tendency as a survival strategy for entering an already saturated Arabic-language media market, by focusing on local news and issues.⁶¹ Jordanian non-government radio can, in this way, be compared to other audio-visual media that have emerged in Jordan in recent years – including the television channel Roya TV and a huge number of other web-based media, such as video series published via YouTube – which all focus

⁵⁹ Ibrahim, “Standard and Prestige Language,” 119-22; Abd-el-Jawad, “Emergence,” 57-62; Abd-el-Jawad, “Cross-Dialectal Variation,” 366.

⁶⁰ Achour Kallel, “Choix,” 90-3; Bassiouney, “Dialect,” 615-7.

⁶¹ Katharina Nötzold and Judith Pies, “‘Going Local’ as a Strategy to Enter Arab National Television Markets: Examples from Lebanon and Jordan,” *Middle East Journal of Culture and Communication* 3, no. 1 (January 2010), 44-5, 58-9.

on local issues presented in a style of elevated Colloquial Arabic with distinctively Ammani features.⁶²

Following through with Nötzold and Pies's argument, this localist tendency can be viewed as an economic strategy to capture audiences looking not just for locally relevant content, but also a *form* of that content that explicitly reaffirms Jordanian identity – for example, through the use of distinctly Jordanian colloquial Arabic features.⁶³ But in the socio-political context of Jordan in particular, such affirmation carries echoes of exclusivist Jordanian nationalism of the kind promoted by the Jordanian regime since the early 2000s, through campaigns such as “Jordan First” and “We Are All Jordan.” Nötzold and Pies, along with other writers on media and Jordanian nationalism such as Naomi Sakr and Curtis Ryan, see this as a highly politicised “stabilisation strategy” in which both public and private media play a role – part of a wider tendency in which various aspects of cultural production, including public monuments, iconography, and films, are subsumed under a particularist Jordanian nationalist project.⁶⁴ On the other hand, a ‘local’ orientation can also be utilised to produce highly participatory, community-oriented projects that do not shy away from regime criticism and holding government agencies

⁶² Magidow, Sawayt Laha Poke.

⁶³ Nötzold and Pies, “Going Local,” 58-9.

⁶⁴ Nötzold and Pies, “Going Local,” 59; Sakr, “We Cannot Let It Loose,” 104, 108; Curtis R. Ryan, “‘We Are All Jordan’...But Who Is We?,” *Middle East Report Online*, July 13, 2010, <http://www.merip.org/mero/mero071310> [accessed 8 May 2017]; Elena D. Corbett, “Hashemite Antiquity and Modernity: Iconography in Neoliberal Jordan,” *Studies in Ethnicity and Nationalism* 11, no. 2 (October 2011): 163–193; George Potter, “(De)constructing Nationalist Imagery: Jordanian Cinema in Times of Crisis,” *British Journal of Middle Eastern Studies* 43, no. 1 (2016): 21–39.

accountable, as demonstrated by Gretchen King for the community of listeners of Radio al-Balad.⁶⁵

The audience addressed in the majority of non-government radio programming is, nevertheless, one that recognises Ammani speech as a plausible simulation of ‘everyday,’ spontaneous talk by Jordanian presenters. The grouping of anonymous addressees toward whom live on-air talk is directed – its public – is not, of course, composed of Ammani locals alone: Jordanian radio stations transmit their broadcasts throughout the country, and also offer online feeds accessible from anywhere in the world, not just Jordan. But it is *assumed to be* a public that recognises the Ammani gender- and origin-linked realisations of sociolinguistic variables as representative of face-to-face speech. Even if the ability to produce such variables is not shared by all listeners, radio programmes assume – at minimum – their comprehension, their *recognition* as a form of legitimate spontaneous linguistic expression.⁶⁶ Ammani speech norms are thus privileged and normalised, at the expense of other possible forms of colloquial realisations available to Arabic speakers in Jordan – and drawing an implicit hierarchy between Ammani speakers for whom such norms are presumed to be more natural than speakers from elsewhere in Jordan.

But the issue is not simply one of privileging one linguistic variety over another. Although the norms of usage are comparable to those of contemporary Ammani Arabic, the variables examined also hold ideological

⁶⁵ King, “Hearing,” 122-4.

⁶⁶ Bourdieu, *Language*, 62.

implications that reveal underlying inequalities in the participant roles of presenters of different genders. Female presenters pronounce [ʒ] and [ʔ] in accordance with Ammani speech norms; and yet these realisations, in particular, are also shared with other urban dialect varieties of the Levant, such as Lebanese. By contrast, the speech of male presenters invokes Jordanian and Bedouin varieties, whereby [g], [dʒ], and locally distinct grammatical particles and lexical items imply both a stance of ‘toughness’ – according to local ideologies of the phonological variables they use – as well as heightened patriotism in comparison to their female colleagues.

Salam al-Mahadin has argued that this division produces a “gendered soundscape” on contemporary Jordanian non-government radio, whereby the very authenticity of women as proper Jordanians is compromised, simply by virtue of their customary speech norms.⁶⁷ Female broadcasters are, in other words, caught in a double bind: in order to sound ‘authentic’ as women and refined urban individuals, they need to follow Ammani speech norms – but these same speech norms also have non-Jordanian connotations, and thus make their speech ‘inauthentic’ on another ideological axis.

The present data demonstrates this association is not absolute: there is still scope for differentiation of distinctly *Jordanian* female speech, as with al-Soqi’s use of *-kum* and her different standards of lexical conditioning compared to the Lebanese Abu Faisal. Still, in the sound-based medium of radio, presenter identities are projected primarily through spoken language. Female presenters conforming to Ammani norms will always be relatively closer to

⁶⁷ al-Mahadin, “Gendered Soundscapes,” 108.

non-Jordanian variants than male presenters, and thus less able to unambiguously represent a Jordanian identity – as long as they conform to the norms of everyday language use that hold for Ammani Arabic.

Both public addressivity and participation frameworks are therefore implicated in the habitual patterning of salient sociolinguistic variables in everyday language on Jordanian non-government radio. The audience addressed is a public that recognises a particular gender- and origin-patterned form of speech as ‘everyday’ and ‘spontaneous’ in the first place. Moreover, this gender- and origin-patterned performance of spoken language by presenters is the primary means through which their identities are projected in radio broadcasts. Participation frameworks are thus affected as well: female broadcasters are relatively less able to take on a role as ‘authentic’ Jordanians, due to the association of ‘their’ habitual spoken language with non-Jordanian linguistic norms. And as these publics and participant frameworks are invoked and reiterated anew through regular linguistic performance on daily radio programmes, any deviation from established usage norms runs the risk of being classified as “marked,” inappropriate to the context of use and potentially illegitimate.⁶⁸

The primary advantage of the frequency analysis approach is that it can point to the regularities of usage which lie behind such effects on publics and participation. One of its major weaknesses, however, is that it only examines speaker variability along axes that have already been selected for analysis. Patterns of similarity or difference that do not align with the selected

⁶⁸ Bucholtz and Hall, “Language,” 372-3.

distinctions – including, for instance, broader syntactic or morphological variability – will inevitably escape scrutiny.

Nevertheless, the four cases considered are representative of tendencies of broadcaster speech on Jordanian non-government radio more generally, based on my own experiences of listening and transcription of radio programmes. Their various patterns of colloquial variable realisation, linked as they are to locally salient language ideologies, thus demonstrate the implications of minute choices made in mediated linguistic performances of Arabic even beyond the oft-considered diglossic binary.

From these findings, one might conclude that broadcast talk on Jordanian non-government radio merely reflects how broadcasters would speak naturally in everyday conversation. Hence, it could be argued that native speakers of Ammani dialect are privileged in their access to broadcaster roles, or that male speakers will always perform linguistic tokens linked with Jordanian origin more naturally than female speakers.

But this conclusion ignores the inherently constructed nature of linguistic performance. It imposes an unwarranted second-order indexicality on the linguistic material considered – essentialising, in a sense, regularities of use as ultimately defining a given speaker, rather than being accretions of context-dependent indexical invocations of identity categories.⁶⁹ On the contrary, the use of ideologically marked sociolinguistic variables need not always be regularised or stereotypical; it can also be creative and

⁶⁹ Silverstein, “Indexical Order,” 201-3; Agha, “Voice,” 47-9, 51-5.

interactionally contingent. Such more evanescent instances of language use are the focus of the final section of this chapter.

4.3 Contingent indexical invocations of identity

The habitual linguistic performance of the four broadcasters analysed above aligns broadly with ideologies of variable use associated with certain identity categories. Such ideologies, however, enter into radio language in a very particular manner: they are invoked, indexically, with the performance of each discrete linguistic token in turn. While these invocations may display regularities correlating with certain stereotypes of speech – language spoken, for example, by individuals belonging to different categories of identity such as gender and geographic origin – they can also be reframed or challenged by broadcasters and other participants in on-air talk, or otherwise used creatively in ongoing interaction.

Mary Bucholtz and Kira Hall's framework for language-based approaches to identity includes a discussion of different indexical mechanisms through which "identity is discursively produced."⁷⁰ The "use of linguistic structures and systems that are ideologically associated with specific personas or groups" is one such process, accomplished via the "accretion" or habitual usage of such structures and systems – for example, the regularised use of

⁷⁰ Bucholtz and Hall, "Identity," 594.

variants of sociolinguistic variables patterned according to identity categories, as with the Jordanian radio hosts considered above.⁷¹

There are, however, other identity-indexical mechanisms as well, not necessarily linked to repeated invocation of linguistic stereotypes. The “overt introduction of referential identity categories into discourse” – that is, explicitly labelling a speaker as belonging to this or that identity category – is the most direct possibility.⁷² Others include *implicature*, in which language is used indirectly to invoke identity affiliation in a way that requires some sort of additional inference or specialised knowledge on part of the addressee; and conveying identity via *stance*, or the “display of evaluative, affective, and epistemic orientations in discourse” – which positions speakers and others as “particular kinds of people,” and can further “build up into larger identity categories.”⁷³

These processes are not necessarily regularised or habitual. Rather, since they are invoked contingently in moments of interaction, they may be used in ways that creatively reframe or even contradict stereotypes of regularised use. It must also be noted that such indexical mechanisms are not limited to sociolinguistic variables located in speech alone; they can also utilise other forms of semiosis, including non-sonic channels such as gesture, dress, and bodily comportment.⁷⁴ Still, insofar as indexical mechanisms are derived from variability in *spoken* language, they function perfectly well without

⁷¹ Bucholtz and Hall, “Identity,” 594; 596-7.

⁷² Bucholtz and Hall, “Identity,” 594.

⁷³ Bucholtz and Hall, “Identity,” 595.

⁷⁴ Eckert, “Variation,” 456; Eckert, “Three Waves,” 97.

reference to such channels – in accordance, also, with the status of radio as a media form limited to sound alone.

I now proceed to discuss three cases of spoken discourse that exhibit these mechanisms, excerpted and transcribed from my recordings of Jordanian radio broadcasts. The first case involves one broadcaster's metalinguistic diagnosis of language use by a caller; the second an ironic transformation of a rural-marked pronunciation into an urban-marked one, functioning as a commentary on the broadcaster's origin and social status; and the third a female broadcaster's use of a phonetic variant normally associated with male speech as an index of heightened patriotism. In these cases, creative indexical use of language allows particular kinds of claims to be made about publics and participants in radio language, even beyond the habitual norms of 'everyday' language performance.

4.3.1 "Are you from Tafileh?"

The first excerpt comes from an episode of the *Wasaṭ al-Balad* morning programme on Radio Fann, hosted by Hani al-Badri. *Wasaṭ al-Balad* belongs to the genre of morning 'service programmes' (*barāmiḡ ḡadamātiyya*), a major component of which involves call-ins and digital messages through which listeners impart various personal problems. The 'service' provided is that of broadcasters and other radio personnel contacting relevant officials in order to solve these problems, or pass on citizens' comments or complaints.

On the 20 April, 2014 episode of the programme, a listener identified as Hisham⁷⁵ called in regarding his visit earlier that morning to the Bayader General Security station in West Amman. He had arrived at 8 AM in order to arrange “insurance for [his] domestic servant” (*ta'mīn 'alā kādīmī*). The offices in the building appeared to be closed, however, and he had to return later when the relevant employees were actually present.

On service programmes, after a caller finishes their complaint, the customary response on part of the host is to acknowledge that it will be passed on to the relevant authorities, or occasionally name the official the programme was going to contact. In Hisham's case, however, al-Badri forewent any such acknowledgment. Rather, he launched immediately into a metalinguistic evaluation of Hisham's speech, diagnosing his geographic origin to be in Tafileh, a town and governorate in central Jordan south of Amman:

[RR008]: [1:24:37]

H: *fa-waḷḷā ḥābbīn min kīlāk niḥkī el-mulāḥaḍa sayyedī*

HB: *hišām inta ṭafīlī*

H: *eyy na'am*

HB: *kīf 'arift anā*

H: *ā- waḷḷa same'tā*

HB: [((laughter))]

H: [((laughter))]

HB: *el- ((uh)) el- el- ((uh)) el-lahdže l-məḥabbabe lle*

H: [((unclear))]

⁷⁵ All personal names of callers mentioned in this and subsequent chapters are pseudonyms.

HB: [*bi-nihāy-*] *el-*
aḷḷā yaḥallīk
bi-nihāyet et-tā' 'indkum ī

H: ((laughter))

HB: ((laughter))
šukran ya hišām [*taḥiyātī mustamirrīn ma'akum*]

H: [*šukran šukran ilek doktōr*] *waḷḷa-*

HB: *wa-l-mulāḥaḍa btūṣal le-l-iḳwān*
[*fī l-amn el-'ām*]

H: [*šukran doktōr ilek*]

[RR008]: [1:24:37]

H: And we really wanted to say this comment through you, sir

HB: Hisham – are you from Tafileh?

H: Ah – yes

HB: How did I know?

H: Yes – well, you heard it

HB: [((laughter))]

H: [((laughter))]

HB: The, um, the, the adorable dialect which –

H: [((unclear))]

HB: [At the end –] The –

God keep you

You have an “i” at the end of the *tā'*

H: ((laughter))

HB: ((laughter))

Thank you Hisham, [greetings, we're continuing with you]

H: [Thank you, thank you, Doctor –] really –
HB: And the comment will reach (our) brothers
[At General Security]
H: [Thank you Doctor]⁷⁶

Note that al-Badri's evaluation here is entirely language-based. He makes, first, an explicit reference to a feature of the Tafileh dialect – namely, the tendency to pronounce a high front vowel (-i) in certain final syllables. Moreover, in this particular conversation segment, there appears to be no evidence *other than* Hisham's linguistic performance that would allow al-Badri to conclude his caller is indeed "from Tafileh." The caller never states his origin directly, and the issue he describes suggests he is resident in Amman. Nevertheless, in the communicative setting of live talk radio, al-Badri is able to produce a correct linguistic diagnosis of origin based on sound, on spoken language, alone.

But this interaction also exposes how an identity category can be invoked overtly in linguistic performance. The meaning of the final -i may be stereotyped in the sense that al-Badri frames it as a characteristic of the speech style of 'people from Tafileh.' But simultaneously, its invocation singles out only one meaning among the many available in the various indexical "fields" that an evaluation of Hisham's speech could potentially activate.⁷⁷ This makes Hisham's language use itself into something worthy of note, a

⁷⁶ "Wasat al-balad, 20 April 2014," *Wasat al-balad* (Amman: Radio Fann, April 20, 2014), [RR008], author's archive, 1:24:37-1:24:58.

⁷⁷ Eckert, "Variation," 455-7, 463-5.

meaningful performance with implications linked to broader ideologies of identity. Moreover, it foregrounds one particular aspect of his identity, by framing him as a ‘person from Tafileh’ in particular – not simply a ‘Jordanian,’ or ‘male speaker,’ or ‘citizen with a problem,’ or ‘member of the upper / upper middle class who can afford to employ a domestic servant,’ which would all be alternative and equally valid evaluations following from his call. al-Badri’s framing, in other words, extracts one particular linguistic variable for the purposes of an act of labelling – an explicit categorisation that functions as a partial identity index.

Such indexical use, further, allows al-Badri to make particular claims about the context of the call – specifically, about the nature of participants in the ongoing on-air interaction, and the kind of public that is privy to it. The caller is identified as an ethnic Jordanian with discernibly local roots, an origin which in Jordanian public discourse is generally evaluated positively. Indeed, al-Wer has identified this as one factor contributing to the spread of linguistic features identified as Jordanian or Bedouin among male speakers in Amman – a favouring of Jordanian or ‘East Banker’ identities, to the exclusion of others, in particular Palestinians.⁷⁸ al-Badri shares this evaluation, as indicated by his characterisation of the Tafileh dialect as “lovable” or “adorable” (*məḥabbabe*). While Hisham’s immediate response to this description is not quite clear on the recording, in his next turn al-Badri responds to it with “God keep you” (*allā yəḵallīk*), a standard formula in sequences of compliments, thanks, and

⁷⁸ al-Wer, “Formation,” 60-2; Massad, *Colonial Effects*, 100-162, 222-275.

greetings – suggesting that, at least at the interactional level, the caller understands it as a compliment.

Simultaneously, however, his identification of the caller's dialect also allows al-Badri to present himself as a person qualified to make linguistically evaluative claims in the first place. He has sufficient knowledge of local Jordanian dialects to identify fine phonetic differences as indices of his interlocutor's ethnic origin; he is, in other words, an adept speaker, fully justified to hold a position as a purveyor of 'spontaneous' radio talk. Both caller and host, then, have their legitimacy as on-air participants amplified through this linguistic evaluation: the caller as a proper Jordanian of local (East Bank) origin deserving of the broadcaster's attention and assistance, and the host as a skilled language user deserving of his talk-heavy position behind the microphone.

But the locality diagnosis also implies specific ideas about the programme's audience. Recall that any 'spontaneous' performance of radio talk imitates everyday speech only with reference to an audience of overhearing listeners.⁷⁹ al-Badri's evaluation is, then, aimed at a particular kind of listener that recognises details of geographic origin as a relevant feature of identity to be brought up in broadcast talk. Not every Jordanian listener may be able to recognise a Tafleleh accent – which is why al-Badri is able to use his diagnosis as an assertion of linguistic expertise in the first place. Still, through this very diagnosis, al-Badri's listeners are addressed as a public for whom knowledge of local origin – and, in particular, origin in a specific area of Jordan

⁷⁹ Hutchby, *Media Talk*, 14.

that may well be unfamiliar to outsiders – is a pertinent factor. Authenticity, specifically an East Bank / Jordanian linguistic authenticity, emerges as a common locus for Jordanian “insiders” which include the broadcaster, the caller, and the broadcast’s assumed audience or public.⁸⁰

In this exchange, a metalinguistic reflection on a phonetic quirk thus also invokes broader ideas about the nature of participants in radio talk: the Jordanian origins of the caller, the colloquial linguistic expertise of the broadcaster, and the assumed relevance of intra-Jordanian origins for an overhearing audience. Overt mention of identity categories can thus contribute to the ongoing construction of participant structures and publics in mediated linguistic performance.

4.3.2 ča‘āčīl and ka‘ākīl

The second excerpt is taken from the 26 November, 2014 episode of *Rainbow*, an afternoon call-in programme on the community radio station Radio al-Balad. *Rainbow* normally features a range of callers, most of them regulars, putting forward their opinions on the topic of the day set by the host, Muhammad al-Irsan. Topics touching on controversial political, economic, and social affairs are the norm. The 26 November episode of *Rainbow*, however, had a somewhat lighter tone, with callers who would normally discuss their views on the financial woes of fuel costs, arrests of activists on trumped-up

⁸⁰ Sabina Perrino, “Performing Extracomunitari: Mocking Migrants in Veneto Barzellette,” *Language in Society* 44, no. 2 (2015), 143.

terrorism charges, or violence against women rather talking about the kinds of food and entertainment appropriate for periods of cold and rainy weather during winter.

For the duration of the episode, al-Irsan was joined in the studio by Roz Naser, a newsreader on Radio al-Balad, as a temporary co-host. After four callers and a short phone conversation with the Minister of Energy talking about Jordan's power generation capabilities in winter, al-Irsan and Naser took a call from Ammar, a regular caller, hailing from a town in Irbid Governorate in the north of Jordan. Ammar mentioned a local dish, *ča'āčīl* – a type of egg-and-vegetable dumpling cooked in yoghurt – as something he would traditionally eat in winter. However, he then immediately proceeded to make a joke based on the pronunciation of the dish aimed at al-Irsan:

[RR017]: [29:23]

A: *fa m-el-yowm eṣ-ṣubəḥ bagēt tǧūl ča'āčīl*

((uh)) *ʔle'nā* [*'ala 'ammān 'a- 'a-*]

RN: [*āā ča'āčīl hāy*] [*el-akle*]

MI: [((laughter))]

RN: [*el-bedawiyye ya'nī*]

A: [*ā ā na-*]

((uh)) *stāḡ l-əmḥammad*

MI: *ā*

A: *ʔla'ət* ((uh)) *ʔla'ət 'a-r-rābi'a w-'a-l-'abdālī ṣərt tǧūl ka'ākīl*

MI: ((laughter)) *anā* [((laughter))]

RN: [((laughter))]

A: [((laughter))]

MI: *anā agūl ka'ākīl* ((laughter))

[RR017]: [29:23]

A: So from this morning you've been saying *ča'āčīl*

((uh)) If we went up [to Amman, uh –]

RN: [Oh, *ča'āčīl*, this] [dish –]

MI: [((laughter))]

RN: [Bedouin (dish)]

A: [Yes, yes –]

((uh)) Muhammad, sir

MI: Yes

A: If you go to – ((uh)) if you go to al-Rabiah and Abdali, you start saying *ka'ākīl*

MI: ((laughter)) Do I – [((laughter))]

RN: [((laughter))]

A: [((laughter))]

MI: Do I say *ka'ākīl*? ((laughter))⁸¹

In mentioning the dish, Ammar draws an explicit contrast between two variants of the phonological variable (k), [k] and [tʃ]. The velar stop [k] is the Standard Arabic, Ammani, and prestige urban Levantine form, and also the variant habitually used by all radio presenters in Jordan, al-Irsan included. By contrast, the affricate [tʃ] (č) is a colloquial variant marked as both rural and

⁸¹ "Rainbow, 26 November 2014," *Rainbow* (Amman: Radio al-Balad, November 26, 2014), [RR017], author's archive, 29:23-29:40.

Bedouin, but relatively more stigmatised than other equally Bedouin features, such as the [g] variant of (q) valorised in male speech.⁸² Ammar claims that al-Irsan, although himself originally from Irbid in Northern Jordan where the [tʃ] pronunciation is prominent, would use the prestige urban form [k] when pronouncing the name of the dish, calling it *ka'ākīl* – just as people would do, presumably, in al-Rabiah and Abdali, two well-off areas of West Amman. The *ka'ākīl* pronunciation would therefore index al-Irsan strongly as a would-be Ammani urbanite, in an attempt to hide the Bedouin, rural, and ultimately non-urban implications of [tʃ].

The exchange engendered ample laughter on part of all three participants, as evident from the final four turns in the transcript. The humour hinges on the fact, obvious to the participants, that pronouncing the name of the dish as *ka'ākīl* is an *exaggeration* of urban refinement: it would, namely, involve sanitising the rural pronunciation of (k) in a word that is normally pronounced with [tʃ] by *all* Jordanians, even those of non-rural origins. The reason for this is lexical conditioning. *ka'ākīl* belongs to a category of vocabulary defined by Abd-el-Jawad and Suleiman as “used to refer to a domestic, local concept or activity.”⁸³ According to principles of lexical conditioning identified by these authors as prevalent in spoken Arabic in Jordan, when (k) appears in such words, it should always be realised with the

⁸² Heikki Palva, “Sedentary and Bedouin Dialects in Contact: Remarks on Karaki and Salti (Jordan),” *Journal of Arabic and Islamic Studies* 8 (December 2008), 66.

⁸³ Abd-el-Jawad and Suleiman, “Lexical Conditioning,” 304.

rural variant [tʃ], rather than the standard [k] – regardless of interactional context or other considerations.⁸⁴

In the *Rainbow* exchange, this norm was evidently broken – though not in the form of actual habitual linguistic performance on part of the broadcaster. Rather, Ammar’s remarks on *ka’ākīl* functioned as a contingent indexical evaluation, a humorous way of invoking identity categories of refinement and urbanity using an ideologically marked sociolinguistic variable.

By contrast with al-Badri’s explicit invocation of the Tafileh dialect, Ammar’s joke and al-Irsan’s response made identity categories relevant through *implicature* – an indexical process whereby the identity-linked use of a linguistic token requires “additional inferential work for interpretation.”⁸⁵ The thrust of the joke would not be comprehensible to an audience that was not already familiar with the local salience of the [tʃ] / [k] contrast, and its import for al-Irsan as a crypto-Irbidi in particular. It thus, once again, addresses a distinctly local Jordanian public – though likely also one familiar with details about al-Irsan’s origin, perhaps a more limited public of regular listeners to the *Rainbow* programme.

Ammar continued his language-focused evaluations even beyond the *ka’ākīl* exchange included in the transcript, voicing supposed Abdalites’ use of English with an exaggerated imitation of a Jordanian speaker’s English accent – to which al-Irsan responded, in turn, by humorously asking Ammar whether

⁸⁴ Abd-el-Jawad and Suleiman, “Lexical Conditioning,” 304.

⁸⁵ Bucholtz and Hall, “Identity,” 595.

he wears an animal pelt (*farwa*) to keep himself warm in winter.⁸⁶ This only further developed stereotypes of the urban-rural opposition, with implications not just for speaker origin but also relative hierarchies of prestige, affluence, and social class. The initial [t] / [k] distinction, in this case, functioned as a contingent indexical invocation, as the *ka'ākīl* token brought the two possible pronunciations of (k) into explicit contrast within a single conversational exchange. In invoking broader identity values, however, it also carried implications for the participant structure of the communicative context of Jordanian radio: it exposed, in a creative manner, the hierarchical nature of the norm of urban speech as legitimate for a person in the role of broadcaster – i.e., al-Irsan.

The *ča'āčīl* / *ka'ākīl* exchange, then, provides an example of using a fine phonetic contrast to invoke specific identity categories via the indexical mechanism of implicature. It addresses a public sensitive enough both to local linguistic ideologies and details of broadcaster biography to appreciate al-Irsan's anxieties as a supposed *ka'ākīl* speaker; and it exposes, and satirises, the host's supposed unwillingness to use the stigmatised – though more normative, according to principles of lexical conditioning – form in favour of a variant associated with higher-class urban speakers. Although less explicitly metalinguistic than the Tafileh example, Ammar's joke and al-Irsan's subsequent elocutionary anxiety demonstrate precisely the same tendency for creative – rather than habitual or normative – invocation of linguistic ideologies.

⁸⁶ "Rainbow, 26 November 2014," 29:40-30:30.

4.3.3 [g] as an index of patriotism

My final example of creative on-air indexicality is drawn from the day-long programme *Şawtunā wāḥid* (“Our Voice Is One”), run by a number of non-government radio stations on 5 February 2015 in honour of the Jordanian pilot Muath al-Kasasbeh, who had recently been executed by the Islamic State (IS) in Syria. As detailed in Chapter 3, each running hour of this programme was co-hosted by two or more broadcasters from different radio stations, in an iconic performance of Jordanian unity through the unification of radio broadcasts.

Here, I return to the previously discussed *Şawtunā wāḥid* excerpt, in which Radio Hala’s Randa Karadsheh and Sameer Masarweh from University of Jordan Radio performed Jordanian patriotism in an especially pointed manner. After mentioning a statement from “a military source” announcing that Jordan’s air force had begun air strikes on IS positions in Syria, both Masarweh and Karadsheh launched into an enthusiastic round of praise for the Jordanian army’s activities:

[MR012]: [05:00]

SM: *al-ān aṭ-ṭā’irāt al-urduniyye taqṣif*
ma’āqil wa-mawāqī’ hā’ulā’i l-džirdān fī awdžārihā
iḍan šey’ yab’aṭ ‘ala l-ḥamās
yā rētnī ṭayyār

RK: *‘ademnā gāsī yā*
samīr

SM: *yā rētnī ṭayyār*

[05:17]

RK: *iḥna ayḍan ra'eynā ((uh)) maẓmū'a min aṭ-ṭā'irāt el-ḥarbiyya
allatī ḥallaqat ((uh)) fawq el-kerak
fawq beldet 'ayy
li-tuḥayyi ahl aš-šahīd al-kasāsbe
li-tuḥayyi ẓalālet sayyidnā bi-hāda l-wuḏūd*

SM: [*na'am*]

RK: [((uh))] *wa-hāda el- el- el- el-
intiṣār illi ['imlū]*

SM: [*na'am*]

RK: *ba'd mā ḍarabū ṭil'ū **fōg** 'ayy*

[MR012]: [05:00]

SM: Jordanian aircraft are now bombing
The sites and positions of these rats, in their dens
Something that inspires enthusiasm
If only I was a pilot

RK: Our absence is difficult –
Sameer

SM: If only I was a pilot

[05:17]

RK: We have also seen a group of military aircraft
That had flown over Kerak
Over the town of Ayy
To salute the family of the martyr al-Kasasbeh
To salute Our Majesty (the King) with this presence

SM: [Yes]

RK: [((uh))] And this –

Victory which [they have accomplished]

SM: [Yes]

RK: After they'd hit they rose up over Ayy⁸⁷

In this excerpt, Karadsheh uses the [g] realisation of the (q) variable in two lexical items: *gāsī* “hard, difficult” and *fōg* “above.” The [g] variant contrasts with Karadsheh’s habitual on-air performance in her weekday afternoon programme on Radio Hala – where she, in line with most female broadcasters, uses [ʔ] as the colloquial variant of (q).⁸⁸ It also contrasts, however, with her own performance and that of other female hosts during the rest of *Şawtunā wāḥid*. Karadsheh breaks the norm of [ʔ] for female speech in this particular segment only, suggesting the switch is somehow linked to its particular sequential context – namely, the news of the Jordanian air force’s bombing of IS sites in Syria, as vengeance for al-Kasasbeh’s execution, and their subsequent “salute” (honouring) of the martyred pilot’s family by flying over his home town of Ayy.

[g], as discussed above, carries various identity-categorical implications when used in colloquial language in Jordan. It is associated with masculine speech, as well as rural Jordanian and Bedouin varieties. But in this excerpt,

⁸⁷ “Şawtunā wāḥid” (Amman: Radio Hala, February 5, 2015), [MR012], author’s archive, 05:00-05:14, 05:17-05:35.

⁸⁸ “Ḳallīk zayn; Yā halā, 2 December 2014,” *Ḳallīk zayn; Yā halā* (Amman: Radio Hala, December 2, 2014), [RR033], author’s archive.

it does not simply reflect some stable stereotype of speaker identity. Rather, Karadsheh's use of [g] is a contingent indexical invocation of the ideological values associated with the variant. She performs what Erving Goffman would term a switch in "footing" – "an alteration in the social capacities in which the persons present claim to be active" – emphasising an identity-value particularly salient to the immediate communicative context.⁸⁹

Here, [g] functions as a strong index of *Jordanian* identity – but only due to the structural contrast with its expected alternative, [ʔ], which unlike [g] is widespread among prestige varieties of colloquial Arabic elsewhere in the Levant as well. This makes [g] a useful resource to amplify the expression of militant patriotic enthusiasm performed by Karadsheh following the announcement of air strikes against Jordan's enemies in Syria. Additionally, [g]'s association with male speech also allows her to make at least a partial claim to masculine values – in particular, the kind of aggressive, loyal patriotism at stake in a vengeful response to al-Kasasbeh's death, consistent with the tight relationship between masculinity, militancy, and nationalism in Jordanian national identity discourses.⁹⁰ In this way, she is able to at least temporarily challenge the potential associations of female speech with non-Jordanian identity that inhere in the closeness of feminine realisations, such as [ʔ], to urban Levantine varieties not explicitly marked as Jordanian.

Karadsheh's responses – especially "our absence [from the air strikes] is difficult" (*'ademnā gāsī*), and the reference to "victory" (*intiṣār*) effected by

⁸⁹ Goffman, *Forms*, 126.

⁹⁰ Massad, *Colonial Effects*, 100-162, 207-10, 217-21, 251-3.

the Air Force – would, presumably, index such enthusiasm even in the absence of any [g] tokens. Note that the co-host, Masarweh, never himself uses the [g] version of (q) in the excerpt quoted, despite his possibly greater legitimacy to do so as an identifiably male speaker. For Masarweh, however, this would be a less expressive and meaningful move than for Karadsheh – whose [g] is striking precisely *because* it contrasts with her normal usage of [ʔ] for (q). The very potency of using [g] depends on the background assumption that [ʔ] is the norm for female presenters. This ultimately preserves the ambiguous position of female speakers with regard to national belonging: Karadsheh needs to actively perform a departure from the norm in order to assert her Jordanian-ness, whereas Masarweh is presumably secure enough in his linguistic masculinity to not need to do so.

Karadsheh's use of [g] here is thus less an expression of belonging to an identity category via habitual usage than a momentary, contingent affiliation with certain values associated with such categories. It can, in this sense, be interpreted as taking an affective *stance* – an affective evaluation of, or commitment to, ongoing talk – towards the news of the air strikes.⁹¹ In frameworks of stance used by authors such as Alexandra Jaffe and John Du Bois, the air strike news plays the role of the *stance object* – the entity *towards which* an evaluation is being performed by the broadcaster, as two of the three

⁹¹ Bucholtz and Hall, "Identity," 595-6; Du Bois, "Stance Triangle," 143-4.

main elements of the “stance triangle” (with the third being the interlocutor, or audience).⁹²

Most analyses of stance in linguistic anthropology and sociolinguistics focus on specialised morphosyntactic mechanisms – such as evidentials and modals – that encode speakers’ attitudes towards their own speech.⁹³ Once full appreciation is given to the ideological mediation of language, however, there is no reason to suppose that finer distinctions could not serve as stance-encoding tools as well – including phonological contrasts with differing indexical meanings, such as using [g] instead of [ʔ].⁹⁴

Given [g]’s status as both a “Jordanian” and “masculine” identity index, the stance Karadsheh performs by using it is clearly supportive. It aligns her with both the regime (“Jordanian”) and militant (gendered “masculine”) positions regarding military intervention. This stance was, further, indexed by non-linguistic semiotic elements as well: a clip published on YouTube, featuring video material recorded inside the studio during *Şawtunā wāḥid*, shows both Masarweh and Karadsheh smiling and raising their arms in the air in a gesture of triumph as Masarweh reads the news about the airstrikes.⁹⁵

⁹² Alexandra Jaffe, “Staging Language on Corsica: Stance, Improvisation, Play, and Heteroglossia,” *Language in Society* 44, no. 2 (2015), 162-3; Du Bois, “Stance Triangle,” 163.

⁹³ Paul Kockelman, “Stance and Subjectivity,” *Journal of Linguistic Anthropology* 14, no. 2 (2004): 127–50; Michael Lempert, “The Poetics of Stance: Text-Metricity, Epistemicity, Interaction,” *Language in Society* 37 (2008): 569–92.

⁹⁴ Bucholtz and Hall, “Identity,” 595; Alexandra Jaffe, “The Sociolinguistics of Stance,” in *Stance: Sociolinguistic Perspectives* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009), 17.

⁹⁵ MazajFM, “Mubādarat al-iḍā’āt al-urduniyya #şawtunā_wāḥid wafā’an li-l-šahīd al-ṭayyār #al-baṭal_mu’ād_al-kasāsiba,” YouTube, (February 16, 2015),

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=q0UYiOeuLIE> [accessed 3 November 2015].

In Du Bois's and Jaffe's work on stance, a crucial role is also assigned to interlocutors, or audiences, to whom any stance-focused performance "ascribes or attributes paired or complementary stances" by default.⁹⁶ Audiences may, of course, seek to challenge the performer's evaluation of a stance object in a particular way; however, the extent to which they are actually able to do so during the performance itself can vary, according to the specific participatory dynamics of the performance context.

In the radio broadcast context under discussion, Karadsheh holds a position of relative authority with regard to other participants simply by virtue of her very position as broadcaster. As media studies scholars such as Scannell and Hutchby have argued, the role of broadcaster in a mass medium such as radio stands for institutional authority in a symbolic and metonymical sense, but is also reinforced through fine structures of turn-taking and asymmetries in available interactional resources between hosts and other participants.⁹⁷ In this segment in particular, Karadsheh and Masarweh fully monopolise the semiotic channel of communication – implying *their* particular evaluation of the Air Force's activities is legitimate above all others. The audience may be an implicitly acknowledged participant in the talk; but due to the absence of non-broadcaster voices in the immediate discursive context, it is unable to challenge or give feedback on the stance that Karadsheh projects.⁹⁸ Further, even if it did so, this would only distance it from

⁹⁶ Jaffe, "Staging," 164; Du Bois, "Stance Triangle," 163.

⁹⁷ Scannell, "Introduction," 3; Ian Hutchby, *Confrontation Talk: Arguments, Asymmetries, and Power on Talk Radio* (Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, 1996), 32-108.

⁹⁸ Goffman, *Forms*, 138.

Karadsheh's evaluation of the relevant stance object, and thus exclude it from the group of patriotic Jordanians enthusiastic about the air strikes, which includes both Karadsheh and her ideal interlocutors "interpellated" by the stance triangle.⁹⁹ Karadsheh's stance is, therefore, imbued with a particular kind of interactional authority – legitimising both her own affective evaluation of the air strikes, as well as addressing a public that shares, or at least accepts, such an evaluation.

The performance of [g] by Karadsheh in this *Şawṭunā wāḥid* segment is thus a stance-taking move indexing particular socio-cultural values: a distinct Jordanian-ness, and by extension patriotism, along with a partial claim to military-linked strength and aggression stemming from [g]'s association with a masculine identity categorisation. These values are, further, invoked as part of a model reaction to air strikes conducted by the Jordanian army against the IS in Syria – which Karadsheh is uniquely authorised to perform in her broadcaster role.

Such nuances would remain invisible in an analysis that focused solely on the diglossic pole of linguistic differentiation. Both [g] and [ʔ] are 'Colloquial' versions of the variable (q) – yet nevertheless carry strikingly different ideological associations. Similarly, a frequency-based examination of sociolinguistic variation, even if it was sensitive to the [g]/[ʔ] contrast, would likely discard Karadsheh's temporary use of [g] as a mere statistical anomaly. By contrast, such departures from habitual language use, as they invoke

⁹⁹ Jaffe, "Staging," 163.

particular indexical meanings, can be highly relevant for structuring model images of the audiences and participants of linguistic performance.

#

This chapter began with considering the principles of producing 'everyday' spoken language in radio-mediated contexts, as well as the resources available to Jordanian speakers of Arabic to produce such language. As evident from the frequency analysis of the language of four morning programme broadcasters, habitual language use on Jordanian non-government radio involves variation not only on the diglossic continuum, but *within* Colloquial Arabic as well. The choices made by Jordanian broadcasters mostly reflect the features of Arabic spoken in contemporary Amman, presuming a public for which Ammani Arabic *is* 'everyday' spoken Arabic. While other audiences are not explicitly excluded, they are nevertheless placed in a different relationship with the programmes than listeners for whom the broadcast language is one they might use spontaneously in everyday, face-to-face situations.

These choices in colloquial language, however, also indexically invoke identity categories and reinforce stereotypes of gender- and origin-linked forms of speech. This may be especially precarious for female broadcasters: their Jordanian-ness is inherently compromised, since certain highly visible linguistic forms linked to female speech in Ammani Arabic are closer to Levantine urban norms than those that are distinctly Jordanian. There is still

some scope for distinction, as demonstrated by the distinctions between Rose al-Soqi and Jessy Abu Faisal in terms of lexical conditioning and the use of *-kum / -kun*. Nevertheless, the ambiguity remains insofar as female-linked realisations, such as [ʔ] and [ʒ], are relatively closer to pan-Levantine urban norms than to realisations understood in local ideologies as more distinctly Jordanian within the Levantine dialect area, such as [g] and [dʒ].

But if these associations are indexical, there is also scope for challenging them. This chapter has also examined three cases of linguistic performance in which identity categories were not merely habitual reflections of stable stereotypes, but were rather invoked in a creative and contingent manner. Hani al-Badri's linguistic diagnosis of a caller's geographic origin demonstrates how the overt mention of an identity category legitimises the caller as a native Jordanian and the broadcaster as a linguistic "expert," while simultaneously addressing a public for which the issue of geographic origin is significant in the first place. Joking about Muhammad al-Irsan's supposed phonologically prestigious pronunciation in the case of *ka'ākīl* carries implicatures of class and geographic origin, invokes a public sensitive both to phonetic contrasts and details of the broadcaster's biography, and exposes the asymmetries latent in the norms of prestige speech upheld by radio broadcasters. Karadsheh's switch to [g], finally, utilises identity categories linked to sociolinguistic variables to display a particular stance towards retaliatory strikes by the Jordanian air force, uniquely legitimised by the institutionalised authority of the broadcaster role and implying inclusion only of those audiences who share her patriotic, nationalist evaluation.

These features of publics and participant roles all hinge on contingently invoked indexical meanings of linguistic tokens – meanings that classic variationist sociolinguistics, concerned with frequencies and statistical generalisations alone, cannot necessarily uncover. This reaffirms the need for close interpretive study of actual events of language use in order to understand the full implications of language use in the mass media.

The question is not just one of examining linguistic variability for its own sake. Rather, this very variability invokes particular ideological meanings through its association with identity categories – and thus carries implications for *who* is included and excluded in the public of the mediated performance, *who* can legitimately perform as a participant (e.g., a broadcaster) in mediated interaction. This is an aspect of mediated communication that scholars of Arabic-language media have only recently begun to recognise.¹⁰⁰ It is, however, of crucial importance when considering the role and import of such media in broader social, cultural, and political processes – as structures of public addressivity and participant roles are the primary ways in which mediated interaction makes links beyond the context of this interaction itself.¹⁰¹

Finally, as this chapter has demonstrated, both habitual and contingent invocations of language ideologies can be strategic on part of speakers. They can produce, for example, a particular kind of ‘everyday’ language through habitual invocations, or through foregrounding or challenging linguistic

¹⁰⁰ Achour Kallel, “Choix,” 81-3, 90-3; Hachimi, “Maghreb-Mashreq Language Ideology,” 270-1, 289-91; Schulties, “Do You Speak Arabic?,” 62-3, 69-70.

¹⁰¹ Agha, “Recombinant Selves,” 325-7; Agha, “Meet Mediatization,” 164-5.

stereotypes with contingent ones. A tension remains, however, between indexical moves which accord with – indeed, reproduce – prevalent stereotypes of language and identity, and those that might be seen to challenge them: the habitual yet patriotically ambiguous use of [ʔ] for (q) by female speakers of Ammani Arabic, for instance, versus the use of [g] by Randa Karadsheh to perform an explicitly patriotic stance.

Further, there are issues related to the talk radio context in particular. To what extent are participants in radio programmes able to mount challenges to habitual linguistic stereotypes, while still retaining the illusion of authentic, everyday ‘spontaneity’ enjoined by the setting of talk radio shows? The strategies suggested by the present research include overt mention of identity categories, implicature, and stance-taking. Following the work of Bucholtz and Hall on indexical invocations of identity, these recall strategic and subversive indexical language use in other contexts – such as contingent assignments of gender by individuals belonging to the transgender category of *hijra* in India in challenging normative gender presuppositions, or the appropriation of African American Vernacular English (AAVE) by Korean-American men in attempts to subvert prevalent ideologies of whiteness.¹⁰²

But in the talk radio context, where unmarked ‘everyday’ language is the tacit background norm of communication, any departures from it will *of necessity* be out of place, inherently delegitimised by their very status as departures from what is tacitly understood to be normal, spontaneous

¹⁰² Bucholtz and Hall, “Identity,” 589-91; Hall and O’Donovan, “Shifting Gender Positions,” 231-58; Chun, “Construction,” 55-60.

language use. While it is important to recognise that challenges are possible, we must therefore be wary of assigning them too much subversive potential. Stereotypes of inequality inevitably lurk in the background, as long as the understanding that radio language is merely a reflection of everyday face-to-face conversation remains unchallenged.

Still, it is important to recognise that challenges are possible. Variation in habitual language use does not merely lock radio broadcasters into regurgitating existing social and cultural stereotypes. While such stereotypes are present and relevant – and the habits of the broadcasters examined in this chapter attest to this fact, insofar as gender and ethnicity-linked stereotypes are concerned – more creative indexical invocations are possible as well. Hopefully this chapter will stimulate further discussion regarding such invocations, beyond the well-worn lines of diglossic and dialectal variation examined in Arabic sociolinguistics.

Both habitual and non-habitual linguistic variation is an important site for the performance of linguistic ideologies, and invoking the social and cultural values connected with such ideologies. Such values can “accrete” to produce persistent categorical identity stereotypes connected with features of speech, and delineate legitimate audiences as well as police participation in linguistic communication itself.¹⁰³ But when examining language in public settings, where specific individuals are often given more room to speak than others, it is not just habitual, generalised stereotypes that are at stake. Language variation can also produce effects linked more tightly to specific *individuals*:

¹⁰³ Bucholtz and Hall, “Identity,” 596; Goffman, *Forms*, 147-50.

styles of speech can come to stand for personality traits, aspects of an individual's social position and biography, and other features that coalesce into a distinct public character or persona. In the next chapter, I examine such characterological structures as they appear on Jordanian non-government radio today, and the specific consequences of such structures for the ways broadcasters address their publics and format participation in radio programmes.

#

5. Broadcaster Persona on Morning Service Programmes

Sociolinguistics has long recognised the correlations between variations in language use and membership in social categories. In the view of contemporary linguistic anthropologists, such correlations are built up through patterns of language use that invoke particular identity categories, such as gender or geographic origin, as stereotypes of particular kinds of language users. But indexical links do not necessarily have to invoke *categorical* membership in order to be meaningful for linguistic analysis. In the context of mass media in particular, where language use is focused on highly visible individuals such as actors and talk show hosts, indexical effects can be much more idiosyncratic, in the sense that they imply unique features and personalities for *individual speakers* rather than categories of people.

Linguistic anthropology has not traditionally been very strong in recognising the mechanisms and implications of such idiosyncrasies. The same is true for studies of Arabic linguistic variation. On the rare occasions when individual speaker features are brought into the spotlight, such as Holes's examination of Nasser's political speeches, the ultimate goal is nevertheless to draw taxonomic conclusions regarding more generalisable features of language use – namely, looking at (for instance) Nasser's usage strategies as an example of the significance of different Arabic linguistic resources for Arabic speakers more broadly, rather than how these resources are used in constructing 'Nasser' himself as a persona through speech-

making.¹ The background features of Nasser's personality – his role as the “prophet” of socialism, his leadership charisma, and so forth – are simply assumed.² Yet, as I will demonstrate in this chapter, language plays a crucial role in how such features are in fact generated in discourse.

This chapter focuses on constructs of speaker personality for the hosts of morning “service programmes” (*barāmiž ƙadamātiyya*) on Jordanian non-government radio. On these programmes, listeners calling in often enumerate problems or issues which broadcasters then attempt to solve, either directly or by linking them up with a person who might be able to help them. But in doing this, hosts are far from simply neutral mediators. Rather, they emerge as individuals with distinct characters and personalities, who respond to callers and deal with problems in very particular ways.

Rather than the gender- and origin-linked demographic identity categories covered in Chapter 4, this chapter thus discusses the implications of *individual* identity – the characterological aura, or *persona*, associated with a radio broadcaster, and its impact on their linguistic performance. This is a particularly interesting issue in the service programme genre, which has been subject to competing evaluation by recent observers of Jordanian media. Some commentators celebrate the inclusion of citizens' voices and problems in service programme call-ins. Others, however, critique the programmes as a mass-mediated refraction of well-established patterns of *wāṣṭa* – literally, “mediation” or “connection,” but referring in the Jordanian context specifically

¹ Holes, “Uses,” 13-45.

² Holes, “Uses,” 30-1.

to individualised clientelist provision of services and favours.³ Against both these extremes, I argue that the linguistic performance of service programme hosts, mediated through the distinct personalities that they project, is a central factor to be considered when evaluating the inclusivity potential of such programmes.

The present chapter first provides an overview of the formal features of the service programme genre in Jordan, including its place in the broadcasting schedule and the types of linguistic interaction that it encompasses. It then moves on to outline a linguistic anthropological approach to performance of characterological features through language, as a way of analysing the consequences of broadcaster personalities on participation in mass-mediated linguistic communication.

This is followed by a comparison of the linguistic performance of two service programme hosts, Muhammad al-Wakeel on Radio Hala and Hani al-Badri on Radio Fann. Based on an analysis of broadcaster monologues and ‘service’ calls – in which listeners ask for favours or put forward complaints – the two broadcasters demonstrate aspects of two quite distinct personalities: a ‘heroic’ persona for al-Wakeel, and an ‘ordinary citizen’ persona for al-Badri.

This distinction is, moreover, dialogically reinforced by other service programme participants – namely, the callers. While caller contributions occasionally challenge the broadcasters’ characterological constructs, they

³ Aseel Al-Ramahi, “Wasta in Jordan: A Distinct Feature of (and Benefit for) Middle Eastern Society,” *Arab Law Quarterly* 22, no. 1 (2008): 35–62; Ellen Lust, “Competitive Clientelism in the Middle East,” *Journal of Democracy* 20, no. 3 (2009): 122–135.

nevertheless share in producing a relative contrast in participatory dynamics between the two hosts. Ultimately, al-Wakeel and al-Badri's personae enable two quite different ways of public engagement with service programmes: one in which radio listeners are privy to, and participate in, events of personalised drama centred on the broadcaster; and one in which they overhear and participate in critique by a fellow citizen.

al-Wakeel and al-Badri's personae function to provide a semblance of individual authenticity – of 'real' personhood, 'real' affect behind a disembodied broadcaster voice. Focused as they are on individual speakers, their effects are perhaps not as generalisable as those that concern language use linked to identity categories more broadly. Still, they provide valuable case studies for examining the impact of linguistic performance on public participation in the mass media: they demonstrate that neither blanket celebration nor criticism of service programmes is warranted, since much depends on details of communication that vary significantly between individual hosts.

5.1 The service programme genre on Jordanian radio

Before examining the linguistic practices of Jordanian service programme hosts, it is first crucial to understand the basic features of the *programme genre* in which they operate. Following Mikhail Bakhtin, genre is normally defined in linguistic anthropology as involving systematically co-occurring attributes of communication that organise and define a communicative event as belonging to a distinctive type – or "genre" – of

linguistic production.⁴ While linguistic anthropologists often use the term in a general sense as an organisational label for classifying different styles of linguistic performance, or to group together speech events that occur under similar conditions, I refer to genre specifically to define the bundles of features that characterise different *radio programmes* as distinct “units of interaction.”⁵ Genre is thus a central aspect of the context of performance that distinguishes linguistic interaction on service programmes from other shows on Jordanian non-government radio.

“Service programmes” is my English translation of the phrase *barāmiž ʔadamātiyya*, widely used in Jordan to describe a type of radio talk show programming where listeners call in with issues that broadcasters then resolve by either contacting government officials or using the programme itself to circulate information. In terms of scheduling, such programmes regularly appear on weekday mornings, Sunday to Thursday between 7 and 10 AM, as the day’s first live talk programme offering. They are also led predominantly by male hosts, many of them with considerable social media followings and long careers in mainstream Jordanian audio-visual media – JRTV before the liberalisation of the radio field in the early 2000s, and non-government radio stations since. Finally, they often occur on commercial stations which feature advertisements heavily, such as Radio Fann, JBC, and Radio Rotana. Notably,

⁴ Mikhail M. Bakhtin, *Speech Genres and Other Late Essays*, ed. Caryl Emerson and Michael Holquist, trans. Vern W. McGee (Austin, TX: University of Texas Press, 1986), 60-4; Charles L. Briggs and Richard Bauman, “Genre, Intertextuality, and Social Power,” *Journal of Linguistic Anthropology* 2, no. 2 (July 1992), 141.

⁵ Philips, “Method,” 83.

the independent community station Radio al-Balad – where ads are less prominent – used to run a type of service programme in its morning slot in the early 2010s, but changed the format to include broader discussion of daily events, after having determined the “long-term impact” of helping citizens through service programmes is “limited.”⁶

Station	Programme	Time	Host
Radio Hala	<i>Barnāmiž al-wakīl</i> (“al-Wakeel’s Programme”)	7:00 – 10:00	Muhammad al-Wakeel
Radio Fann	<i>Wasaṭ al-balad</i> (“City Centre”)	7:30 – 10:00	Hani al-Badri
JBC Radio	<i>Ṣawt al-muwāṭin</i> (“Voice of the Citizen”)	7:00 – 10:00	Mahmoud al-Hawyan
Radio Rotana	<i>Bi-ṣirāḥa ‘alā rōtānā</i> (“Plainly on Rotana”)	7:00 – 9:30	Yaser Nsour

Table 5.1. The most prominent service programmes in Jordan in 2014-15.

While service programmes have certain distinctive features, they also share characteristics with other kinds of programming on Jordanian non-government radio stations. It is, rather, the *regular co-occurrence* of a number of features that defines service programmes as a genre in its own right.⁷

A typical episode of a service programme begins with generalised greetings from the broadcaster to the audience. The host reads out the date;

⁶ Sweis, “New Liberty.”

⁷ Bakhtin, *Speech Genres*, 87-94; Briggs and Bauman, “Genre,” 146-9.

introduces themselves and the studio team; recounts the schedule of the programme; and greets listeners, often with specific reference to some unique feature of the day, such as a news headline or the weather. In this initial section, hosts also often read out quotations in Standard Arabic that amount to pop-psychological advice about interpersonal relations and self-conduct, and read and respond to greetings sent in by listeners through mobile text messages and digital social media.

Hosts then proceed to an overview of the day's "news headlines" – a section conventionally titled *'anāwīn* or *'anāwīn aṣ-ṣuḥuf* – read out from the websites of Jordanian daily newspapers such as al-Ghad and al-Dustour, as well as online-only news outlets, such as Ammon News. On most service programmes, including Muhammad al-Wakeel's on Radio Hala, the headline overview takes the form of a dedicated news headline segment, marked out by a distinctive jingle and a change in underlying music. Hani al-Badri on Radio Fann, by contrast, spreads the headlines throughout the two-and-a-half hours of his programme, and usually adds comments – often ironic or sarcastic – on each headline as he reads them out. Still, the presence of such headlines is a key element of each service programme episode.

This style of remediating written journalistic content for the sound-focused radio setting by reading it out loud is typical of Jordanian non-government radio programming generally. Hosts of daytime household and afternoon talk programmes regularly read out lighter news items, such as health advice and entertainment news; more 'serious' discussion programmes, such as *Rainbow* and *Ṭallet ṣubeḥ* on Radio al-Balad, do the same for

weightier political and economic news. Service programme hosts also resemble their counterparts on other Jordanian non-government radio programmes by filling up airtime with monologues in which they express their own opinions and positions on issues, events, or trends. Often such monologues are linked to a particular news headline, though they can also include narrations of broadcasters' personal experiences, or respond to messages sent in by listeners.

The interactional centrepiece of service programmes, however, are calls in which broadcasters conduct conversations with individuals outside the studio. Contemporary Jordanian non-government radio features several types of such calls, all of which are represented in service programmes as well.

There are, first, 'phone-outs' or *guest calls*, in which the radio station calls up a government official to discuss or resolve a particular issue, or speak about a current or upcoming event or project with some other individual. These range from conversations about upcoming concerts or lectures, to discussions of the weather forecast, to checking up on people the programme might have helped through a charity drive in the past. Guest calls are lengthy, typically lasting over five minutes, and there are, at most, four or five in any single episode of any programme.

With guest calls or phone-outs, the conversation is initiated by the radio station, with the broadcaster as the animator of the interaction on the station's behalf. This participation dynamic should be distinguished from *call-ins*, where members of the audience phone in to the station and are granted airtime in which to speak with the host. On Jordanian non-government radio, many call-

ins resemble the classic “open line phone-in” which Ian Hutchby has identified as typical of the radio “talk show” genre, where callers offer their own opinion or standpoint on a topic of their choice.⁸ Often, however, audience members call in just to chat, exchange greetings with the host or pass on greetings to another named individual such as friend or relative or request a song to be played on the programme.

I term these call types *comment calls* and *phatic calls*, respectively, with reference to the basic communicative function the caller seeks to accomplish with each particular type of call. Comment and phatic calls form the most frequent types of call-ins on Jordanian non-government radio; they are present in afternoon call-in programmes such as *Yā halā*, hosted by Randa Karadsheh on Radio Hala, and open-line discussion talk shows such as Radio al-Balad’s *Rainbow* and *Ma’a al-ḥadaṭ* on Mazaj FM.

On service programmes, comment and phatic calls are also present. Most call-ins, however, tend to be of a third type, specific to service programmes: what I refer to as *service calls*, in which the caller requests some kind of ‘service’ on part of the host or station. Often, service calls involve the caller describing a problem – such as a damaged road in their residential area, a broken water pipe, a traffic fine, a bad experience at a government institution, or similar – which they then ask the host to solve through calling or otherwise linking up with a relevant government institution or official. They also include, however, callers asking for charitable donations or appeals to find a job; calls informing the station of an ongoing situation, such as a fire or traffic accident;

⁸ Hutchby, *Confrontation Talk*, 1.

and calls regarding lost and found property, such as finding a wallet on the street or forgetting a bag in the trunk of a taxi.

Typically, the station later – in the parlance of service programme broadcasters – “follows up” (*yutābi*) the problem or issue set out in a service call. The broadcaster sometimes does this in person, by calling up a relevant official during the programme; this can also lead a direct on-air conversation between the official and the caller with the host acting as mediator. More often, however, the comment is taken up by members of the programme team, who then pass it on to the relevant party “off the air” (*taḥt al-hawā*) – an action often mentioned, though rarely elaborated upon, by the hosts in their on-air talk.

If the call is not ‘followed up,’ callers may also be given advice directly by the host, or have their complaints dismissed as unreasonable. Alternatively, the solution may already be implicit in the host’s response. Whenever the broadcaster repeats a description of lost or found property on the air, or asks for charitable donations for a caller, the mass-mediated form of the radio broadcast circulates the information among a public of multiple anonymous listeners – some of which will, presumably, be able to assist with the issue. In such cases, the very description of the problem on the air already functions as provision of the requested ‘service.’

Call direction	Call type	Primary function(s)
<i>Station -> individual</i> (‘phone-out’)	Guest	providing information; discussion of an issue; request for action on part of guest
<i>Individual -> station</i> (phone-in / call-in)	Comment	presenting caller’s opinion on an issue
	Phatic	greetings; sociable talk
	Service	requesting an action / service from the station or host

Table 5.2. Overview of major call types on contemporary Jordanian radio.

Like other Jordanian non-government radio programmes, service programmes also exhibit a number of elements that accompany spoken communication, and frame a broadcast as an episode of a recurrent show or programme. Programme *jingles* are played several times during each broadcast. These are professionally recorded in radio station studios, and can be quite lengthy and elaborate: they often last for over a minute, and are usually structured around a distinct musical arrangement and sung by a chorus with lyrics that define features of the programme, such as its schedule, the name of the broadcaster, or – in the case of many service programmes – its claims to representing the voices of Jordanian citizens. The following jingle, used to introduce episodes of *Barnāmiž al-wakīl* in 2014 and sung by a chorus to a music accompaniment of drums and bagpipes, is but one typical example.

[RR024]: [00:20]

bismillā
twakkilnā ‘ala llā
nibda’ ma‘kum ṣabāḥ
il-waṭan il-žamīl
yā halā
fīkum ya mīt halā
hunā rādyō halā
barnāmiž il-wakīl
ṣōt il-waṭan wə-n-nās
barnāmiž il-wakīl
le-kull in-nās
barnāmiž il-wakīl
qaḍāyē wa-ḥlūl
muwāṭin aw mas’ūl
ma‘akum ‘ala ṭūl
mə-rādyō halā
le-kull il-balad
barnāmiž il-wakīl

[RR024]: [00:20]

In the name of God
We have trusted in God
We begin with you the morning
Of the beautiful homeland
Welcome
To you, a hundred welcomes
This is Radio Hala

Al-Wakeel's Programme

The voice of the homeland and the people

Al-Wakeel's Programme

For all the people

Al-Wakeel's Programme

Issues and solutions

Citizen or official

With you, always

From Radio Hala

To all the country

Al-Wakeel's Programme⁹

Apart from sung jingles, the most pervasive framing element of live on-air talk programming in Jordan is the music background. Most programmes on Jordanian non-government radio are accompanied by an incessant stream of music – turned down in relative volume when broadcasters or other on-air participants are speaking, but nevertheless constantly present. As noted in Chapter 2, Arabic-language stations, particularly those of the 'commercial' sub-format, usually play a mixture of Egyptian and Lebanese pop music. Service programmes, however, also always feature a significant proportion of patriotic Jordanian music, of a distinct music genre known locally as *aġānī waṭaniyya* ("patriotic" or "nationalist" songs): heavily rhythmic tunes, sung in

⁹ "Barnāmiž al-wakīl, 1 December 2014," *Barnāmiž al-wakīl* (Amman: Radio Hala, December 1, 2014), [RR024], author's archive, 00:20-00:56.

distinct and often exaggerated local Jordanian accents, with lyrics praising some aspect of Jordan, the monarchy or security services, or its inhabitants.

While *aġānī waṭaniyya* are frequent on non-government radio stations with a 'nationalist' format orientation, such as Radio Hala, even stations with a more commercial image play them heavily within service programmes. They are also present, however, more generally on programmes scheduled in the early morning slot, whether they include service call-ins or not. The prominence of patriotic music in this temporal position suggests some sort of initiative or performatively generative function – bringing the nation into being, metaphorically, at the beginning of each subsequent day. As Danny Kaplan has argued in the context of radio music engineering in Israel, regularly scheduled music in the mass-mediated space of radio is easily implicated in producing an “everyday, collective present” through its directedness towards an anonymous public of radio listeners.¹⁰ In this way, the prominence of nationalist music on morning programmes on Jordanian non-government radio invokes a distinctly *national* audience – implying an ideal public of patriotic Jordanians, loyal to the Jordanian regime and the country as a whole, as praised in *aġānī waṭaniyya*.

Links with nationalism, patriotism, and regime loyalty are nevertheless especially relevant for service programmes, given their specific position in the contemporary Jordanian radio ecology. Unlike talk shows that feature comment or phatic calls only, service programmes allow the entry into the

¹⁰ Danny Kaplan, “The Songs of the Siren: Engineering National Time on Israeli Radio,” *Cultural Anthropology* 24, no. 2 (May 2009), 315.

public space of issues linked to both national and local governance, based on authentic experiences of individual citizens, circulated in an apparently direct, immediate fashion through their phone calls. This upholds an image of local Jordanian authenticity, demonstrating the radio station's concern with local issues and representing the "voice" of Jordanian citizenry – as claimed by the jingles of many service programmes, such as al-Wakeel's. But it also positions service programme broadcasters as intermediaries between citizens and various government agencies. They thus act as a kind of supplement to government services, substantiating the radio station's commitment to improving the lot of Jordanians, and an enthusiasm for the national project perhaps greater than even that of the Jordanian state itself.

The participatory spaces opened up by service programmes have been lauded by certain scholars and journalists. Rana Sweis has noted that these programmes have allowed broadcasters to address topics that were once "unmentionable in public," including human rights and political issues, as well as quotidian economic problems such as low wages and price increases.¹¹ Similarly, Mahjoob Zweiri argues that programmes such as al-Wakeel's have the potential to exert a positive impact on Jordanian society, as they enable citizens to "voice local concerns" and thus "encourage political and social participation."¹²

By contrast, other authors have been much more critical of the role played by service programmes in the contemporary Jordanian media scene.

¹¹ Sweis, "New Liberty."

¹² Zweiri, "Jordan's Local Radio Revolution," 145, 146.

Sawsan Zaidah, a Jordanian journalist and media analyst, and also host of a media watchdog programme on Radio al-Balad, offers a detailed critique based on excerpts from the JBC service programme *Ṣawt al-muwāṭin*, hosted by the experienced presenter Mahmoud al-Hawyan. Zaidah identifies as especially problematic the tendency of programmes such as *Ṣawt al-muwāṭin* to degenerate from genuine service-oriented mediation – such as contacting a local authority to repair a broken water pipe – into what she terms *al-wāsiṭa wa-l-šaḥḍa* (“*wāsiṭa* and begging”).¹³ For Zaidah, the service programme interaction is essentially the enactment of a patron-client relationship mediated by the host. The patron, an official or employer, can either offer the caller *wāsiṭa* – a term meaning literally “mediation” or “connection,” but used in Jordan to refer to the clientelist provision of services and favours, or giving a client an advantage in obtaining such – or alleviate their suffering through a charitable donation.¹⁴ From this standpoint, service programmes merely perpetuate clientelist inequalities and narrowly individualised solutions to problems such as joblessness and poverty, rather than enabling participation oriented towards discussion or resolution of publicly relevant issues.

Zaidah correctly identifies certain problematic tendencies of service programmes, including the omnipresent charity drives focused on specific individuals who phone the radio station with dramatic stories of personal hardship in order to obtain financial assistance. What her assessment misses,

¹³ Sawsan Zaidah, “Barāmiṣ ‘al-baṭṭ al-mubāšir’: min al-māsura al-maksūra ilā al-wāsiṭa wa-l-šaḥḍa,” *Tiber*, May 14, 2014, <http://Tiber.org/2014/05/radioprogramsjbc/> [accessed 17 May 2014].

¹⁴ Zaidah, “Barāmiṣ”; Al-Ramahi, “*Wasta*,” 37-61; Lust, “Competitive Clientelism,” 126-31.

however, is that service programmes are made up of more than just “*wāṣṭa* and begging.” While individualised complaints make up the bulk of call-in topics, comment calls resembling open-line phone-ins are also present. These appear to provide more space for critical discussion, as do news headline readings and host monologues that offer personalised opinions on daily issues. The topics under discussion are, admittedly, limited: they include local authority and government-level politics, as well as economics and occasionally social issues – though never contentious subjects that might cross the latent red lines of Jordanian media discourse, suggesting a degree of self-censorship on part of broadcasters. Still, news stories and the resultant comments do broaden the scope of service programmes beyond individualised service provision alone.

Second, even to the extent that individual complaints and requests do occupy much of service programme airtime, there are nuances to the way in which such calls are framed. Callers themselves might bring their complaints to bear on socio-political issues more broadly. Hosts can likewise give public relevance to a complaint, sometimes within the call itself but often in monologues that mention a particular caller’s experiences. The ultimate impact of such strategies is debatable, but they at least suggest there is more to service programme interaction than clientelist disbursement of favours, and competitive advantage.

In order to provide an empirical basis for these nuances, the present chapter analyses the linguistic performance of two popular Jordanian service programme hosts as illustrative case studies: Hani al-Badri, the host of *Wasat*

al-balad on the commercial station Radio Fann; and Muhammad al-Wakeel, currently the host of *Barnāmiž al-wakīl* on the army-run Radio Hala. It also draws on data from al-Wakeel's former programme on Radio Rotana, *Bi-širāḥa ma'a al-wakīl* ("Plainly with al-Wakeel"), which he had hosted before moving to Radio Hala in May 2014. Despite being broadcast on different stations, *Barnāmiž al-wakīl* and *Bi-širāḥa* are very similar in terms of their structure and language, and are representative of al-Wakeel's personal linguistic performance as a broadcaster more generally.

Both presenters had distinguished media careers before their stints on radio: al-Wakeel as a newsreader on Jordanian state television (JTV), and al-Badri as a presenter on a long-running JTV discussion programme, *Sittūn daqīqa* ("60 Minutes"). They are thus experienced media personalities, and have had the opportunity to hone their distinctive discursive styles even before undertaking their roles as service programme presenters – which have, proven extremely successful in turn. al-Wakeel's programme is consistently among the most highly rated in terms of listenership numbers.¹⁵ He also commands millions of followers on Facebook, and is often cited by Jordanians as the prototypical service programme host. al-Badri is somewhat less prominent, though he still has a sizeable audience – in the tens of thousands – on social media, and holds considerable influence in the south of Jordan, Aqaba Governorate in particular.¹⁶ He is also a columnist for the Jordanian daily *al-*

¹⁵ Zweiri, "Jordan's Local Radio Revolution," 145

¹⁶ The Facebook page dedicated to Hani al-Badri's programme had just under 20 thousand followers as of December 2015; Radio Fann's, just under 112 thousand. See "Barnāmiž wasaṭ al-balad ma'a hānī al-badri," *Facebook*, 2015, <https://www.facebook.com/WASATALBALAD/>

Ghad, as well as holding a doctorate in media studies – hence often addressed as *duktōr hānī* (“Doctor Hani”) by callers on his programme.

al-Badri and al-Wakeel’s shows thus provide typical examples of service programmes, hosted by personalities deeply embedded in the local media scene and familiar to their audiences through years of broadcasting experience. Their linguistic performance, further, shares a number of features determined by the generic features of service programmes in particular. They both read out news headlines in Standard Arabic, but provide monologic comments in elevated Jordanian Colloquial, in the style typical of male broadcasters on Jordanian non-government radio more generally. They also use the same kind of language when interacting with callers. An examination of the four indicative sociolinguistic variables examined in Chapter 4, for example, reveals that both al-Wakeel and al-Badri project distinctly male and Jordanian identities, with ubiquitous use of [g] as a colloquial reflex of (q), [dʒ] for (ǧ), *-kum* and occasionally *-ku* for the second person plural bound pronoun (-kum), and *hassa’* or *al-ān* for the adverb “now.” Table 5.3 below compares the two broadcasters’ realisations of these variables, based on 30 minutes of pure talk selected randomly from a total of 891 minutes of *Barnāmiž al-wakīl* recordings, and 1512 minutes of recordings of *Wasaṭ al-balad*.¹⁷

[accessed 3 December 2015]; “Radio Fann-Jordan (Official Fan Page),” *Facebook*, 2015, <https://www.facebook.com/RadioFann/> [accessed 3 December 2015].

¹⁷ Randomness and Integrity Services Ltd, “Random.org.”

	(q)	(ž)	(-kum)	("now")
al-Wakeel	267 total 198 [q] (62.0%) 118 [g] (37.0%) 3 [ʔ] (1.0%)	266 total 2 [ʒ] (0.8%) 264 [dʒ] (99.2%)	79 total 65 -kum (83.3%) 13 -ku (16.7%)	19 total 15 al-'ān (78.9%) 4 hassa' (21.1%)
al-Badri	239 total 173 [q] (72.4%) 63 [g] (26.4%) 3 [ʔ] (1.3%)	194 total 17 [ʒ] (8.8%) 177 [dʒ] (91.2%)	54 total 53 -kum (98.1%) 1 -ku (1.9%)	6 total 3 al-'ān (50.0%) 3 hassa' (50.0%)

Table 5.3. Frequencies of reflects of select sociolinguistic variables for Muhammad al-Wakeel and Hani al-Badri.

Such linguistic performance of authentic Jordanian-ness is further sonically reinforced by the music background accompanying al-Wakeel and al-Badri's programmes, where *ağānī waṭaniyya* feature prominently – as demanded by the service programme genre, with its heavy investment in local Jordanian flavour and patriotic commitment to the national project. The persistent generic features that shape al-Wakeel and al-Badri's language use thus include not only the types of interaction typical of service programmes – that is, 'weighty' news headlines and monologue comments, and call-ins with a high proportion of service calls – but also ideological cues for interpreting the programmes' role in addressing, assisting, and representing the *Jordanian* national public in particular.

Still, al-Badri and al-Wakeel's programmes are not identical. Even though they operate within a shared generic framework, a closer examination of the two broadcasters' language reveals that they engage with their audiences and callers in different ways – requiring an approach that acknowledges the impact of *individual* personality on linguistic performance in mass-mediated settings.

5.2 Personae and media language

Sociolinguistics has traditionally focused on linking variability in language use to various categories of social differentiation, such as class, gender, age, and ethnicity. Like sociolinguistics, linguistic anthropology's focus on the indexicality of linguistic forms is likewise concerned with meanings denoting larger social groupings, shared by large numbers of language users and holding implications across a broad range of contexts and events, beyond the linguistic idiosyncrasies of any individual speaker.

In public media subject to mass circulation, however, the linguistic performance of a small number of individuals becomes highly focused and visible. Newsreaders, presenters, performers, and other media regulars such as experts and politicians become conspicuous speakers not only by virtue of their repeated appearances circulated to extensive audiences, but also through their institutional affiliation – that is, their role as representatives of a formally structured and stable organisation, such as a radio station or

government agency.¹⁸ When studying media language, the identity of individual speakers thus becomes a highly relevant issue, as individualised features of linguistic performance may come to affect both practices and perceptions of language use.

While most work on Arabic in the media has tended to focus on wider patterns of language use and socio-cultural differentiation, a handful of studies do consider the relationship between the identity of individual speakers and linguistic performance. Clive Holes's examination of Gamal Abdel Nasser's speeches, for example, demonstrates in some detail the links between his use of Standard Arabic to quote principles of socialism, and his switch to Colloquial Arabic when he turns to interpret these principles to his audience. These usage patterns depend fundamentally on Nasser's position as the president of Egypt, a role requiring both commitment to his political creed and a dedication to interpreting it and acting as a "teacher" for the Egyptian masses.¹⁹ Similarly, Dina Matar's study of the televised speeches of Hassan Nasrallah, the leader of Lebanon's main Shi'ite party Hizbullah, reveals how the use of specific religio-political vocabulary – such as "struggle" (*ḡihād*), "resistance" (*muqāwama*), and "steadfastness" (*ṣumūd*) – provides a particular frame of spatial and temporal reference to Nasrallah's "mediated charisma" of a down-to-earth leader who can claim to share certain experiences with his audience.²⁰

¹⁸ Hutchby, *Confrontation Talk*, 7-9; Cook, "Dangerously Radioactive," 64-5; Andrew Tolson, "Televised Chat and the Synthetic Personality," in *Broadcast Talk*, ed. Paddy Scannell (London: Sage, 1991), 178–200.

¹⁹ Holes, "Uses," 30-3.

²⁰ Matar, "Performance," 147-54.

Holes and Matar both provide intriguing case studies regarding the use of media Arabic by institutionally affiliated individuals. Neither of them, however, supplies a conceptual framework for exploring the impact of speaker identity and personality on linguistic performance in the mass media more generally. Such a framework is nevertheless crucial for considering individual identity in parallel with other aspects that affect mediated language use, as well as taking account of different contexts of linguistic interaction, participation, and audience address – such as those of, for example, talk radio shows.

In media studies, the notion of *persona* has been used productively in order to conceptualise the role of individual character in performance, especially in research on stardom and celebrity performers in film, television, and music industries. Christine Gledhill's analysis of Hollywood stardom introduces *persona* as a mediating term between a star actor's role as a fictional character, and their ostensibly "authentic" personal nature.²¹ *Personae* thus "[draw] on general social types and film roles, while deriving authenticity from the unpredictability of the real person."²² Andrew Tolson, focusing on UK television celebrities, similarly views their *persona* as a "synthetic" construct performed in order to convey a sense of authentic personality in a mass-mediated setting.²³ For these authors, *persona* as a

²¹ Christine Gledhill, "Signs of Melodrama," in *Stardom: Industry of Desire*, ed. Christine Gledhill (London & New York: Routledge, 1991), 213-27.

²² Gledhill, "Signs," 215.

²³ Tolson, "Televised Chat," 182-7, 193-9; Andrew Tolson, *Mediations: Text and Discourse in Media Studies* (London: Arnold, 1996), 120-50; Andrew Tolson, "'Being Yourself': the Pursuit of Authentic Celebrity," *Discourse Studies* 3, no. 4 (2001), 449-56.

concept thus captures the role of character and personality – that is, supposedly authentic characterological features of performers as ‘real people’ – that emerge in contexts of mass-mediated performance.

Although neither Gledhill nor Tolson state this explicitly, their discussions do imply that persona authenticity is fundamentally *ideological* – that is, deriving its potency from the fact that it is *presented as* rooted in a prior social reality or internal world of individual personality, without necessarily being a genuine reflection of this reality.²⁴ They do not, however, discuss the particular discursive and linguistic mechanisms that can achieve such ideological effects. Tolson does remark that ‘authentic’ personality performance amounts to a shift in footing or “production format” of a celebrity’s utterances, shifting them from a mere animator to a proper author of discourse.²⁵ However, merely noting that a shift in footing occurs tells us little about the specific kind of character that is being conveyed as ‘authentic’. As a result, Gledhill and Tolson can only make very general claims about the socio-cultural implications of persona performances – for instance, persona as management of a celebrity’s “public image,” or a way through which personal authenticity is asserted as an important aspect of public life.²⁶

An approach to persona more sensitive to the details of language use is provided by Michael Lempert and Michael Silverstein’s analysis of

²⁴ Gledhill, “Signs,” 218-27; Tolson, “Televised Chat,” 185-7, 199; Tolson, *Mediations*, 125, 131-41, 149; Tolson, “Being Yourself,” 455-7.

²⁵ Tolson, “Being Yourself,” 444.

²⁶ Tolson, “Televised Chat,” 186-7, 198-9; Tolson, *Mediations*, 125-34; Tolson, “Being Yourself,” 444; Gledhill, “Signs,” 226-7.

characterological “image” and “message” of U.S. presidential candidates. Considering a number of candidates in the 2004 and 2008 presidential elections, Lempert and Silverstein demonstrate how a political contestant’s “image” – that is, the kind of personality or persona they project – is constituted through discrete events of mass-mediated communication which either support or detract from the “message” individuals are supposed to be standing for as a candidate.²⁷ They also focus, however, on the specific linguistic techniques that accomplish such projections. Speeches at political rallies, televised debates, and even random off-the-cuff remarks made by candidates all demonstrate evaluative stances towards certain statements or propositions, addressed either to specific publics (“constituencies,” in U.S. political vocabulary) or interdiscursively to other communicative events. These, in turn, accrete to produce a stable candidate persona – such as that of the “flip-flopper,” defined by inconsistencies in their stance-taking towards a particular issue.²⁸ Such accretions are further accompanied by a meta-discourse of critique and interpretation conducted by journalists, analysts, and other political ‘insiders,’ all seeking to read events of stance-taking and addressivity for what they reveal about candidates *as people* – their mass-mediated

²⁷ Michael Lempert, “On ‘Flip-Flopping’: Branded Stance-Taking in U.S. Electoral Politics,” *Journal of Sociolinguistics* 13, no. 2 (2009), 229-42; Lempert, “Avoiding,” 194-201; Michael Silverstein, “Presidential Ethno-Blooperology: Performance Misfires in the Business of ‘Message’-Ing,” *Anthropological Quarterly* 84, no. 1 (2011), 166-71, 173-9; Silverstein, “‘Message’,” 207-16.

²⁸ Lempert, “‘Flip-Flopping’,” 225-9; Lempert, “Avoiding,” 191-4, 201-3; Silverstein, “Presidential Ethno-Blooperology,” 171-3, 179-82; Silverstein, “‘Message’,” 203-6; Michael Silverstein, “What Goes Around...: Some Shtick from ‘Tricky Dick’ and the Circulation of U.S. Presidential Image,” 70-2.

persona, in other words – and, hence, their actions as potential future office-holders.²⁹

Though developed in the particular socio-cultural context of U.S. political spectacle, Lempert and Silverstein’s approach is useful in a more general sense in examining how individual speakers perform characterological features – and, through them, distinct personae – in mass-mediated contexts. Their focus on stance-taking and addressivity, in particular, allows us to analytically disaggregate the specific discursive pathways through which a distinct persona is constituted. Further, it helps demonstrate the effects that different kinds of personae constituted through stance-taking and addressivity have for audiences and participation in the mass media.³⁰

In U.S. political communication, a candidate’s persona is often interpreted through their orientation towards a particular constituency or public that is not co-present in the actual mass-mediated communicative event. Such publics can be invoked explicitly, but more frequently function as implicit “superaddressees” in interaction – since it is understood that, ultimately, any event of mass-mediated communication by a political candidate is voter-

²⁹ Lempert, “‘Flip-Flopping,’” 238-41; Lempert, “Avoiding,” 188-94; Silverstein, “‘Message,’” 206-16; Silverstein, “What Goes Around...”, 58-72.

³⁰ Lempert and Silverstein’s work has been criticised for their claims that a consideration of the meta-discourse of political commentary is sufficient to provide “emic” viewpoints of candidate persona, without examining how audiences or voters respond to political communication in any detail; see Diane Riskedahl, “Creatures of Politics: Media, Message, and the American Presidency (review),” *Journal of Linguistic Anthropology* 23, no. 2 (August 2013), E109-10. By contrast, while I focus on mass-mediated interactions alone, I do not claim that such a reading can provide an accurate picture of local responses to or interpretations of media communication.

directed.³¹ Star persona has likewise been analysed primarily through the performer-public axis, as authors such as Gledhill and Tolson are mostly concerned with how a celebrity's characterological features are constituted in relation to their presumed audience.³²

But it is not only absent publics that determine how, and what kind of, persona will be performed in events of language use in the media. Exchanges with co-present interactants can be equally crucial for defining an individual's characterological features that build up towards a distinct persona.³³ In the context of live talk radio, in particular, the way broadcasters interact with callers contribute significantly to the personalities that they project. This point has been noted by analysts of talk radio such as Hutchby, Graham Brand and Paddy Scannell, and Jackie Cook, though again rarely with much nuance as to the particular *kind* of personae that language use can constitute.³⁴ Nevertheless, these authors all agree that *having* a persona – some sort of distinct personality that implies individuality and authenticity, a 'real' form of personhood behind the voice of the broadcaster, and displayed prominently in host-caller interactions – is a central factor in the success of talk radio programming more generally.

³¹ Lempert, "Flip-Flopping," 228; Bakhtin, *Speech Genres*, 126.

³² Gledhill, "Signs," 216-7, 226-7; Tolson, "Televised Chat," 189, 194-9; Tolson, "Being Yourself," 449-57.

³³ Lempert, "Flip-Flopping," 233-7; Silverstein, "'Message'," 207-16; Tolson, "Televised Chat," 184-5, 193-4.

³⁴ Graham Brand and Paddy Scannell, "Talk, Identity and Performance: The Tony Blackburn Show," in *Broadcast Talk*, ed. Paddy Scannell (London: Sage, 1991), 201–26; Cook, "Dangerously Radioactive," 61-3, 65-80; Hutchby, *Confrontation Talk*, 59-108.

The concept of persona thus provides a useful framework for analysing the relationship between the character of individual speakers and their linguistic performance. In the radio talk show setting, this relationship is a particularly important aspect of language use for presenters and their engagement with audiences and callers – which, in turn, also suggests broader socio-cultural implications for different kinds of broadcaster personae. I now turn to analyse aspects of linguistic performance of Muhammad al-Wakeel and Hani al-Badri on their respective service programmes in which such contrasts are particularly evident.

5.3 Broadcaster persona on *Barnāmiž al-wakīl* and *Wasaʔ al-balad*

The service programme genre, as noted above, includes a combination of different types of linguistic interaction that define it as a distinct genre. Such programmes, further, promote a general image of national representation and patriotic service to Jordanian citizens that turn to them for help.

Against this common generic background, al-Badri and al-Wakeel nevertheless project contrasting on-air personae. These emerge quite clearly in two types of spoken communication distinctive to service programmes: broadcaster monologues, and problem-oriented service calls. An interpretive analysis of language use in these contexts reveals that different persona constructs have consequences both for how service programme hosts address audiences, as well as the spaces of participation allowed by their distinct individual performance styles.

5.3.1 Monologues

Both al-Wakeel and al-Badri regularly perform extended monologues setting out their opinions on particular topics. These may be introduced via news items, call-ins or listener messages; or brought up individually by the host without an in-programme cue – though usually following a prepared script or notes, as confirmed by in-studio webcams. The topics range widely; in the present data, they included such diverse issues as the use of direction indicators when driving in fog, negotiations in the Jordanian parliament regarding an increase in electricity prices, and praise for the Lebanese singer Nancy Ajram visiting a Jordanian child with cancer.³⁵ In general, most concern economic issues, government and parliament-level politics, social issues that do not cross the tacit red lines of sexuality and religion, and occasionally entertainment, sports, or international affairs.

For the purposes of this analysis, I defined monologues as stretches of broadcaster-only talk expressing an opinion or reflecting on an issue that went on for longer than 25 seconds, with no internal pause in talk longer than 5 seconds. The recordings in my database – consisting of 5 episodes of *Barnāmiž al-wakīl* and 5 of *Bi-širāḥa ma'a al-wakīl*, and 12 episodes of *Wasaṭ*

³⁵ “Barnāmiž al-wakīl, 2 December 2014,” 15:56-16:47; “Wasaṭ al-balad, 21 January 2015,” 04:59-05:40; “Wasaṭ al-balad, 4 December 2014,” *Wasaṭ al-balad* (Amman: Radio Fann, December 4, 2014), [RR036], author’s archive, 52:58-53:35.

al-balad – included a total of 29 such “monologues” for al-Wakeel and 137 for al-Badri.

	number of monologues	median monologue length	total monologue length	total recording time	monologues as % of recording time
al-Wakeel	29	76s (mean 79s)	2297s (38 min)	80418s (1340 min)	2.9%
al-Badri	137	45s (mean 53s)	7200s (120 min)	90454s (1508 min)	8.0%

Table 5.4. Select features of monologues longer than 25 seconds in the data.

The difference in the number of monologues in the data is partly due to their different median length, which is considerably longer for al-Wakeel than for al-Badri: 76 seconds versus 45 seconds, as shown in Table 5.4 above. The total *proportion* of air time dedicated to monologues compared to other content, however, is also higher for al-Badri than for al-Wakeel: 8.0 versus 2.9 percent, respectively. This might suggest that al-Badri is less reticent than al-Wakeel to offer his opinions on disparate issues, as opposed to just reading out news headlines or taking calls. But the particular discursive techniques each broadcaster uses in their monologues also differ, as I show below.

There are, first, differences in the two hosts’ self-presentation – that is, the reflexive statements they make regarding themselves as individuals when performing their on-air personae. al-Wakeel regularly emphasises his great numbers of listeners and Facebook followers, his success in following up on

issues, and his status as an influential celebrity in his own right. al-Badri, by contrast, tends to describe himself more as an ordinary, ‘plain’ speaker: an honest and direct critic of government policies, though one who depends on both his studio team and his audience for his achievements, and is ultimately not too different from them.

This distinction emerges clearly in two monologues I present below, in which both al-Wakeel and al-Badri speak about their relationship to officials and supposed independence from government pressures. Although the point they argue is broadly the same, the two broadcasters defend it through characterising and evaluating their own talk – that is, taking an evaluative stance towards their on-air linguistic performance – in quite distinct ways.³⁶

In the first monologue, al-Wakeel describes, with some indignation, how government ministers and officials generally ignore what his followers say on social media. However, he then proceeds to characterise his own speech as *inherently* influential – so much so that he must actively avoid any personal contact with officials, for fear of being affected by their agendas:

[RR025]: [1:17:59]

MW: *anā ilī aḳṭar min sitt seb’ə sanawāt*
 ((uh)) *mamnū’ aḳḥar fī ayy makān fīh mas’ūl ḥukūmī*
‘ašān mā wāḥad y’attir ‘aley bi-inni ə’allī ṣōtī ‘a-l-hawā
bə’allī ṣōtī gā’id
w-illi m’allim ‘aley bi-l-ḥukūma bi- mas’ūl

³⁶ Du Bois, “Stance Triangle,” 143-4.

urdunī

yballiġnī

mā fī iši baṭlub ey- iši šakṣī ilī wala baṭlub iši šakṣī le-‘ēltī

wala baṭlub iši šakṣī le-aṣdiqāṭ

baṭlub le-š-ša‘b al-urdunī

‘ašān hēk ṣōtī ‘ālī w-nafasī gawī

u-mā ḥada bigdar y’allim ‘alēynā

[RR025]: [1:17:59]

MW: For six or seven years I

Haven't been able to enter any place where there is a government
official

So that nobody influences me to raise my voice on the air

I keep on raising my voice

And whoever is giving me instructions in government – an official

A Jordanian (official)

(Let them) inform me

There is nothing I ask for – anything personal for me, or anything
personal for my family

And I don't ask for anything personal for my friends

I ask for the Jordanian people

For this purpose my voice is loud and my breath is strong

And nobody can instruct us (what to do)³⁷

³⁷ “Barnāmiž al-wakīl, 2 December 2014,” 1:17:59-1:18:29.

al-Wakeel presents himself as speaking for the Jordanian people by reaffirming his independence; he is never “influenced” or given “instructions.” This would, presumably, not be an issue unless his on-air voice was influential all by itself, as al-Wakeel implies has been the case for the past “six or seven years.”

Contrast this form of self-presentation with al-Badri’s, who is less concerned with the raw power of his voice than the way it operates in his public performances. The following excerpt is taken from the conclusion of a monologue made in response to a call-in which criticised the Social Development Ministry, a favoured target for al-Badri’s censure more generally. After arguing that he only ever criticises the performance of officials and never disparages them personally, and that he refuses to accede to officials’ requests for on-air praise or uncritical interviews, al-Badri suggests that he would not, in fact, even be *able* to offer unsubstantiated praise to officials – as he has never learned to do so:

[RR047]: [25:50]

HB: *bi-kul basāṭa*
anā miš min en-nās
illi bəǧannī
wə-š-ša‘ar al-ḥarīr ‘a-l-ḳudūd byihafhaf
w-yirga‘ yəṭīr
anā wāḥad mən-nās
illi mā t‘allamt – min ayyām sittūn daqīqa b-munāsabe
innī aǧ‘ud

aġ- atġannā fī ‘uyūn el-mas’ūlīn

*we-r-rumūš el-**garī’a***

[RR047]: [25:50]

HB: Quite simply

I’m not one of those people

Who sing

‘And the silken hair flutters above the cheeks

And **returns** to fly (again)’

I’m one of those people

Who haven’t learned – and since the days of ‘Sixty Minutes,’ by the

way

To keep

Praising officials

‘And the **bold** eyelashes’...³⁸

al-Badri’s reference to praising officials – the “silken hair,” the “bold eyelashes” – is highly stylised and ironic. His monologue cuts off directly after the final line quoted, as if no further comment is necessary. Further, the lines of the supposed praise are read out with the distinctly Egyptian pronunciation of [g] for (ž) in *yirga’* and *garī’a* (marked in bold in the transcript and translation above), suggesting an interdiscursive link to the effusively expressive contexts of pop music lyrics and soap operas with which the use of Egyptian / Cairene

³⁸ “Wasaṭ al-balad, 19 January 2015,” *Wasaṭ al-balad* (Amman: Radio Fann, January 19, 2015), [RR047], author’s archive, 25:50-26:07.

colloquial is stereotypically associated. Such other-voicing is also consistent with al-Badri's explicit disavowal of the praise – which he has never “learned” how to do properly in his entire media career. Rather, he is a plain, honest, direct purveyor of comments and opinions, one unable to offer unearned praise even if he wanted to.

In these monologue excerpts, both al-Badri and al-Wakeel foreground a similar aspect of their personae: the independence of their on-air voices from official and government pressures. They perform, in other words, an evaluative stance towards their own talk as being a real, authentic voice, not compromised by government or personal agendas, and thus representative of either the opinions of the Jordanian people – for al-Wakeel – or independent ordinary speech – for al-Badri. The substantive nature of their persona claims, however, differs considerably. While they both foreground their independence, al-Wakeel achieves this specifically through asserting the *power* of his voice: emphasising its inherent influence, and the need to avoid situations in which officials would be able to affect it. al-Badri's persona, by contrast, is independent not because it is powerful, but because it is *plain*. He has never “learned” to dissimulate with faint praise, and can therefore be trusted for his ordinary, plain expression.

Such explicit characterisation is matched by more implicit means of constituting characterological features. One example of such performances are monologues in which the broadcasters attempt to give public relevance to individual issues – that is, to reframe problems or complaints in a way that addresses a broader public of Jordanian citizens. Such addressivity

interventions typically exhibit a powerful, agentive persona assertion by al-Wakeel, while al-Badri tends to present himself more as a fellow ordinary citizen rather than influential celebrity mediator.

The following two monologue excerpts both involve the hosts taking up an individual issue previously brought up by a caller and reframing it to give it relevance for a broader listener public. In both cases, the hosts also reflect on the difficulties of following up on such issues.

al-Wakeel's monologue, first, was made in response to a call-in regarding a damaged road at a busy intersection in Sweileh, in north-western Amman, which had caused a tyre puncture for the caller, identified as "Abdallah Hamdan."³⁹ Although promising that officials would be contacted in order to repair the road, al-Wakeel also broadened the complaint to include government departments shuffling responsibility among themselves – and how difficult this makes it for his programme to perform the service of following up on complaints:

[RR025]: [1:32:29]

MW: *el-muškile kemān eḥnā mnəḥtār bēyn*
ē'im- amānet 'ammān el-kubrā bətšīl l-gurṣ 'an nārḥā
w-bitwaddīh 'ala nār wizārt el-ašgāl
āy- wizārt el-ašgāl tgullek be- ((uh)) rūḥ 'a-wizārat el-belediyyāt
iḥnā
mā bənḥibb niḥkī ihāna tarā šuḡennā ṣa'ab yā iḳwān

³⁹ al-Wakeel used the caller's full name and surname in the monologue, but this is a pseudonym.

šugənnā

ya'ni bə- bəl- ənbahbiš ka-annā baḥt džināṭ binkūn

ndawwir mīn el-mas'ūl

[1:33:07]

MW: *bintābi' w-bnurkuḍ warāhum*

u-miš zahgānīn walā binmill walā binkill

u-bintābi'

ya'nī mawḍū' ḥufra taḥet džiser ešwēleḥ

awwal iši hāy el-ḥufra miš sulāfet ḥufra bas ḥuṭṭ niṭfet zifte w-

intahēyna ya'nī

aw ihmāl ḥukūmī bi-išlāḥ ḥufra taḥet džiser

taḥt nafaq ya'ni u-buqsud 'abdaḷḷā ḥamdān

wa nafaq

ešwēleḥ illi taḥt el- ((uh))

en-nafaq binzil b-ittidžāh el-baga'a

el-mawḍū' akbar min hēk bi-kṭīr

bi-innu ya'nī

((uh)) el-ḥufra hāy

mumkin ət'addī ilā wafāt muwāṭin

kēf bi-innu biddu yit- yib'id 'a-l-ḥufra buhrub yamīn aw ešmāl

siyyāra dāḳila bi-n-nafaq m- ma'u

mumkin an ā- tiḡbaḥu

ya'nī ḥayā – bi-l-muḥaššal lli bdī as'alu ḥayāt el-muwāṭin

rḳisā maṭalan 'and el-ḥukūma bi-innu mā yitāb'ū innu yšallḥū hā-l-

ḥufra maṭalan

aw yḥuṭṭū 'alēyhā b-šilen zifte

[RR025]: [1:32:29]

MW: The problem is also that we can't decide between
Either – Greater Amman Municipality 'takes the bread off its fire'
And gives it over to the Ministry of (Public) Works
The Ministry of Works tells you, uh, go to the Ministry of
Municipalities
We
Don't want to make insults, (but), see, brothers, our work is difficult
Our work
I mean, we search around as if we were (the Department of) Criminal
Investigation
Looking for who the responsible (official) is

[1:33:07]

MW: We pursue and we run after them
And we aren't bored, we don't get bored or tired
And we follow it up
The issue with the hole under Sweileh Bridge
First of all, the hole isn't just some talk about a hole, put a drop of
asphalt (on it) and we're done
Or the government's ignorance in repairing a hole under a bridge
Under a tunnel, I mean – according to Abdallah Hamdan
And the tunnel
The Sweileh (tunnel) which is under the, uh –
The tunnel that goes down towards Baqa'a
The issue is much bigger than this
In that, well
Uh – this hole

Can lead to the death of a citizen

How? If they want to avoid the hole, they turn right or left

And a car entering the tunnel with them

Might kill them

So then, life – the upshot, is what I want to ask about – a citizen’s life

Is it cheap, for example – for the government? In that they don’t

follow up by repairing this hole, for example?

Or put asphalt on it for almost nothing?⁴⁰

Typically for his monologues, al-Wakeel takes the chance to self-aggrandise by referring to his commitment to following up on issues: “pursuing,” “running after” officials, never “getting bored or tired” even when responsibility is being shuffled from one department to the other – summarised vividly through the folksy idiom of one department’s “taking the bread off its fire” and giving it to another. At the same time, however, al-Wakeel also makes the issue *public* – most clearly, at the point where he explains that if the damage is to go unrepaired it could cause the future death of “a citizen.” In other words, his language effects a particular kind of public addressivity, by extending the damaged road issue from a single caller’s complaint regarding a punctured tyre to a generalised hazard that government officials should not ignore.

But al-Wakeel’s addressivity strategy also implies that “the government” is actually listening. Posing the rhetorical question whether a citizen’s life is

⁴⁰ “Barnāmiž al-wakīl, 2 December 2014,” 1:32:29-1:32:48, 1:33:07-1:33:58.

“cheap” presupposes that al-Wakeel’s voice is influential enough for the issue to be resolved simply by speaking about it, shaming some government institution or other into action by asserting it on the air. As in the stance-taking episode above, this stresses the agency of al-Wakeel’s voice in his on-air performances.

And once again, a characterological contrast emerges when al-Wakeel’s style of publicising a caller’s complaint is compared to al-Badri’s. The following is an excerpt from a monologue al-Badri performed in response to a call-in by a taxi driver, about having had to cover a “taximeter adjustment” (*ta’dīl al-‘addād*) fee out of his own pocket, following a decision by the Jordanian government to decrease public transport fares due to falling fuel prices. Here, al-Badri’s ire is directed at the Land Transport Regulatory Commission (LTRC), a government body responsible for overseeing and regulating public transport including bus lines and taxi services. The LTRC is notorious for its apparent lack of interest in resolving systemic issues plaguing the transportation sector – such as, indeed, taxi drivers’ responsibility to pay for meter adjustments. al-Badri does, nevertheless, also give public relevance to the issue, by generalising the LTRC’s disdainful attitude to other branches of government:

[RR047]: [41:21]

HB: *lākin ((uh)) illi massiknā fi‘lan*

ṣamt zeyy kif ġiyāb wizārt t-tanmiye l-iżtimā’iyye tamāman u-ġiyāb

((uh))

abū t-taqāfe

ū- ((laughter))

u-illā ((uh)) bēynum fī nās mā ilumš 'alāqa fī d-dōwle walā fī ilum

'alāqa ḥattā fī l-i'lām walā ilum 'alāqa bi-l-muwāṭin

yaḷḷa lə-ḥālum 'a-rāshum

šagǧālīn 'a-sās innu ya'nī byi'milūnā iši džābed

minhum ayḍan

hey'et qitā' en-naql el-barrī

wa-lemmā kunnā maḥmū- kān el- ((uh))

el-muhandis əmdžāhid maḥmūd əmdžāhid kān

bi- ((uh)) kān muhandis əmdžāhid a'taqid məḍakkir

((uh)) ke- kunnā niḥkī ma'u

u-mubāšara

kān mūbāy- ya'nī mtābi'

šaḥīḥ mā kān fī bidžūz āliyāt sarī'a wa- w-

lākin el-yōm

fī qitā' en-naql el-barrī šabāḥ el-ḳēr bi-l-lēl

fiš ḥattā tadžāwub

ṭab sā'iqī t-taksī

ya-ḳī mā huwwa ḍā'i' bēn

šāḥib et-taksī aw šāḥib al-maktab

wā- ((uh)) w-mawḍū' en-naqābe lli mā ilhāš 'alāqa b-ḥada

w-illi biddum yidfa'ū wāḥad biddu y'addil 'addādu

intu lli nazzaltu l-as'ār

ṭab nazzaltu l-as'ār yiṭla' hā el-as'ār 'a-rāsu

ya'nī nazzaltu l-as'ār

ṭab yə'ddlū l-'addād

bidūn ḳams w-ṭalaṭīn dīnār

idā el- t-ta'dīl l-fannī kaməs danānīr
badal użret illi biddu iyyāy-
hāda ʔ-tabīr
lākin kif mā biżbuṭeš
wiga' sā'iq et-taksī
wiga' muwāṭin bēyn idēnā waḷḷā nənwarīh

[RR047]: [41:21]

HB: But, uh, what has really held us up
Is the silence – just like the absence of the Social Development
Ministry, and the absence of –
'Mr. Culture'
And – ((laughter))
And, uh, among them there are people who don't have anything to do
with the state, or even anything to do with the media, or anything to
do with citizens
Go on, on their own, let them be
They work to make us disoriented
And among them is also
The Land Transport Regulatory Commission
And when we were, (Mahmud), he was the –
Engineer Mujahid, Mahmud Mujahid, he was
In – uh, Engineer Mujahid was, I think, I remember
Uh – we used to speak to him
And immediately
His (mobile) was – well, he was following up
True, maybe there weren't quick mechanisms, and –

But today

In the Land Transport Regulatory (Commission), it's 'good morning at night'

There's no response, even

So taxi drivers

Brother, he's – this driver is lost between

The owner of the taxi, or the owner of the company

And, uh – and the Union which doesn't have anything to do with anyone

And they want them to pay someone to adjust their taximeter

You're the ones who have lowered the prices

So you've lowered the prices, and these prices go up by themselves

I mean, you've lowered the prices

So they adjust the meter

Without 35 dinars

If the technical adjustment is 5 dinars

For the price that it needs –

This is what's natural

But how, it's not right

The taxi driver has fallen –

A citizen has fallen between our hands – of course we'll hide him...⁴¹

As with al-Wakeel, al-Badri begins by describing how he might work on resolving the caller's issue. Instead of emphasising his commitment to act

⁴¹ "Wasat al-balad, 19 January 2015," 41:21-42:37.

despite faults in the system, however, al-Badri foregrounds another aspect: namely, his *powerlessness* in the face of non-responsive officials. Now that there is no longer a responsive contact in the LTRC – “Mahmud Mujahid,” who according to al-Badri was at least “following up” (*mtābi*), even if solutions were often slow to come by – there is little he can do about taxi drivers’ complaints regarding metre adjustments. Second, while al-Badri also performs an addressivity move by making the issue public, his strategy involves comparing the LTRC to other similarly unresponsive agencies, such as the Social Development Ministry and the Minister for Culture – another favoured target, whom al-Badri here refers to sarcastically as *abū t-taqāfe*, “Mr. Culture.” The monologue is a commentary broader conditions in Jordan that al-Badri, like other ordinary Jordanians, is ill-equipped to change, rather than a statement by a voice powerful enough to change the Commission’s behaviour all by itself.

Both hosts are thus able to give public relevance to initially individualised issues. But while al-Wakeel does this via an action-focused statement that positions his voice as an *agent* of change – indeed, a saviour of lives, if the damaged road is repaired – al-Badri resorts to more ordinary, complaint-level commentary. The first strategy gives the broadcaster a special position as a purveyor of solutions to public problems; the other places them on a more equal level with the ostensible ‘ordinary citizens’ that call into the programme every day with their problems. Like the stance-taking episodes examined above, there is therefore a clear contrast between the *kind* of individual that each monologue projects in the role of broadcaster.

Contrasting interpretations of the two hosts' performances might also be offered. al-Badri's performances may be action-focused more implicitly – aiming, for example, to find some audience powerful enough to actually institute change in the non-responsive Land Transport Regulatory Commission. Similarly, there are shades of an effort to project himself as an ordinary citizen in al-Wakeel's talk, for instance by claiming that he and his programme team need to “run after” officials in order to achieve what they want, or using the vernacular idiom of “taking the bread off [one's] fire.”

But the predominant focus in each of the monologues examined above is towards one of two distinct forms of engagement with problems plaguing Jordanian citizenry – distinct forms of self-presentation of broadcasters as actors in the real world, as distinct personalities or personae. I quote these monologues, further, merely as particularly illustrative examples of persona contrasts. Although they are perhaps more poignant than the majority of the monologues in the data, they nevertheless represent cases of linguistic performance which would not be possible without at least an implicit understanding of the two hosts' distinct personal natures.

5.3.2 Service calls

Such tendencies are not limited to monologues addressed to absent audiences. Rather, they occur across all types of daily language use and interaction on service programmes. Service calls are another context that

amply demonstrates the implications of different broadcaster personae for on-air communication.

There is, first, a clear contrast between al-Wakeel and al-Badri's programmes regarding the frequency of such calls. Whereas the vast majority of the direct call-ins taken on *Barnāmiž al-wakīl* can be classified as belonging to the service category – that is, calls in which the caller asks for some kind of service or mediation to be done by the host – the proportion of such calls on *Wasaʕ al-balad* is much lower, amounting to less than half of all calls.

	Total call-ins	Service calls	Comment calls	Phatic calls
al-Wakeel	69	65 94.2%	2 2.9%	2 2.9%
al-Badri	318	146 45.9%	120 37.7%	52 16.4%

Table 5.5. Number and proportion of different call types for each broadcaster in the data.

Instead, comment and phatic calls – open comments and calls whose main purpose is socialising via talk itself, respectively – take up the bulk of the call-ins taken on the air by al-Badri.⁴² This implies more space for debate, discussion, and general socialising compared to al-Wakeel, whose call-ins are oriented more strictly towards problem-solving or provision of services by the

⁴² I have classified all calls in which an action is requested on the broadcaster's part as service calls, even when the call-in also has commenting or phatic aspects.

broadcaster. It is moreover consistent with the persona features outlined above: service calls provide an unparalleled arena for promoting the agentive persona of a saviour-hero such as al-Wakeel, whereas comment and phatic calls are more congenial to an ordinary citizen persona such as that of al-Badri.

But similar contrasts also emerge when comparing how the hosts manage interaction *within* service calls. When service calls are considered as a group, differences in interaction length show some resemblance to the previously considered monologue segments:

	number of service calls	median service call length	total service call length	total recording time	service calls as % of recording time
al-Wakeel	65	134s (mean 137s)	8879s (148 min)	80418s (1340 min)	11.0%
al-Badri	146	72s (mean 78s)	11398s (190 min)	90454s (1508 min)	12.6%

Table 5.6. Select features of service calls in the data.

There are significantly more service calls in the recorded data for al-Badri than for al-Wakeel. As with monologues, this is linked to the different median lengths of the interaction for each particular broadcaster: the median length of a service call by al-Wakeel is a little over two minutes (134 seconds), versus a little over a minute (72 seconds) for al-Badri. On the other hand, service calls as such represent a very similar proportion of total programme time for both broadcasters: 11.0 percent for al-Wakeel versus 12.6 percent for al-Badri. In terms of raw airtime, then, service calls are a major component of

both programmes – although one should note that, while they represent the vast majority of all call-ins taken by al-Wakeel, al-Badri also takes a significant number of calls *in addition to service calls*. On *Wasaʿ al-balad*, significantly more time *in total* is thus dedicated to caller interactions than on *Barnāmiž al-wakīl* and *Bi-širāḥa*, although the difference is made up by comments and phatic exchanges rather than more service calls.

The gender imbalance among callers must also be noted here. On both al-Wakeel and al-Badri's programmes, only around a tenth of service callers appearing on the air are female. Out of 65 service calls taken by al-Wakeel in the data considered, 9 (13.8 percent) were made by female callers; for al-Badri, the number is 21 (14.4 percent) out of 146 service calls. The proportions of female callers out of the total number of calls taken are similar, at 13.0 percent for al-Wakeel and 12.3 percent for al-Badri, respectively. These numbers reflect the generally low participation of women in live call-in programmes in Jordan. While this tendency is not necessarily matched by an imbalance in listenership or audiences, it nevertheless suggests that male speakers are either much more likely to phone in than females, or are preferred as interlocutors by the radio station where the calls are filtered.

This phenomenon may be linked to local cultural norms that prioritise men speaking out in public; notably, all service programme hosts – and most hosts of radio programmes in Jordan generally – are men as well. It may also be affected, however, by linguistic norms. Following Salam Al-Mahadin's argument regarding the "gendered soundscape" of Jordanian non-government radio, speech styles stereotypically associated with men invoke ideologies of

patriotism and masculine authority, and thus make men more natural participants in service programmes – which are heavily invested in representing the Jordanian nation as well as highly agentic processes of problem-resolution.⁴³ Given that gender imbalances recur across different programme genres and types of call-ins, such linguistic ideological preferences are unlikely to be the single reason for the masculine bias of participation in service programmes; still, their impact cannot be ruled out.

No matter the gender of the caller, however, most service calls display a very similar structure. The host opens the interaction with a greeting, which the caller reciprocates; two or three more greeting turns follow, before the caller moves on to setting out their problem.

The following are two typical examples of call openings encountered in the data:

- Opening 1 (al-Wakeel)

[RR024]: [2:46:51]

MW: *alō ṣabāḥ el-ḳīr*

C1: *ṣabāḥ en-nūr*

MW: *yā halā*

C1: ((uh)) *a-yaʿṭik el-ʿāfiya*

MW: *aḷḷāh yəʿāfikī mīn maʿī*

C1: ((uh)) *maʿek nādya*

bas ((uh))

biddī aḥkī ʿa-żizdan mafqūd ilī

⁴³ Al-Mahadin, “Gendered Soundscapes,” 108.

[RR024]: [2:46:51]

MW: Hello, good morning

C1: Good morning

MW: Hello

C1: Uh, (God) give you strength

MW: God give you strength, who's with me?

C1: Uh, Nadiya is with you

Just, uh

I want to talk about a purse that I've lost⁴⁴

- Opening 2 (al-Badri)

[RR047]: [38:26]

HB: *tfaḍḍal yā ziyād*

C2: *ṣabāḥ el-gōr el-džamīl yā abū-*

HB: *ṣabāḥ el-ķēr 'ammē ziyād tfaḍḍal*

C2: *yā duktōr hānī ķēyf ḥālak*

HB: *yā halā*

C2: *aļļā yis'ad ṣabāḥak ṣabāḥ el-waṭan l-džamīl yā duktōr hānī*

HB: *ḥabībī šukran tfaḍḍal*

C2: *duktōr hānī ḥnā əttadžahnā ilā iqā'atek el-ķerīma*

HB: *u'mur*

C2: *((uh)) sīdī l-'azīz ((uh)) məntəqt ekrēyma*

HB: *kreyme na'am*

⁴⁴ "Barnāmiž al-wakīl, 1 December 2014," 2:46:51-2:47:02.

[RR047]: [38:26]

- HB: Go ahead, Ziyad
- C2: (Good) morning of the beautiful Ghor (= Jordan Valley), Abu –
- HB: Good morning, Uncle Ziyad, go ahead
- C2: Doctor Hani, how are you
- HB: Welcome
- C2: God grant you a happy morning, the morning of the beautiful
homeland, Doctor Hani
- HB: Thank you, my dear, go ahead
- C2: Doctor Hani, we have turned to your noble radio station
- HB: Say it (literally: “give the order”)
- C2: Uh, my dear sir, uh, the Krayma area
- HB: Krayma, yes⁴⁵

The two hosts both have distinctive styles of introducing callers. al-Wakeel gives his signature greeting – *alō, ṣabāḥ el-kīr* (“hello, good morning”) – before letting the caller speak; al-Badri, by contrast, introduces the caller by name (e.g. “Ziyad”) along with the polite formula *tfaḍḍalī / tfaḍḍal* (“go ahead,” as addressed to a female or male speaker, respectively). al-Wakeel’s callers give their name subsequently during the interaction – either of their own accord, or after a prompt by al-Wakeel, as “Nadiya” does in Opening 1 above. Note also that the caller’s origin or location is not usually given in the opening unless directly relevant to the issue of the call – as in Opening 2, in which the caller goes on to complain regarding roadside stalls and public hygiene in his

⁴⁵ “Wasat al-balad, 19 January 2015,” 38:26-38:47.

home town of Krayma. This contrasts with standardised formats of phone-in introductions in other contexts – for instance, UK live talk radio in the 1980s, in which Ian Hutchby has identified stating the caller’s location as a key component in addressing the interaction to a public of anonymous listeners.⁴⁶

As the caller proceeds to set out the problem, the host might interrupt them to ask for details; offer their own short comments, expressing astonishment, outrage, or sarcasm; or interpose a lengthier monologue setting out their own view on the subject. In many cases, callers themselves volunteer a way in which the issue can be made publicly relevant – saying, for example, that a certain bureaucratic difficulty concerns “a large group of people,” or that a damaged road is “dangerous” – or at least relevant to people in their locality, as with broken water pipes, damaged electricity pillars, or unlicensed roadside stalls. Broadcasters can similarly give wider public relevance to an issue, for instance by listing parallel cases elsewhere or broadening the problem to include the situation in Jordan more generally, as in the monologues examined above.

Typically, a service call concludes with a promise by the host that the topic will be “followed up” – which may be an explicit statement by the host saying they would contact the relevant authorities, or left implicit by restating the facts of the case before concluding the call.

The following are two examples of typical service call closings:

- Closing 1 (al-Wakeel)

⁴⁶ Hutchby, “Frame Attunement,” 46-8, 56-60.

(regarding issues with public transport in a village in Zarqa Governorate)

[RR025]: [1:48:35]

MW: *ṭayib*

iyā hiyya qariyet eš-šḵūt tābi'a le-qaḍā' əḍlīl

C1: *tābi'a le-qaḍā' ((uh)) i- na'am sīdī li-mḥāfḍət ez-zarqa'*

MW: *ṭayib aḵūy yāser wuṣilet risāltək*

*wuṣilet iḥnā mənwaṣṣillā hey'ət ən-naql l-barrī w-əḥnā bintābi' in šā'
a!!ā*

[RR025]: [1:48:35]

MW: All right

So it's the village of Shukhut, in Dalil District

C1: In the district, uh – yes, sir, in Zarqa Governorate

MW: All right, brother Yaser, your message has arrived

It's arrived, we're passing it on to the Land Transport Regulatory
Commission, and we'll follow up, God willing⁴⁷

- Closing 2 (al-Badri)

(regarding parking violations in Wihdat, a Palestinian refugee camp and
neighbourhood of Amman)

[RR007]: [37:17]

C2: *ṣirāḥa ḡābiṭ es-sīr l-mawḍūd fī l-wiḥḍāt ḡēyr musā'i-*

ḡēyr mutsā'əd iṭlāqan fī hāḡa l-mawḍū' ma'nā

HB: *māši okē yā iyād*

wuṣlet er-risāle šukran

⁴⁷ "Barnāmiž al-wakīl, 2 December 2014," 1:48:35-1:48:46.

[RR007]: [37:17]

C2: Honestly the traffic warden in Wihdat is not (helping) –

He doesn't cooperate with us at all on this issue

HB: Right, okay, lyad

The message has arrived, thanks⁴⁸

As these openings and closings demonstrate, the range of service call topics on both *Barnāmiž al-wakil / Bi-širāḥa* and *Wasaṭ al-balad* can be quite broad, including such varied issues as public transport, traffic violations, and notifications regarding lost property. On both programmes, personal bureaucratic difficulties or problems at the neighbourhood or municipality level are likewise frequent. But as with monologues, linguistic mechanisms also function to constitute distinct personae for al-Wakeel and al-Badri in service calls. Specifically, the two hosts' treatment of callers in such interactions exhibits characterological features consistent with their 'heroic' and 'ordinary citizen' personae, respectively.

Service programme callers often complain that some Jordanian government institution or authority is acting irresponsibly, or is being negligent in providing services to citizens. While both al-Wakeel and al-Badri seek to reassure such callers that their issues can indeed be solved, they frame their responses in somewhat different ways. Specifically, al-Wakeel tends to redefine such problems as dramatic arcs in which he acts as the central agent

⁴⁸ "Wasaṭ al-balad, 14 April 2014," *Wasaṭ al-balad* (Amman: Radio Fann, April 14, 2014), [RR007], author's archive, 37:17-37:25.

providing the solution to the problem. al-Badri, by contrast, though still promising an effort to follow up on the issue, likes to take up the role of world-weary commentator, not fundamentally different from the callers that speak with him on the air in the first place.

The following two excerpts illustrate how such persona contrasts can be performed in service call interactions. The first excerpt, from *Barnāmiž al-Wakīl*, involves a caller complaint regarding “weak” electricity current during the night in the area where he lives. The caller, introduced as Raed, recounts that he had tried to contact the electricity provider, but failed to get a response, and has thus decided to turn to al-Wakeel. al-Wakeel reassures him that he has made the right choice, by invoking his contact at the electricity company and explicitly setting out the pathway for solving the problem:

[RR027]: [2:44:46]

R: *bas rannēyt aḵtar mə-marra ya'n- mā*
ya'nī mā ḥada rafa'a s-sammā'a ygullī ēš fī bas šū mālak ēš fī
fa-gult ṭab a-ḵallīnī aldža' lə- abū hayṭam wə-akīd abū hayṭam 'an
ṭarīg abū hayṭam raḥ təḥall el-muškilē

MW: [**walā yhimmek**] *yā ra'əd* [**walā yhimmek**]

R: [**el-mulāḥaḍe**] [**ā**]

MW: *le-ennu l-uḵt* ((uh)) [**mahā**] *z-zo'bī*

R: [**u-fī**]

MW: *hiyya l-ḥaqīqa* ((uh)) *mahā z-zo'bī*
min šariket el-kahrabā
hiyya ma'nīyya bi-amar mudīr 'ām širkət el-kahrabā ennu

min es-sab'a le-l-'ašara māska
gelem u-gəddāmhā waraga w-btuktub kull el-mulāḥaḍāt
illi ((uh)) btəṭla' bi-l-barnāmidž u-li-ġāyet el-'ān
inta mā ittašalt illā 'ārif innī mā biḥkī bi-idni llā illā ṣ-ṣaḥīḥ

R: [*in šā' allā*]

MW: [*li-ġāyet*] *el-'ān kull el-mulāḥaḍāt*

illi

tilḥakā 'a-l-kahrabā ((uh)) ya'nī betāb'ūhā

biddek titwaqqa' ittišāl minhum

ba'd el-barnāmidž hum raḥ yəttāšlū ma'nā akīd

R: [*miš muškile miš muškile*]

MW: [*u-raḥ yōḳdū raqem*] *telefōnek*

fa-biddek titwaqqa' ittišāl minhum 'ašān

yidžū yzūrū l-manṭaga 'andek

[RR027]: [2:44:46]

R: But I rang them more than once, and, well, no –

I mean, nobody picked up the phone to tell me – just, 'what is it,'

'what's your problem,' 'what is it'

So I said, all right, let me resort to Abu Haytham, and surely Abu

Haytham – through Abu Haytham the problem will be solved

MW: [**Don't worry,**] Raed, [don't worry]

R: [**The comment –**] [Yes]

MW: Because the sister, uh, [**Maha**] al-Zu'bi

R: [**And there is –**]

MW: She is really, uh, Maha al-Zu'bi

From the (National) Electricity Company

She's charged – by order of the Director General of the Electricity Company

From 7 to 10 (AM), to hold

A pen, with a piece of paper before her, and to write all the comments

Which, uh, come up on the programme, and until now –

You wouldn't have called unless you'd known that I don't speak anything but the truth, with God's permission

R: [God willing]

MW: [Until] now, all the comments

That

Speak about electricity, uh – well, they follow them up

You should expect a call from them

After the programme – they will definitely call us

R: [No problem, no problem]

MW: [And they will take your (phone) number]

And you should expect a call from them so that they will

Come visit your area⁴⁹

Here, the caller does his own share of work in positioning al-Wakeel as the hero of the interaction – not least in his apparently sincere declaration of belief that “through Abu Haytham the problem will be solved.” Abu Haytham – al-Wakeel's teknonym and nickname by which many of his callers know and address him – signals agreement with this, and proceeds to identify an

⁴⁹ “Barnāmiž al-wakīl, 7 December 2014,” 2:44:46-2:45:33.

employee at the National Electricity Company whose sole job seems to be to listen to his programme in the morning.

Note, also, that this is accomplished through a specific discursive mechanism on part of al-Wakeel: interruptions and overlap. At two points, marked in bold in the transcript above, al-Wakeel cuts Raed off abruptly when the caller attempts to explain the problem further. Similar to strategies used by English-language radio hosts seeking to construct overwhelmingly superior personae through discursive means, al-Wakeel thus claims the floor from the caller in order to affirm his authority and promote his agenda, and reasserts his status as a problem-solving agent through a vivid description of his contacts at the Electricity Company and the actions they will take to solve Raed's issue.⁵⁰ Notably, the caller again contributes to al-Wakeel's construction of this persona, by ceding the floor to him almost immediately when interrupted.

al-Wakeel's response ultimately proposes a resolution to the drama experienced by the caller – though one to which al-Wakeel is crucial as a mediator. Nobody at the Electricity Company may be picking up the phone when an ordinary citizen calls; but they *are* listening to al-Wakeel's programme. In this way, al-Wakeel once again asserts himself as superior to his callers, performing the persona of a heroic saviour with unparalleled agentive potential to resolve problems.

⁵⁰ Cook, "Dangerously Radioactive," 65-79; Peter Moss and Christine Higgins, "Radio Voices," *Media, Culture & Society* 6 (1984), 364-6.

al-Badri, by contrast, is often less interested in emphasising this potential than criticising the fact that citizens face such problems in the first place. In the following excerpt, a caller introduced as Jawad complains about damaged roads in the city of Ruseyfa, close to Amman. Jawad claims the authorities are ignoring the problem since it does not affect the city's mayor personally – a position which al-Badri fully aligns with:

[RR046]: [35:31]

- J: *fa-ʿendnā hafriyyēt ektīre*
ū-s-siyyārāt itkassarat
wə-iḥnā tkassarnā
ū-raʿīs el-belediyye miš sāl bi-l-marra
yaʿni bāb bētu ṭab šūf bāb bētu kēf
- HB: ***kīf ((uh)) bāb bēytu əwşifli***
- J: *bāb bētu hassa dżanne hāda ʿibāra ʿan dżanne*
- HB: [*dżanne*]
- J: [*bi-*] *kull yōm byidżū yənaḍḍūlu iyyāha*
walā ḥufra ʿandu
- HB: ***bənaḍḍūlu iyyāha akīd kull yōm***
- J: ((uh)) *akīd yaʿnī anā bəšūf*
[*li-an anā sākin bi-l-manṭaga*]
- HB: [***akīd raʿīs el-belediyye***] ***bənaḍḍūlu iyyāha***

[RR046]: [35:31]

- J: So we have a lot of holes
(Our) cars have been broken

And we've been broken

And the mayor doesn't care at all

I mean, the gate of his house, well, look at what the gate of his house
is like

HB: **How is, uh, the gate of his house? Describe it to me**

J: The gate of his house – now, it's paradise, it's like paradise

HB: [Paradise]

J: [In –] They come clean it up for him every day

He doesn't have a single hole

HB: **They really come clean it up for him every day?**

J: Uh, really! I mean, I see

[Because I live in the area]

HB: **[Of course, the mayor,] they would clean up for him!**⁵¹

al-Badri's responses in this exchange, marked in bold in the transcript above, serve only to escalate a critical evaluation of the situation. He first prompts Jawad to proceed with his description of the gate to the mayor's house, which the caller already sets up as the reason for the municipality's negligence of the problem. al-Badri proceeds with an ostensibly fact-checking question – on whether the gate is really cleaned “every day” – in a raised tone of voice which suggests the query is more ironic than genuine. Finally, he concludes with a cynical summary that “of course” the gate to the mayor's house would be kept clean while the roads elsewhere in Ruseyfa remain full of holes.

⁵¹ “Wasat al-balad, 18 January 2015,” 35:31-35:57.

Despite his cynicism, at the end of the call, al-Badri ultimately promises to follow up on Jawad’s complaint with the mayor of Ruseyfa. The way in which he does so, however, does not focus on the host as hero of the dramatic arc to be resolved through mediation, but rather directly quotes Jawad’s reference to “cleaning up”:

[RR046]: [36:19]

HB: *ṭayib ənšūf raṭs belediyyet ərşeyfe w-nmarrir el-mulāḥaḍa ‘ašān*
((uh)) *yənaḍḍfūlkum iyyāha barḍo intu bi-l- bə-*
bi-l-manṭaqa fōg belāš ‘and raṭs el-belediyye bas

[RR046]: [36:19]

HB: All right, we’ll see the Mayor of Ruseyfa, and pass on the comment, so that –
Uh, they will clean up for you as well, in the –
The area above... not just next to the mayor⁵²

al-Badri still promises the programme team will “pass on” the comment, and thus function, presumably, function as effective mediating agents. But unlike al-Wakeel, he does not linger on the specific means through which they will do so, or reassure the caller regarding his agency by asserting links through particular contacts. He rather re-states his critical evaluation of the responsible authority – by quoting, moreover, the caller’s framing of the issue directly. Despite his privileged institutional position, in other words, al-Badri’s

⁵² “Wasat al-balad, 18 January 2015,” 36:19-36:28.

persona involves self-presentation as a fellow citizen-critic, as opposed to asserting an especially powerful mediating agency.

As with monologues, then, service calls also provide an effective context for persona performances. While service calls on both al-Badri's and al-Wakeel's programmes display a broadly similar structure – with distinct kinds of openings and closings, and similar tendencies to make individualised issues public, either by broadcasters or by callers themselves – the two broadcasters can be shown to cultivate two quite distinct on-air personae in their interactions with callers. In the cases of institutional negligence examined above, the hosts frame their responses to callers' issues rather differently – as an action-oriented resolution effected by a superior mediator, in al-Wakeel's case, versus assistance offered by a commentator that joins the caller in the ranks of resigned critique towards the authorities, in the case of al-Badri.

5.3.3 The dialogic construction of persona

As implied by the case of al-Wakeel's caller Raed above, however, hosts do not merely perform their personae through their own linguistic devices. In the setting of a talk radio programme, replete with other voices – either implicit, as in the addressivity of specific publics, or explicit, as in the case of callers with which broadcasters need to interact – the constitution of persona is necessarily a dialogic phenomenon. Following Bakhtin, environments marked by such a multiplicity of voices – by “heteroglossia” – require even the most authoritative expressive positions to be developed in a

dialogic relationship with the speech and language of others.⁵³ Attention must also be given, therefore, to how other participants in radio talk contribute to the performance of characterological features by presenters.

Here, the contrasts between al-Badri and al-Wakeel are perhaps less clear-cut. Callers are, indeed, often deferential or respectful towards al-Wakeel, as in Raed's case above; and they frequently present critical, sarcastic, or confrontational descriptions of a situation when communicating with al-Badri, as in the case of Jawad and the roads in Ruseyfa.

But the opposite is true just as often. In the excerpt below, al-Wakeel talks to a caller introduced as Huda, who is complaining about the delays to opening a new government hospital in the North Badiya district, which would both serve local patients and provide employment for recent nursing graduates. Although not evident from the transcript, the caller's intonation in this exchange was rather agitated, and her turns pronounced abruptly in a way that allowed little scope for formulas of respect or deference. Note also the multiple instances of overlap and interruption on al-Wakeel's part, marked in bold:

[RR025]: [2:14:54]

MW: *inti btiḥkī ma'ī 'alašān tawḍīf en-nās fī l-mustašfā walā yegaddim*

ḳidma ṣaḥḥiyya lə-n-nās

H: *la' 'ašān l-iṭnēyn le-ennu l-iṭnēyn fihā muwāṭinīn mista- bistafidū*

⁵³ Mikhail M. Bakhtin, *The Dialogic Imagination: Four Essays by M. M. Bakhtin*, ed. Michael Holquist, trans. Caryl Emerson and Michael Holquist (Austin, TX: University of Texas Press, 1981), 324-40.

[*el-mumarrīdīn illi tḡarradżū gā'dīn bi-l-bēyt*]

MW: [*hassa' anā ma' – anā ma' innu*]

H: [((inaudible))]

MW: [*isma'ī ḡayn- ((uh)) yā uḡt*] *hudā*

anā ma' innu abnā' al-bādiya

humma el-awlā bi-et-tawḡīf wə-t-ta'yīn wə-l-'amal fī

el-mustašfayāt el-mawḡūda bi-l-bādiya aw ayy madżāl 'amal āḡar

anā ma'a hēk [ya'nī]

H: [*akīd*]

MW: *mā yidżū nās min barra ya'nī*

lākin iḡna l-'ān bidnā nfakkir

bi-d-daradża l-ūla bi-mustašfā

biḡkī wazīr eḡ-ḡiḡḡa nnu mustašfā kbīr

u-raḡ ytimm iftitāḡu qabl nihāyet al-'ām

H: [((inaudible)) *innu yiftaḡu bas*]

MW: [*illi huwwa mustašfā l-bādiya*] *š-šamāliyya*

isma'ī barnāmidżnā u-btisma'ī ḡabar 'alā hāḡa l-mawḡū' inšā' !!ā

[RR025]: [2:14:54]

MW: Are you talking to me because of employing people in the hospital or
(for it to) offer medical services to people?

H: No – because of both, because with both there are citizens who will
benefit

[**The nurses who have graduated are sitting at home**]

MW: [**Now, I agree – I agree that –**]

H: [((inaudible))]

MW: [**Listen, uh – sister**] Huda

I agree that the people of the Badiya

Should be the first in employment and appointments and work in

The hospitals in the Badiya, or any other area of employment

I agree with this, [I mean]

H: [For sure]

MW: People shouldn't come from outside I mean

But we should think about

Most important, in a hospital

The Minister of Health says it is a big hospital

And it will be opened before the end of the year

H: [(??) – just for him to open it]

MW: [**That is, the (North) Badiya Hospital**]

Listen to our programme and you will hear news about this, God willing⁵⁴

Although al-Wakeel aligns with Huda on the issue of hiring locals to work in the hospital, this is merely a preface for his argument that it will indeed be opened soon, on the authority of the Health Minister. He ultimately asserts his superiority through quoting the authority of the Health Minister's promises – but in order to do so, he must actively intervene in Huda's talk, taking the floor from her through aggressive interruptions. And although Huda might believe that speaking about the issue on al-Wakeel's programme could expedite the hospital's opening, al-Wakeel himself implicitly dismisses the

⁵⁴ "Barnāmiž al-wakīl, 2 December 2014," 2:14:54-2:15:32.

notion, promising no follow-up but merely instructing the caller to re-assume a passive listener role in waiting for news on the issue.

While she ultimately submits to his authority, in this instance, al-Wakeel must nevertheless actively move against the caller in order to affirm his heroic persona. Unlike Raed, Huda does not exhibit a deferential stance appropriate to al-Wakeel's agentive heroism. Although temporary, her performance still mounts a challenge to the predominant persona construct promoted by al-Wakeel.

Similarly, not everyone plays along with al-Badri's self-presentation as merely another ordinary Jordanian citizen. First, as noted, most callers address him as "Doctor Hani" – which, for all al-Badri's efforts at maintaining a down-to-earth image, nevertheless places him in a fundamentally asymmetrical position to his callers, who are often individuals with little formal education, such as service sector workers and taxi drivers. There is also a high frequency of calls in which listeners call into *Wasaʔ al-balad* exclusively for the purpose of thanking al-Badri for having 'followed up' on their issue – where callers display an extremely respectful stance, often describing in detail how problems had been resolved, and thanking al-Badri specifically for his mediating role in the process.

In the exchange below, typical of such calls, a listener – Ziyad from Krayma, the same listener featuring in the "Opening 2" excerpt from *Wasaʔ al-balad* quoted above – called in a few days after his problem appeared on the air solely to thank al-Badri, displaying a highly deferential stance towards both the host and the officials involved:

[RR050]: [14:02]

Z: ((uh)) *istadżāb ilnā ‘uṭūft el-muḥafid ‘uṭūft el-məṣarref w-raṯs*
belediyyet əkreyma

əmbāriḥ kānat ḥamla wāsi’a dżiddan fī minṭagt əkreyma

HB: [*na’am*] [*na’am*]

Z: [*min*] *naḍāfa* [*min*] ((uh)) *bāstā- izālet bāstāt*
min kull šēy yā doktōr hānī

HB: ***intu bitfakkir [I-ekrēyme galil-] [((laughter))]***

Z: [*u anā waḷḷāhi*] *ḥabbēyt uş-şubeḥ* [*inni aškurek*]
ḥagīgt el-amr(??) li-ilk (k)ē- l-idā’a l-karīme

HB: *lā intu kbār bi-n-nisba ilnā*
l-ekrēyma miş galīle ‘aleynā yā ziyād

Z: *aḷḷā ya’izzek inta mā gaşşart wa-‘uṭūft al-muḥafid mā*
[*gaşşar ū*]

HB: [*ḥamdu li-llā*]

Z: *‘uṭūfet* [*el-mutaşarrif şukran*]

HB: [*huwa wa’ad w-el-*]

ḥ- wa’ad wə-l-ḥamdu li-llā

mişyet el-umūr şukrān yā ziyād

[RR050]: [14:02]

Z: Uh, His Excellency the Governor responded to us, His Excellency the
Provincial Governor, and the mayor of Krayma

Yesterday, there was a very extensive campaign in the Krayma area

HB: [*Yes,*] [*yes*]

Z: [Including] hygiene, [including,] uh, stalls – the removal of stalls

Including everything, Doctor Hani

HB: **Do you think that [Krayma is (worth) little-] [((laughter))]**

Z: [And I, really,] wanted today [to thank you]

Really, you (and) the noble station

HB: No, you are great as far as we're concerned

Krayma is not (worth) little to us, Ziyad

Z: God give you strength, you weren't negligent, and His Excellency the Governor was not [negligent and]

HB: [Praise be to God]

Z: His Excellency [the Provincial Governor – thank you]

HB: [He promised and –]

He promised and, praise be to God

Things have gone (well), thank you Ziyad⁵⁵

There are traces of al-Badri's signature approach here as well. Notably, in the section marked in bold in the transcript above, he interrupts the caller in order to lighten the atmosphere, humorously asking Ziyad whether he believes "Krayma is worth little." Still, the central focus of the call is to thank, and praise, al-Badri's agency in problem-resolution. al-Badri's interruption can be interpreted as an attempt to deflect this; but the caller's performance

⁵⁵ "Wasat al-balad, 22 January 2015," *Wasat al-balad* (Amman: Radio Fann, January 22, 2015), [RR050], author's archive, 14:02-14:30.

nevertheless frames him as the hero of the interaction, the crucial chain in the link which led to the streets of Krayma actually being cleaned.

al-Badri's very attempt at deflection, however, hints at a crucial contrast between his and al-Wakeel's personae in terms of caller engagement. Both broadcasters use strategies to lighten up the episodes of their programme through jokes and sarcasm. On al-Wakeel's programme, these are, however, mostly limited to Thursday 'pre-weekend' episodes, in which the programme does not take service calls but rather involves al-Wakeel reading out greetings from listeners, commenting on music, bantering with studio staff and making jokes at their expense, and occasionally phoning up guests to speak on lighter topics. al-Badri, by contrast, uses jokes and sarcasm almost constantly. This includes deflecting praise, as in the excerpt examined above; giving sarcastic comments in his monologues; or by using a humorous key to frame service calls as they come in.

In the following call, for example, a caller introduced as Shawqi declares he has a "problem" he wishes to talk about. Since the episode, to that point, had included numerous calls complaining about potholes and the poor quality of Jordanian roads in general, al-Badri jokingly anticipates this to be the subject of Shawqi's call as well:

[RR046]: [43:32]

S: *duktōr anā mbāriḥ kānat 'andī muškila*

HB: *šāra' mkassar wə-lā ġēyru*

S: *lā' ((uh))* [((laughter))]

HB: [((laughter))] *ṭayib tfaḍḍal*

[RR046]: [43:32]

S: Doctor, yesterday I had a problem

HB: A damaged road, or something else?

S: No, uh – [((laughter))]

HB: [((laughter))] Right, go ahead⁵⁶

Although the call ended up being about something a completely unrelated topic – namely, extortionate parking fees at Amman’s international airport – the caller did not take al-Badri’s light-heartedness against him; indeed, he responded with laughter, at least outwardly aligning with al-Badri in finding the joke humorous.

In such cases, it is still al-Badri who is pulling the strings, by making jokes at his audience’s expense. But often, callers *themselves* also take the initiative – signalling, in effect, that al-Badri’s programme provides a performance context in which they can safely function as al-Badri’s equals in making humorous comments on their problems and day-to-day issues of importance in Jordan. Listening regularly to *Wasaʔ al-balad*, for example, one is bound to notice a number of ‘running gags’ repeated by different callers when speaking on apparently unrelated issues. This is the case, for example, with the phrase *al-bāgiye ‘andek* – literally “you have the rest” or “you have the change” – used by many callers in conclusion to comment calls, with the rough sense of ‘no comment.’ al-Badri always has a good-humoured response ready

⁵⁶ “Wasaʔ al-balad, 18 January 2015,” 43:32-43:39.

for this idiom, and its constant reoccurrence functions as a proper signature phrase for the programme – a cue for the development of al-Badri’s on-air persona, though one that is crucially initiated by callers rather than the broadcaster himself.

Occasionally, caller jokes are also more elaborate. Consider the following excerpt, where a listener, Ahmad, phoned in to comment on a recent incident in the Jordanian parliament in which a female deputy, Hind al-Fayez, had been insulted in a sexist manner by another deputy, Yahya al-Saud:

[RR036]: [1:06:52]

A: *yā sīdī anā bə- ((uh))*
bəliff – bəliff ((uh)) be-‘ammān
maktūb sālōn li-r-riḏžāl

HB: *sālōn li-r-riḏžāl mā-lu*

A: *ā*
yā-ḳī ḳaṭa’ hāy el-ma‘lūme
yuktubū sālōn li-ḡ-ḡukūr

HB: *lēš*

A: *yā-ḳī mā – mā ‘annā rdžāl b-širāḥa ya’nī*

HB: *mā ((uh)) la’ bas in ḳaliyet bilyet yā aḥmad ma’gūl*

A: *yā sī- yā sīdī ((uh))*
lā lə-yuktubū sālōn lə-ḡ-ḡukūr adaqq sīdī

HB: *yuktubū sal- ((laughter))*

[RR036]: [1:06:52]

A: Sir, I, uh

- I go – I go around, in Amman
 It's written 'hairdresser for men'
- HB: 'Hairdresser for men,' what's wrong with that?
- A: Yes
 Brother, this information is false
 They (should) write 'hairdresser for males'
- HB: Why?
- A: Brother, we don't – we don't have any men, I mean, honestly
- HB: We don't – uh, no, but, 'there will always be good people around' (*in ḵaliyet bilyet*), Ahmad, right?
- A: Sir – sir, uh
 No, they should write 'hairdresser for males,' sir, it's more accurate
- HB: They should write... ((laughter))⁵⁷

The humour is subtle, hinging on the implication that Jordan's "men" – of which the offending Yahya al-Saud is an example – are a disgrace to an image of honourable masculinity. Rather, they are mere "males" (*dukūr*), a term used technically to refer to somebody's sex, and recalling animals just as much as people.

This kind of sarcastic comment on a public figure's behaviour fits perfectly into the atmosphere of a programme governed by al-Badri's persona. This is, indeed, confirmed by al-Badri's own responses during the call, which include a heavy dose of irony – with the proverb *in ḵaliyet bilyet*, literally "if [the

⁵⁷ "Wasaṭ al-balad, 4 December 2014," 1:06:52-1:07:15.

world] was emptied [of good people] it would fall apart,” enunciated with a raised intonation – as well as laughter at the end of the joke.

On a programme hosted by al-Wakeel, by contrast, such a joke would simply be unthinkable. al-Wakeel does not take many comment calls in the first place; when he does, they are framed in a strictly serious, straightforward manner, both by callers as well as al-Wakeel himself in any subsequent comments he might make. With al-Badri, on the other hand, not only are irony and humour more prevalent generally, but callers also demonstrate a sense of having the license to contribute to this environment. This suggests, at least in comparative terms, a somewhat more accessible structure of participation on al-Badri’s programme than al-Wakeel’s.

Of course, this very participation implies a degree of investment in al-Badri’s persona on part of callers. If we take the dialogic nature of persona constitution seriously, we must acknowledge that any jokes that callers make – ostensibly on a level with al-Badri, as fellow ‘ordinary citizens’ – feed into the narrative of his programme as implying equality between caller and broadcaster. A persistent power asymmetry is also suggested by echoes of deference and agentive heroism on part of al-Badri’s callers, as demonstrated by the respectful manner adopted by many callers, as well as the frequent ‘thanking’ calls in which listeners praise al-Badri for resolving their problems. On the other hand, al-Wakeel’s overbearing heroic persona is not immune to challenges – even if they are only temporary, as in Huda’s call examined above.

Nevertheless, even once the dialogic dimension of caller contributions to persona is put into perspective, there remains a *relative* difference in the degree of equal participation allowed to callers by al-Wakeel and al-Badri's linguistic performances. Through joking and humour in particular, al-Badri's 'ordinary citizen' persona allows at least a semblance of equal engagement – which is comparably more difficult for callers confronted with the domineering 'heroic' performances of al-Wakeel.

#

The ultimate aim of radio host persona is to grant a sense of real personhood and individual authenticity to what would otherwise merely be a disembodied broadcaster voice. Given the limitations of radio as a medium, the main question is how to perform such personhood by means of sound alone. The present chapter has examined some of the primary linguistic means for constructing persona on Jordanian service programmes – including stance-taking and addressivity in host monologues, as well as different ways of interacting with callers. Even against a common generic background, al-Wakeel and al-Badri's performances exhibit differences that suggest two quite different individuals behind their on-air personae: al-Wakeel as a powerful, indeed heroic, agent who can solve any problem through his extensive influence and connections, versus al-Badri as an ordinary citizen, not unlike his listeners in his resigned humour and criticism of the social and political situation in Jordan.

This suggests a rather more complex situation than is depicted by both supporters and detractors of the service programme genre. Service programmes are not just open spaces for free citizen participation; but they are not merely platforms for begging and job search appeals either. They include various forms of linguistic performance beyond service calls, including monologues, phatic calls, and comment calls. Both broadcasters and callers, as we have seen, also engage in discursive efforts to make individual issues relevant directly to a broader Jordanian national public. These are important aspects of the role of service programmes in Jordan today which can only be revealed through a detailed interpretive study of language in such programmes.

Even more importantly, such a study also underscores the broader relevance of difference in the personae of programme hosts, in particular caller participation. For a host such as al-Wakeel, callers may ultimately have little choice other than submit to his heroic arc-making and assumptions of power. But with al-Badri, whose fellow citizen persona implies a position comparable to his callers, there is more scope for equal performances. Asymmetries of discursive power remain in both cases; for all his joking and sarcastic commentary, al-Badri is still the interactant positioned to resolve problems on part of his callers, rather than the other way around. But the nuances of on-air linguistic performance suggest that the genre is much more varied in this respect than might be assumed from looking at its formal features alone.

It is also, however, necessary not to overstate the effects of persona differentiation, for two main reasons. First, the ideal audience of service

programmes remains firmly Jordanian. The jingles, music background, and dialect all make it clear that service programmes are aimed at a Jordanian national public only, to the exclusion of all others. The authentic problems presented by callers thus remain predominantly *Jordanian* problems, the service provided limited to the national level, to Jordanian citizens frustrated by the lack of response from ‘their’ state institutions. Non-Jordanians may listen in, but it is not a space meant for them. While one might imagine a host persona more congenial to outsiders – a Lebanese broadcaster, perhaps, or one who would downplay the genre’s nationalist overtones – no such persona is, at the moment, present in the Jordanian radio field, and may indeed not be feasibly performed within the strictures of the genre.

Second, as Norma Ellen Verwey has suggested, persona-focused performance may itself detract from equal participation in radio talk shows, as it cannibalises on the interaction in order to focus on the host’s “star-making” strategies alone.⁵⁸ While Verwey’s analysis perhaps idealises the possibility of a pure, unadulterated communicative exchange between equals in a broadcast setting, it is a useful reminder of the fact that service programmes are inevitably centred around their hosts. Since problem-solving is the ostensible focus of the programme, its very existence depends on the authority of the broadcaster as an effective intermediary. In a sense, this normalises a form of governance in which state institutions are irresponsive to citizens unless some kind of intercession is made – in other words, *wāṣṭa*. But it also

⁵⁸ Norma Ellen Verwey, *Radio Call-Ins and Covert Politics: A Verbal Unit and Role Analysis Approach* (Aldershot: Avebury, 1990), 114-5, 218-20, 236-40.

carries the uncomfortable implications of framing people's problems as a form of entertainment, supremely authentic raw material exploited to draw in audiences and advertisements and prop up the stardom of a radio host. The programmes' active search for authenticity in soliciting service calls is not just a strategy for making media content relevant to local audiences, but also a way of bolstering the hosts' legitimacy.

Nevertheless, as the present chapter has demonstrated, there is still potential for different kinds of participation in radio programmes through modifying broadcasters' characterological self-presentation. While the excerpts considered are merely snapshots of much more extensive, day-to-day performance practices, they would not be conceivable without an underlying understanding of a specific kind of host persona. Language plays an important role in developing distinct host personalities – which, in turn, affect both how radio audiences are addressed and legitimised, and the particular ways in which members of the public can participate in mass-mediated interaction.

Noha Mellor's work on contemporary Arab journalism and the hierarchies it engenders between "regional" and "local" media outlets has shown that any evaluation of the role of media should closely attend to both the *content* of the medium as well as the possibilities for *access* it offers to media consumers.⁵⁹ My work on Jordanian service programmes indicates that, in addition to content and access, an important role is also played by the *form* of mediated interaction – that is, the linguistic and discursive norms and

⁵⁹ Mellor, *Modern Arab Journalism*, 109-15.

practices that influence exactly *how* broadcasters and callers, producers and consumers, ultimately interact. Closer attention to idiosyncratic features of individual language and performance can thus importantly enrich the insights provided by more generalisation-oriented sociolinguistic and linguistic anthropological study, and provide a more complete picture regarding the relevance of language use in mediated settings.

Of course, Jordanian radio broadcasters never simply have full freedom to use language in a way that would reinforce one kind of persona as opposed to another. The generic frame of the programme exerts limitations, as suggested above in the case of service programmes in particular. But other kinds of programmes require hosts to draw on linguistic resources that exert authority on their own terms. One example are programmes offering religious advice to pious listeners, which form the focus of the next chapter.

#

6. The Authority of Religious Talk in Islamic Advice Programmes

The 1 December, 2014 episode of the Islamic advice programme *Iirmi hammak* – literally, "Cast Aside Your Worries" – on Radio Hala began with a curious appropriation of radio metaphors to an Islamic ontological framework by the host Muhammad Nouh al-Qudah. In his address to listeners at the beginning of the programme, Nouh – one of the most famous pro-regime Islamic preachers in Jordan, as well as a politician and former minister of religious endowments (*awqāf*) – first referenced the familiar idiom of God viewing people through their “hearts” (*gəlūb*), and hence knowing intimately whether their innermost emotions and intentions are pious and sincere. In order to be “in touch” (*tattaṣəl*) with God, Nouh claimed, one needs to be able to attune their heart to Him. Doing so, however, is a process similar to how one would “tune” one’s radio receiver in order to listen to a particular radio station:

[RR029]: [08:35]

MN: *lā yumkin tistamə' lē- rādyo halā illā idā ḍabaṭət er-rādyo 'ala miyye
wə-tnēyn fāṣli wāḥed
bi-'ammān
tamām
lā yumkin tattaṣəl ma'a l̄lāh 'azza w-džall illā idā ḍabaṭət gelbek 'a-l-
mōwdž eṣ-ṣaḥḥ
el-mōwdž eṣ-ṣaḥḥ ma'a l̄lāh 'azza wə-džall maḥabbe w-raḥma w-*

*wa-‘aṭif wa-ḥanān ‘ala ḵalqi llāh ‘azza wə-džall ḥāy el-mōwdž eṣ-ṣaḥḥ
ma‘a llā ‘azza w-džall*

[09:13]

MN: *bideyāt kul barnāme(dž) mindakkər bi-mawqe‘ er-rādyo
mindakkər aydan
bi-mawqe‘i naḍari llāh tabāraka wa-ta‘āla
zabbəṭ nīytək
ma‘a llāh
wa-lemā tuḗbuṭ ma‘ek gullu
gullu yā rabb*

[RR029]: [08:35]

MN: You can't listen to Radio Hala unless you tune your radio to 102 point
one (= 102.1, the Radio Hala FM frequency)
In Amman
Okay?
You can't get in touch with Almighty God unless you tune your heart
to the correct frequency
The correct frequency with Almighty God is love and compassion
and...
And affection and sympathy for Almighty God's creation, this is the
correct frequency with Almighty God

[09:13]

MN: At the beginning of every programme we remind (you) of where the
radio (station) is
And we also remind (you)
Of the place where God, the Blessed and Sublime, looks (at us) from

Order your intentions

With God

And when they're ordered, say to him:

Say to him: 'Oh Lord'¹

The "frequency" invoked by Muhammad Nouh is, presumably, one that can be accessed by any of his Muslim listeners, if they only "order" (*zabbəṭ*) their intentions – that is, think and act in ways that comply with Islamic notions of religious obedience. And it is precisely programmes such as Nouh's that provide advice on how people might 'tune' themselves in order to genuinely "step in touch" with God.

On *Iirmi hammak*, as on other Islamic advice programmes on Jordanian non-government radio, listeners call in to receive authorised answers from preachers and religious scholars on every issue imaginable, from the appearance of the Prophet Muhammad in dreams to the appropriateness of euthanising pets. In doing so, these programmes presuppose its participants and publics to have a predominantly Islamic orientation. On Jordanian non-government radio, this effect is accomplished primarily through language use, via distinct discursive strategies that mark Islamic texts as sources of authority and legitimate bases for pious conduct.

In this chapter, I first provide an overview of Islamic advice programmes in the context of contemporary Jordanian non-government radio broadcasting.

¹ "Iirmi hammak, 1 December 2014," *Iirmi hammak* (Amman: Radio Hala, December 1, 2014), [RR029], author's archive, 08:35-08:57, 09:13-09:26.

Like the service programmes considered in Chapter 5, Islamic advice programmes form a distinct genre through the co-occurrence of certain discursive features, such as pious addresses and monologues at the beginning of the programme, and ‘advice calls’ with a religious bent.

Although such features already delineate the programmes as religiously oriented, their most distinctively Islamic aspect is the authoritative framing of Muslim religious texts by broadcasters in their on-air linguistic performance. Following Steven Caton, I argue that entextualisation strategies in spoken language play a crucial role in “authorising” textual traditions such as that of the core texts of Islam – the Qur’an and hadith literature – and their validated interpretations.² Authoritative texts and discourses are, in other words, not just authoritative by themselves; they need to be invoked and framed in specific ways that *give* them this authority. And Islamic advice programme hosts expend considerable effort establishing such authority linguistically. They accomplish this through direct quotations from authorised sources, as well as their own personae as learned Islamic scholars – presenting themselves as supremely qualified animators of texts imbued with a special kind of religious authority. By framing the textual tradition in this manner, broadcasters thus reinforce the hallowed status of Islamic religious knowledge as an exceptional and authoritative source for pious conduct.

But the hosts’ public addressivity and interactions with callers also dialogically presuppose participants who accept such lines of authority as valid

² Steven C. Caton, “What Is an ‘Authorizing Discourse?’”, in *Powers of the Secular Modern: Talal Asad and His Interlocutors* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2006), 42-5, 50-6.

means for establishing piety in the first place. This point emerges most clearly in the advice hosts give out to callers – which, if followed, would presumably lead listeners to a more pious lifestyle closer to God. In this way, linguistic invocations of religiously authoritative discourse limit the audiences and participants of Islamic advice programmes to individuals who accept this discourse as externally indicative of religious truth. On the other hand, the authority of this discourse is itself actively constituted through linguistic performance – suggesting it is not entirely pre-given, but also an interactional accomplishment in its own right.

The language of broadcasters and other participants thus plays a central role in making Islamic advice programmes ‘Islamic’ in the first place. Through this example, the present chapter provides an empirical example of the role of “authorising discourses” in language – a topic which deserves more attention especially in studies of Arabic linguistic variation, whose focus on diglossic variation tends to consign quotations from the Qur’an and Muslim religious texts to the ‘High’ diglossic bracket without exploring the interactional nuances on their use.³ But the particular linguistic strategies involved in producing these discourses also have broader social implications. Language is deployed in ways that presupposes the doctrinal authority of certain texts for leading a more pious Islamic life – invoking a public that shares this evaluation of authority, and requiring participants to accept the broadcasters’ expert-hood

³ Caton, “What Is an ‘Authorizing Discourse’?”, 42-5.

in order to sustain the grounds for further interaction.⁴ Ostensibly inclusive mass media, such as radio advice shows, therefore impose limits on audience legitimation and public participation, through linguistic mechanisms which need to be examined in detail in order to evaluate their ultimate socio-cultural import.

6.1 The Islamic advice programme genre

When Arabic-language non-government radio stations in Jordan feature religious programming, the content invariably pertains to Sunni Islam. A handful of stations are dedicated exclusively to religious content, representing an Islamic station sub-format designed to attract a devout audience that seeks to lead a religiously acceptable life by following validated Sunni Muslim standards of belief and pious behaviour. The most popular of these stations are Hayat FM and Radio Husna, linked to the ‘hardliner’ (“falcon,” *ṣuqūr*) and ‘softliner’ (“dove,” *ḥamā'im*) factions of the Jordanian Muslim brotherhood, respectively; and, since January 2015, Yaqeen, a station established and run by the popular preacher and politician Muhammad Nouh, whose *Irmi hammak* programme had previously gained wide popularity on Radio Hala. In addition to religious programmes filling up most of their airtime, these stations further display their Islamic orientation by featuring pious music

⁴ Ian Hutchby, “Aspects of Recipient Design in Expert Advice-giving on Call-in Radio,” *Discourse Processes* 19, no. 2 (March 1995): 219–38.

or Qur'anic recitation (*taḏwīd*), and pausing programming to play the Muslim call for prayer (*āḏān*).

Such radio stations do not, of course, exist in a socio-political vacuum. Over 95% of the Jordanian population is Sunni Muslim, and Islamic narratives enjoy a high degree of prominence in public life. The regime draws on Islamic symbols for its legitimacy, for instance by deriving the lineage of the ruling Hashemite dynasty from the family of the Prophet Muhammad, but also seeks to control what Jillian Schwedler has termed the “public narrative” of Islam through tight control over the appointment of preachers, the issuing of binding Islamic legal rulings (*fatwas*), and regulation of Islamic social organisations and cultural centres.⁵ Likewise, the Jordanian Muslim Brotherhood, an organisation committed to Islamic reform and revival as an alternative to perceived intrusion of secular and Western values, has been active in the country since the 1940s – acting for the most part as a non-political charitable organisation, but enjoying various degrees of cooperation with the regime throughout the 20th century.⁶ Islamic charitable non-governmental organisations have also grown in importance since the early 1990s, providing services such as education, medical services, and marriage loans to increasing numbers of Jordanians.⁷

⁵ Jillian Schwedler, *Faith in Moderation: Islamist Parties in Jordan and Yemen* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006), 137-41.

⁶ Janine A. Clark, *Islam, Charity, and Activism: Middle-Class Networks and Social Welfare in Egypt, Jordan, and Yemen* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2004), 84-9.

⁷ Clark, *Islam*, 91-5; Quintan Wiktorowicz and Suha Taji Farouki, “Islamic NGOs and Muslim Politics: A Case from Jordan,” *Third World Quarterly* 21, no. 4 (February 2000): 685–699.

In this environment, media play a central part in promoting a pious orientation that many Muslim Jordanians seek to follow. Entire shops are dedicated to the sale of so-called Islamic “recordings” (*taszīlāt*), which feature recitations of sections of the Qur’an, as well as sermons by popular preachers speaking on topics of interest for contemporary Muslim audiences. Also popular are the multiple Arabic-language Islamic TV channels, broadcast via satellite and mostly based in Egypt or Saudi Arabia. These likewise feature sermons and Qur’anic recitation, but also advice and discussion programmes, focusing on ‘Islamic’ viewpoints or solutions to contemporary issues.⁸ Such media offer explicit advice on religiously acceptable behaviour, but also cultivate Islamic dispositions more indirectly. As Charles Hirschkind has demonstrated with regard to cassette sermons in Egypt, the very consumption of such media – through sound and audition in particular – is seen by devout Muslims to develop an embodied ethical alignment with Islamic ideals, and therefore stimulate pious conduct.⁹ They thus form a prime site for the production and circulation of language considered authoritative by large segments of the Muslim population – that is, language drawing on a textual tradition whose purpose is to define certain kinds of belief and behaviour as correct and authoritative according to Islamic religious precepts, what Steven Caton has termed the “authorising discourse” of Islamic thought and practice.¹⁰

⁸ Jakob Skovgaard-Petersen, “Islamic Fundamentalism in Arab Television: Islamism and Salafism in Competition,” in *Fundamentalism in the Modern World, Volume 2: Fundamentalism and Communication: Culture, Media and the Public Sphere*, ed. Ulrika Mårtensson et al. (London & New York: I. B. Tauris, 2011), 270-5.

⁹ Hirschkind, *Ethical Soundscape*, 67-104.

¹⁰ Caton, “What Is an ‘Authorizing Discourse’?”, 42-5.

Contemporary Jordanian non-government radio plays an important role in the production of such discourses. In Jordan's pious media ecology, radio's function is partly to provide a religiously congenial sonic background. Islamic radio stations are often heard on public transport as an alternative to more commercial fare; shopping malls and restaurants regularly play *taḏwīd*, especially during the Muslim holy month of Ramadan. But these goals are accomplished just as easily by recorded material as they are through radio listening. What specifically distinguishes radio from other types of pious auditory media is its potential for *live-ness*: the temporal linearity, or evanescence, of its broadcasts. As discussed in Chapter 3, this form of transmission implies temporal simultaneity between media production and consumption, and thus the potential for a more immediate link between broadcasters and their audiences.

A prime example of this are call-in programmes, where listeners communicate with broadcasters directly – a niche filled, in Jordanian religious radio programming, by Islamic advice programmes, such as Nouh's *Irmi hammak*. "Islamic advice programmes" is my English term for a group of programmes in which audience members phone in or send in messages on points of Islamic doctrine, or proper pious conduct in specific situations. These are subsequently answered live on the air by the broadcaster, always a trained male religious scholar. Locally, such programmes are sometimes known as "fatwa programmes" (*barāmiḏ fatāwa*). The answers given by the scholars can indeed be technically considered *fatwas*, in the sense of being non-binding, although authoritative, legal opinions on points of religious law or doctrine; and

the Islamic advice programme on Hayat FM, hosted by the scholar Ibrahim al-Jarmi, is even titled *Fatāwa*, “Fatwas.” I have chosen, however, to use a different term for the generic label in order to avoid confusion with official *fatwa* pronouncements regulated by the state.¹¹ In Jordan, such pronouncements are issued on a national level by the General Iftaa’ Department (*Dā’irat al-iftā’ al-‘ām*), to which broadcasters such as Nouh and al-Jarmi are not formally affiliated.

This contrasts, for example, with *fatwa* programmes on national radio stations in some Muslim countries – such as that examined by Brinkley Messick in 1980s Yemen, where the chief mufti (issuer of *fatwas*) in the country was directly involved in answering listener questions.¹² On the other hand, they are still led by qualified *scholars*, who provide formal, top-down answers based on their jurisprudential expertise – rather than merely generalised advice given by fellow believers with no necessary religious qualifications, as in Islamic “counselling” programmes analysed by Jakob Skovgaard-Petersen on Islamic satellite TV channels.¹³

Islamic advice programmes thus give pious Jordanians the chance to acquire advice grounded directly in Islamic jurisprudence; but they also

¹¹ Muhammad Khalid Masud, Brinkley Messick, and David S. Powers, “Muftis, Fatwas, and Islamic Legal Interpretation,” in *Islamic Legal Interpretation: Muftis and Their Fatwas*, ed. Muhammad Khalid Masud, Brinkley Messick, and David S. Powers (Cambridge, MA & London: Harvard University Press, 1996), 3-4.

¹² Brinkley Messick, “Media Muftis: Radio Fatwas in Yemen,” in *Islamic Legal Interpretation: Muftis and Their Fatwas*, ed. Muhammad Khalid Masud, Brinkley Messick, and David S. Powers (Cambridge, MA & London: Harvard University Press, 1996), 314-9.

¹³ Skovgaard-Petersen, “Islamic Fundamentalism,” 278.

combine this provision of expertise with immediate, ‘live’ answers on the air, bypassing the bureaucratic written procedures of *fatwa*-giving through formal state channels. Their popularity is, therefore, hardly surprising, and they form a highly prominent media platform that reflects the wide-ranging public interest in Islamic piety in Jordan today.

Station	Programme	Time	Host
Radio Hala (until December 2014)	<i>Iirmi hammak</i> ("Cast Aside Your Worries")	15:00 – 16:00	Muhammad Nauh
Radio Hala (from January 2015)	<i>Rayyih bālak</i> ("Calm Your Mind")	6:00 – 7:00	Zayd al-Masri
Hayat FM	<i>Fatāwa</i> ("Fatwas")	13:30 – 14:30	Ibrahim al-Jarmi
Yaqeen	<i>‘alā baṣīra</i> ("With Insight")	18:00 – 19:00	Ismaeel Nauh

Table 6.1. Major Islamic advice programmes in Jordan in 2014-15.

As Table 6.1 demonstrates, such programmes are not limited to the Islamic station sub-format. Muhammad Nauh’s *Iirmi hammak* programme was broadcast on the army-run Radio Hala until December 2014. After Nauh’s departure to found Yaqeen, the station replaced this with another programme, *Rayyih bālak*, led by a different scholar, Zayd al-Masri. Although he is much less prominent as a scholar and public figure, al-Masri’s programme nevertheless closely resembled Nauh’s, with the broadcaster taking phone-ins and listener messages and responding with advice on various Islamic topics.

This shows that stations with a more patriotic or nationalist orientation, such as Radio Hala, do not exclude provision of Islamic content as part of their purview – suggesting that a pious Muslim audience is considered a relevant segment of the Jordanian national public that they address.

Further, the religious focus of Islamic advice programmes, as well as Islamic format stations more broadly, does not mean that religion is cordoned off inside such programmes or stations alone. There are frequent references to God and Islam, for example, in morning service programmes, including those presented by Muhammad al-Wakeel and Hani al-Badri. In one programme covering the passage of a winter snowstorm over Amman, al-Wakeel invoked God’s absolute power over the weather, “changing the situation” (*yuġayyir al-ḥāl min ḥāl ilā ḥāl*) from one minute to another.¹⁴ Similarly, in a string of programmes following the killings at the headquarters of the French magazine Charlie Hebdo, Hani al-Badri referred to what he termed his own “campaign for the Prophet” (*ḥamlat ar-rasūl*) in order to promote a peaceful, tolerant image of the Prophet Muhammad supposedly distorted both by Islamic fundamentalists and disrespect from satirical cartoons such as those published by Charlie Hebdo.¹⁵

But despite the appearance of religious references across other types of programmes, Islamic advice programmes nevertheless exhibit a number of features that define them as a distinct genre. These features include particular

¹⁴ “Barnāmiž al-wakīl, 11 January 2015 (2),” *Barnāmiž al-wakīl* (Amman: Radio Hala, January 11, 2015), [RR039], author’s archive, 29:45-30:22.

¹⁵ “Wasat al-balad, 19 January 2015,” 16:07-16:59, 50:47-51:45, 58:06-59:28; “Wasat al-balad, 22 January 2015,” 1:29:29-1:29:41.

kinds of linguistic performance and other sonic elements that, through persistent co-occurrence, function as generic cues characterising the genre as addressed to a pious Jordanian audience in particular.

First, every Islamic advice programme tends to begin with an initial religious address or exhortation, directed at listeners generally. After a formulaic opening which includes an invocation in the name of God (*basmala*, beginning with the formula *bismillāh ar-raḥmān ar-raḥīm* “in the name of God the Merciful and Compassionate”), blessings for the Prophet Muhammad, and the name of the programme, as well as phone numbers for call-ins and relevant remediated means through which listeners may contact the station, hosts usually proceed with a short monologue on some aspect of proper pious conduct or Sunni doctrine. Muhammad Nouh’s reflections on “God’s frequency,” quoted above, are one example of this kind of monologue. Similarly, Ibrahim al-Jarmi began one episode of his *Fatāwa* programme with a comment on the deplorable tendency of people without proper training and education to give judgments on aspects of Islamic thought and doctrine:

[RR082]: [01:36]

IJ: *qabla an nabda’ ayyuhā l-kirām uḍakkir bi- qaḍīyyatin hāmma*
 šāḡalatnī w-anā fī ṭ-ṭarīq
 ((uh)) *ḍalik anna min an-nāsi l-yowm man yata’āṭawna l-fiqh man*
 yaqra’ūna fī kutub at-turāt
 ((uh)) *yatafāṣaḥūn*
 fa-yanbišūna kutub at-turāt
 ‘an masā’ila šāḡḍa

aw ‘an aḥādīṭ dāhiruha muškilun dżiddan
wa-liḡā
yażib an nuḥaddīṭa n-nās bi-mā ya‘qilūn

[RR082]: [01:36]

IJ: Before we begin, honourable (listeners), I (shall) mention an important issue which has occupied me on the way (here) Which is that today there are people who engage in interpretation of religious texts (*fiqh*) and read books of the (Islamic) tradition Pretending mastery (of them) So they delve in books of the tradition For abnormal issues Or hadiths whose meaning is very problematic And therefore We must address people with what they (can) comprehend¹⁶

These monologues often address listeners in the second person plural or singular – as in Nouh’s “God’s frequency” excerpt, for example in the clause *lā yumkin **tattaṣəl** ma‘a **!!āh** “you (singular) cannot **get in touch** with God”;* though they can also involve hortative use of the first person plural, as with al-Jarmi’s “**we** must **address** people” (*yażib an **nuḥaddīṭa** n-nās*). They are not present in every single episode; the frequency of their occurrence is also affected by host persona, as I discuss below. Nevertheless, both their religious

¹⁶ “Fatāwā, 10 February 2015,” *Fatāwā* (Amman: Hayat FM, February 10, 2015), [RR082], author’s archive, 01:36-01:58.

subject matter as well as their firm positioning at the beginning of the programme mark them out as distinct to Islamic advice programmes.

Following this initial address, hosts then begin to answer questions on Islamic doctrine and practice posed by their listeners. Sometimes, these questions are provided through remediated means – for instance, via text messages, or comments and private messages on Facebook – but they occur most prominently in what I term the *advice call*, when listeners call in live in order to pose a question (or several) to the host on the programme.

A handful of other call types – such as service and phatic calls – also occur, but the vast majority of phone-ins on Islamic advice programmes are of the advice call type. The actual topics vary widely; listeners regularly call in regarding strictly doctrinal issues such as the interpretation of certain words in the Qur'an, but also questions about ritual practice such as the amount of movements (*raka'āt*) in prayer under particular conditions, questions about money and inheritance, and requests for comment on broader social issues such as charity and conduct with relatives. What callers expect in response to their queries is inevitably an authoritative pronouncement on practices or beliefs deemed appropriately Islamic – one which the host of the programme is considered qualified to provide.

This contrasts with other types of phone-ins on Jordanian non-government radio, in which the host might be contacted for their perceived ability to contact officials and publicise issues – as in service calls – or for phatic purposes alone. To an extent, advice calls share the service calls' function of circulating authentic voices and experiences of Jordanian citizens:

they provide Islamic content, but one that is addressed to a local, Jordanian public specifically, as opposed to a more wide-ranging public addressed by pan-Arab Islamic satellite TV channels. Broadcasters themselves often explicitly mention this point; both Muhammad Nouh and al-Jarmi, for example, frequently declare their preference for giving answers according with principles of the Shafi'i *maḏhab* (jurisprudential tradition) of Sunni Islam, with the justification that this is the *maḏhab* followed by “most Jordanians.” Still, the main purpose of advice calls is to put the caller in touch with the distinctly Islamic expertise of the broadcaster – reinforcing the pious Islamic character of the programmes in which they occur.

Finally, Islamic advice programmes are notable for their sonic background – or lack thereof. Other kinds of phone-in programmes on Jordanian non-government radio bombard their listeners with an incessant stream of music, including both catchy Arabic pop tunes and patriotic *aḡānī waṭaniyya*. This is not the case with Islamic advice programmes. The calls themselves feature no music background at all, opting instead for silence. Music does occasionally occur, most often in order to fill dead airtime between commercial breaks and hosts resuming their live on-air speech. In such cases, however, the tracks chosen are always piously marked, with lyrics praising God or the Prophet Muhammad – which bypasses the risk of music being construed as impious or corrupting, an ongoing concern for pious Muslims due to statements in the prophetic tradition condemning “idle speech” (*lahw al-*

ḥadīth), interpreted by some jurists as including vocal music.¹⁷ In this way, the manipulation of sonic background provides an additional dimension on which Islamic advice programmes distinguish themselves as a pious, religiously marked space within the glut of Jordanian non-government radio programming.

Although these three features – initial monologues on Islamic topics, piety-focused advice calls, and the absence of non-pious music – are shared by Islamic advice programmes as a whole, there is nevertheless scope for differentiation within the genre. Similar to the service programmes examined in Chapter 5, broadcaster persona proves to be a notable source of variation. Even a cursory examination of the on-air performances of Nouh and al-Jarmi – probably the two most prominent hosts in the genre – reveals differences in the way they engage with callers and address their publics, and the characterological auras they project as a result.

Nouh tends to adopt a folksy, almost patronising idiom, often switching into highly localised Jordanian colloquial – though he is equally adept at quoting linguistically complex passages from the Islamic tradition, suggesting a rhetorically skilled persona with deep knowledge of Muslim doctrine that does not shy away from transmitting this knowledge in a way comprehensible to the less educated members of Nouh’s presupposed public. al-Jarmi’s language, by contrast, is more elevated on the whole; his responses to advice

¹⁷ Muhammad al-Atawneh, “Leisure and Entertainment (malāhī) in Contemporary Islamic Legal Thought: Music and the Audio-Visual Media,” *Islamic Law and Society* 19 (2012): 397–415; William O. Beeman, “Production, Hearing and Listening: Intentional Participation in Musical Culture in the Islamic World,” *Anthropology News* 52, no. 1 (2011): 11.

calls are rapid, almost business-like, and often brusque or dismissive, especially on issues he considers clear or unimportant, such as local superstitions regarding running over cats or the minutiae of ritual purity. He also regularly forgoes initial monologues in order to move straight to listener questions – though cases such as the monologue on ‘tradition-delvers’ excerpted above suggest the slot is available when necessary. Finally, al-Jarmi is much more likely to raise his voice in criticism of uninformed interpretations of Islamic texts than Nouh, further contributing to his beleaguered expert persona – in contrast to Nouh’s projected image as a more benevolent fatherly patron.

Aspects of these personae are not, of course, incompatible. Nouh’s answers and monologues occasionally exhibit frustration as well; conversely, al-Jarmi’s brusqueness may also be interpreted as a form of patriarchal concern for his listeners, exhorting them to pious behaviour with a firmer hand. Moreover, from a dialogic perspective, callers generally use the same kind of respectful language – addressing the broadcaster as “sheikh” (*šē(y)k*) or “doctor” (*duktōr*), framing their answers with ample respectful formulas, thanking the broadcaster for their activity on the programme, and so on – with both Nouh and al-Jarmi. Nevertheless, the fact that host personae vary in a discernible manner does suggest a potential for different levels of engagement and participation within the shared generic framework of Islamic advice programmes.

But one crucial aspect of persona that both Nouh and al-Jarmi share is their self-presentation as *experts* in Islamic jurisprudence. In the radio setting,

the primary means through which listeners come to know broadcasters is their linguistic performance. The main challenge for Islamic advice programme hosts thus becomes how to use language in a way that will frame their responses as authoritative answers to listeners' problems – advice which, if a listener is to follow it, will have a positive impact on their piety. Broadcasters must, therefore, utilise linguistic strategies through which the quotes and arguments that they deploy are imbued with an air of authority through their status as part of the Islamic textual tradition. The nature of such strategies, and of the authoritative character of mediated Islamic discourse more generally, is the focus of the remainder of this chapter.

6.2 Authoritative Islamic discourse on the air

Islamic advice programmes on contemporary Jordanian non-government radio should be viewed in the broader context of reinvigorated mediatisation of Islamic thought and practice beginning from the late 20th century. Scholars such as Dale Eickelman and Jon Anderson have argued that this process has opened up established channels of Islamic authority to new, more deliberative democratic horizons of lay Muslim publics, or “public spheres.”¹⁸ Others, such as Charles Hirschkind, have emphasised the

¹⁸ Jon W. Anderson, “‘Cybarites’, Knowledge Workers and New Creoles on the Superhighway,” *Anthropology Today* 11, no. 4 (April 1995): 13-15; Dale F. Eickelman and Jon W. Anderson, “Redefining Muslim Publics,” in *New Media in the Muslim World: The Emerging Public Sphere*, ed. Dale F. Eickelman and Jon W. Anderson (Bloomington & Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 1999), 1–18.

implications of this mediatization for the embodied experience of religion, for example audition of sermons via audiocassettes or multi-modal pious engagement centred around YouTube videos.¹⁹ Drawing both on Michael Warner's work on "counterpublics" and Talal Asad's conception of religion as embodied discursive practice, Hirschkind argues that mediatized forms of Islamic piety are not necessarily democratic or deliberative. By contrast, they often constitute their own authoritative disciplinary structures in the very kinds of bodily engagement with religion that they presuppose.²⁰

Rather than enter into these debates in detail, my interest in examining Islamic advice programmes on Jordanian non-government radio lies in an assumption undergirding both the 'public sphere' and practice-oriented positions on the mediatization of religion: namely, that a body of Islamic knowledge and authority exists independently of such mediatization, and that it can be used to justify certain activities as more pious or appropriate than others.²¹ Jonathan Brown, in his recent examination of Sunni Muslim interpretive traditions, demonstrates that this body is itself constructed through specific practices and methods of authorisation that have varied throughout the history of Islam, and vary among different interpretive communities today – including differing standards of textual legitimation applied by different

¹⁹ Hirschkind, *Ethical Soundscape*, 67-172; Hirschkind, "Experiments," 5-18.

²⁰ Hirschkind, *Ethical Soundscape*, 105-8; Talal Asad, *Genealogies of Religion: Discipline and Reasons of Power in Christianity and Islam* (Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1993), 27-54; Warner, *Publics*, 112-24.

²¹ Caton, "What Is an 'Authorizing Discourse'?", 42-5; Brian Larkin, "Ahmed Deedat and the Form of Islamic Evangelism," *Social Text* 25, no. 3 (2008), 103.

schools of Islamic jurisprudence.²² In other words, it is the very authority of religious references that needs to be interrogated, as the discourse in which they are embedded must in some way uphold it in order for particular texts to be considered the authoritative word of Islam.

In the work of writers such as Asad and Hirschkind, the Islamic textual tradition is defined as an “authorising discourse” used to legitimise certain kinds of religious practice.²³ As Steven Caton has pointed out, however, the question remains precisely *how* a discourse gains this ‘authorising’ status. In his analysis of rain prayers in Yemen that involve select textual fragments from the Islamic tradition, Caton argues that the use of Islamic texts and argumentation as a resource for authorising actions and beliefs is a fundamentally metapragmatic, discourse-internal process. He draws on Mikhail Bakhtin and V. N. Vološinov to show that a discourse’s authority is to an important extent constituted *within* the boundaries of any particular communicative event that uses it as a resource for authorisation. This is because references to authoritative discourses are never merely neutral quotations from bodies of texts which already possess a predefined authority. Rather, in quoting authoritative discourses, texts enter into dialogic relationships with them, framing and commenting on them in ways which either support or undermine their authority.²⁴ In other words, texts must do

²² Jonathan A. C. Brown, *Misquoting Muhammad: The Challenges and Choices of Interpreting the Prophet’s Legacy* (London: Oneworld, 2014), 15-113, 161-215.

²³ Caton, “What Is an ‘Authorizing Discourse’?”, 34, 42-5.

²⁴ Caton, “What Is an ‘Authorizing Discourse’?”, 51-4; Bakhtin, *Dialogic Imagination*, 288-305, 324-31, 342-5; V. N. Vološinov, *Marxism and the Philosophy of Language*, trans. Ladislav

metapragmatic work *in order to* recognise a particular discourse as authoritative: its authority is not pre-given, and may just as easily be subverted through the dialogical framing and commenting on the discourse in any given text.

Bakhtin and Vološinov are indeed concerned predominantly with the potential to *appropriate* authoritative discourses, especially by subverting what they term “official ideological” or “monologic” language in a wide variety of contexts – from literature and philosophy to religion and political discourse more generally.²⁵ Nevertheless, in order for subversion and appropriation to be meaningful, such discourses must somehow gain their authority and power in the first place. They must, therefore, be explicitly constituted as authoritative in the official usage that Bakhtin and Vološinov argue should be dialogically resisted and subverted.

Islamic advice programme broadcasters are no exception. In order to present themselves as legitimate purveyors of advice on pious living, they must deploy strategies which frame *their* Islamic discourse, the texts and arguments that *they* quote, as authoritative in their own right, as credible sources of authorisation for the responses they give to listeners. In the context of radio, these framing practices – insofar as they issue from broadcasters themselves – are rooted primarily in spoken language use. While Islamic advice programme broadcasters do make use of remediation, for instance by

Matejka and I. R. Titunik (Cambridge, MA & London: Harvard University Press, 1986), 14-15, 23-4, 84-6, 91-7, 106.

²⁵ Bakhtin, *Dialogic Imagination*, 269-70, 342-5; Vološinov, *Marxism*, 91-7.

supplying information on upcoming episodes and pictures of broadcasters via Facebook, they do not have access to non-sonic semiotic channels in the same way as, for example, Islamic TV shows – where piety can also be indexed visually, through cues such as dress, gesture, and comportment. The sonic focus of radio thus makes language all the more important as a means of conveying discursive authority.

Moreover, such practices must be conveyed in a spontaneous manner within the live radio broadcast setting. Unlike Islamic audiocassettes and *taszīlāt* of sermons and Qur'an recitations, which are pre-recorded and clearly set apart on separate media as material for pious audition, Islamic advice programme broadcasters must be able to continuously differentiate elements of the Islamic textual tradition within the generalised flow of on-air talk – to emphasise, in other words, that these are phrases and arguments that they are merely animating, but stem ultimately from authoritative textual sources.

Such practices are usefully conceptualised through the linguistic anthropological term *entextualisation*. In Bauman and Briggs's terms, entextualisation involves processes that make language "extractable," converting segments of linguistic production into separable units – or elements of a definable "text" – that are recognised as such across other interactional settings.²⁶ On Jordanian non-government radio, hosts utilise linguistic strategies through which certain words, expressions, and stretches of speech are set apart as belonging to an authoritative Islamic tradition – in other words,

²⁶ Bauman and Briggs, "Poetics," 73.

making them *entextualised* as elements of this tradition, as quotations sourced from religious texts rather than spontaneous products of their on-air talk.²⁷

Some of these entextualising strategies directly accompany the performance of such words and expressions. Others are constituted less directly, through the generalised characterological build-up of broadcasters as knowledgeable religious experts, and therefore trustworthy enough to convey it. I examine both in turn below.

6.2.1 Direct framing strategies: register, prosody, quotation

Even for listeners with less-than-comprehensive knowledge of the Islamic textual tradition, it is not difficult to identify stretches of talk presented by hosts as lifted directly from a religious text. There is, first, a major contrast with regard to the linguistic level, or register, of such quotations. Classical Arabic is inevitably used, which diverges sharply from the Jordanian colloquial idiom that dominates communicative interaction on Islamic advice programmes. Markers of formal or classical Arabic pronunciation, such as full case and conjugation endings and internal vowelling of nouns and verbs, are all regularly preserved, in addition to Classical morphological and syntactic rules.

²⁷ Bauman and Briggs, "Poetics," 72-5; Briggs and Bauman, "Genre," 146-7; Patrick Eisenlohr, "Materialities of Entextualization: The Domestication of Sound Reproduction in Mauritian Muslim Devotional Practices," *Journal of Linguistic Anthropology* 20, no. 2 (November 2010): 314–333.

The following excerpt from an episode of *Iirmi hammak* illustrates the contrasts well. In the excerpt, Muhammad Nouh discusses a supplication (*du‘ā*) asking for God’s aid, customarily recited when facing hardship and attributed to the Prophet in a widely known hadith.²⁸ In addition to quoting the supplication itself, Nouh also gave a short interpretation of each of its constituent elements:

[RR028]: [02:28]

MN: *əmbāriḥ baqra’a du‘ā’ li-n-nabī ‘aleyh ṣ-ṣalātu w-s-salām*

rā’i dżiddan

yā ḥayy yā qayyūm

yā ḥayyu yā qayyūm

bika astağīṭ

aşliḥ lī şa’nī kullah

wa-lā takilnī ilā nafsī

ṭarfata ‘ayn

ya’nī min adžmal el-ad’iye n-nabawiyya

yā ḥayyu yā qayyūm

bika astağīṭ

aşliḥ lī şa’nī kullahu

şa’nak fī şaḥḥtek fī ‘āfiytek fī awlādak fī zōžtak fī mālek fī ‘əyālek fī kull

şī’ aşliḥ lī şa’nī kullah

wa-lā takilnī ilā nafsī mā tḳallīnī arkin ‘a-ḥālī ṭarfatu ‘ayn

²⁸ al-Islām su’āl wa-żawāb, “Du‘ā’ yā ḥayy yā qayyūm bi-rahmatik astağīṭ aşliḥ lī şa’nī kullahu wa-lā takilnī ilā nafsī ṭarfat ‘ayn,” *al-Islām su’āl wa-żawāb*, November 29, 2010, <https://islamqa.info/ar/109609> [accessed 22 April 2016].

'ārif šū ʔarafət 'ēn

wa-lā bi-miqdār rimšet l-'ēyn ya'nī wa-lā ʔāniya

[RR028]: [02:28]

MN: Yesterday I was reading a supplication by the Prophet, prayers and
peace be upon him

An amazing (supplication)

Oh Living, Oh Eternal (One)

Oh Living, Oh Eternal (One)

I ask you for aid

Put all my affairs in order

And do not entrust me to myself

(Not even for) the blink of an eye

One of the most beautiful Prophetic supplications

Oh Living, Oh Eternal (One)

I ask you for aid

Put all my affairs in order

Your affairs – as concerns your health, your vigour, your children,
your wife, your property, your family, everything; **put all my affairs in
order**

**And do not entrust me to myself – don't let me rely on myself – for
the blink of an eye**

Do you know what “the blink of an eye” is?

Not even for the time of a wink – that is, not even for a second²⁹

²⁹ “Iirmi hammak, 30 November 2014,” *Iirmi hammak* (Amman: Radio Hala, November 30, 2014), [RR028], author's archive, 02:28-03:11.

In this stretch of talk, there is a notable difference in register between the quoted portions – marked in bold above – and the surrounding explanatory discourse. In the latter, Nouh uses typically colloquial linguistic resources – such as the contracted preposition ‘a- ‘on’, the interrogative particle *šū*, and the imperfective verbal aspect marker *b-*. He also forgoes final vowel markings – for instance, in bound possessive pronouns; cf. *awlād-ak* versus the quoted ***bi-ka*** – and Classical/Standard Arabic rules of word-internal vowelling – e.g. *ṭarafət* versus the quoted ***ṭarfata*** ‘blink’, ‘*ē(y)n* versus the quoted ‘***ayn*** ‘eye.’ The quotation, by contrast, follows Classical rules of grammar and pronunciation virtually perfectly – to the extent that, when Nouh omits a short final vowel in the first line of the supplication, he is compelled to repeat the entire line in order to rectify the error, as he corrects the inferior ***yā ḥayy yā qayyūm*** immediately with ***yā ḥayyū yā qayyūm***. This demonstrates a strong obligation to preserve the Classical Arabic linguistic form in discourse presented as quoted from a religious text.

Similar linguistic contrasts occur in other Islamic advice programmes. As noted above, the language of *Fatāwa*’s host, Ibrahim al-Jarmi, leans considerably more towards the ‘High’ than the ‘Low’ pole of the Arabic diglossic spectrum when compared with Nouh’s. Nevertheless, al-Jarmi’s standard for full preservation of Classical linguistic features is likewise much higher for quotations from religious texts than surrounding discourse, as the following excerpt from an episode of *Fatāwa* makes clear:

[RR081]: [12:21]

IJ: *idān iyyuhā l-kirām ḥadīṭ kaṭīr li-l-ġāye bitkallim ‘an*
hā’ulā’i allāqīna yubāligūn fī dāḥer el-amr fī-l-‘ibāda
*le- **yuhṣinūna l-qawl** la- lākinnum **yusī’ūna l-fi’l***
en-nebī ḥakam ‘aleyh s-salām
*bi-ennum **yamruqūna min ed-dīn kamā yamruqu s-sahm min er-***
*raw- **er-ramīya***
lā yardža’ūn
ilā fiṭratihī ilā sunnatihī ilā aqlāqih
ḥattā yartadda
*ya’nī **‘alā fawqihī yirdža’***
hāḍa l- as-sahm ilā l-witər wa-laysa bi-fā’əl

[RR081]: [12:21]

IJ: So then, honourable (listeners), a very important hadith, which
speaks about
Those who exaggerate, outwardly, in worship
To **speak well**, even though they **act badly**
The Prophet ruled, peace be upon him
That they **pass swiftly through religion as passes the arrow**
through the – **the game (animal)**
They do not return
To its nature, its custom (*sunna*), its morals
Until it turns back
That is, **to its height**, returns

This arrow to the string (of the bow) – (but) it cannot (return)³⁰

al-Jarmi here interposes segments quoted from a hadith – again marked in bold in the transcript – regarding people who worship in name or form only without true commitment with elements of his own explanation and interpretation. Although he utilises a relatively high number of tokens indicative of formal or Classical speech – such as the pronoun *hā'ulā'i* 'those' and full final vowel markings on pronouns in words such as *fiṭṭatihi* and *sunnatihi* – the non-quoted talk also includes colloquial elements, for instance the imperfective marker *b-*. Further, even some of the more formal tokens are not held to the same kind of standard as the elements quoted directly. One example is the verb *yubāliḡūn* 'they exaggerate,' which according to strict Classical Arabic rules of pronunciation should exhibit an additional final *-a* in non-pausal position – but which al-Jarmi in this instance forgoes, and only pronounces in the quoted segments (cf. ***yuḡsinūna***, ***yamruqūna*** etc.). Thus, again, while al-Jarmi's Classical eloquence may be less than perfect in his explanations or interpretations, he takes care to preserve phonetic accuracy as far as textual quotations are concerned – seeking, in other words, to minimise the "intertextual gap" between his quotation and the written textual form in which it originates.³¹

A second contrast, less immediately evident in transcripts, are the prosodic characteristics of quotations from the Qur'an and hadith literature.

³⁰ "Fatāwā, 8 February 2015," *Fatāwā* (Amman: Hayat FM, February 8, 2015), [RR081], author's archive, 12:21-12:45.

³¹ Briggs and Bauman, "Genre," 149.

Both Nouh and al-Jarmi regularly exhibit noticeable pauses, typically 0.4 to 0.6 seconds in length, surrounding each line of quoted text. Quotations are also recited at a slower pace than the surrounding talk, and vowels tend to receive marked lengthening and higher pitch, especially at the end of each quoted line. The following excerpt from al-Jarmi is typical in this respect, with the underlined portions of the quoted hadith demonstrating all the aforementioned prosodic features – namely, vowel lengthening and heightened pitch, slower pace and pauses (whose length in seconds has been marked in brackets after each line):

[RR081]: [09:37]

IJ: *n-nabī ḥaddat fa-qāl* (0.3)
sayakūnu fī ummatī ktilāfun wa-furqa (0.4)
a-ra'aytum min al-furqa (0.4)
mā fī afdā' minha wə-la ašadd minā fī zamannā (0.6)
qawmun yuḥsinūna l-qīl (0.5)
wa-yusī'ūna l-fi'l idan (0.5)
hunālik man qawluhum (0.5)
džamīl wa-rā'i' (0.4)
wa-lākin af'ālum sayyi'a

[RR081]: [09:37]

IJ: The Prophet said:
There shall be disagreement and separation in my community
 Have you (not) seen separation?
 There's nothing worse or more horrible than it in our time

People who speak well

And act badly – so:

There are those whose speech

Is beautiful and amazing

But their actions are bad³²

The contrasts are difficult to demonstrate in written form without a technical phonetic transcription, but the pause lengths do offer at a rough idea of the prosodic framing of quoted religious talk. This is not to say that longer pauses do not occur outside quotations as well. The regular rhythm of prolonged pauses after each line is, however, highly distinctive, especially when it co-occurs with slower pace of enunciation and exaggerated vowel lengthening and pitch.³³

Authors such as Niko Besnier have approached prosody in quotation as a strategy for double-voicing, enabling speakers to layer their own “affect” over quoted discourse when acting as its animators.³⁴ In Islamic advice programmes, however, prosodic layering in quotation appears less as an idiosyncratic affective response than an evaluative stance defining the quotation as a segment sourced from a body of textual tradition that the

³² “Fatāwā, 8 February 2015,” 09:37-09:55.

³³ Gabriele Klewitz and Elizabeth Couper-Kuhlen, “Quote - Unquote? The Role of Prosody in the Contextualization of Reported Speech Sequence,” *Pragmatics* 9, no. 4 (1999): 459–85.

³⁴ Niko Besnier, “Reported Speech and Affect on Nukulaelae Atoll,” in *Responsibility and Evidence in Oral Discourse*, ed. Jane H. Hill and Judith T. Irvine (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992), 172-4.

broadcaster, and his listeners, consider authoritative.³⁵ Prosodic features, then, can be as prominent as choice of register in marking out religious quotations in the flow of broadcaster discourse, and further emphasise their entextualised character.

Finally, broadcasters utilise a number of specialised quotative expressions in order to signal that a following phrase or stretch of talk should be considered as the voicing of a religious text. The following are all instances in which Nouh and al-Jarmi used such expressions before proceeding to quote from a hadith or a chapter of the Qur'an:

- Hadith 1 (al-Jarmi)

[RR081]: [09:37]

IJ: *n-nabī haddat fa-qāl*

sayakūnu fī ummatī ḵtilāfun wa-furqa

[RR081]: [09:37]

IJ: The Prophet said:

There shall be disagreement and separation in my community³⁶

- Hadith 2 (Nouh)

[RR028]: [11:13]

MN: *al-insān lahu ṣifātu kamāl*

³⁵ Wallace Chafe, "Seneca Speaking Styles and the Location of Authority," in *Responsibility and Evidence in Oral Discourse*, ed. Jane H. Hill and Judith T. Irvine (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992), 73-80.

³⁶ "Fatāwā, 8 February 2015," 09:37-09:41.

wa-ṣifātu nuqṣān

*wə-n-nebī ‘aleyh ṣ-ṣalātu w-s-salām qāl lā yafuqu mu’minun
mu’minatan*

[RR028]: [11:13]

MN: A human being has attributes of perfection

And attributes of deficiency

And the Prophet, prayers and peace be upon him, said: **A (male)**

believer does not differ from a (female) believer³⁷

- Qur’an 1 (Nouh)

[RR029]: [30:46]

MN: *rabbnā šū gāl*

qāl fa-lā wa-rabbik

[RR029]: [30:46]

MN: Our Lord, what did he say?

He said: **No, by your Lord...** (Qur’an, Sura 4, verse 65)³⁸

- Qur’an 2 (al-Jarmi)

[RR083]: [28:26]

IJ: *fa-l-aṣl dżawāz dālik*

li-qawli llāhi ta’āla al-yawma uḥilla lakum aṭ-ṭayyibāt

³⁷ “Irmī hammak, 30 November 2014,” 11:13-11:19.

³⁸ “Irmī hammak, 1 December 2014,” 30:46-30:48.

[RR083]: [28:26]

IJ: And the principle is to permit this

Due to the word of God the Sublime: **Today the good (things) have been declared lawful for you** (Qur'an, Sura 5, verse 5)³⁹

The underlined phrases in the four excerpts above are all used to frame the lines that follow as quoted from authoritative religious texts – either the Prophet Muhammad's hadiths (*n-nabī ḥaddaṭ fa-qāl* and *wə-n-nebī... qāl* “the Prophet said”), or the Qur'an as the revealed word of God (*rabbnā... gāl* “our Lord... said,” *qawli llāhi ta'āla* “the word of God the Sublime”). In doing so, the production format of the talk is explicitly modified by assigning authorship to a religiously authoritative source – God or the Prophet Muhammad – of which the broadcaster is merely an animator.⁴⁰ When a hadith or Qur'anic verse is mentioned, such frames thus function as an additional viable strategy to set apart stretches of talk as directly quoted portions of a religious text.

6.2.2 Indirect framing strategies: authorisation through persona

In addition to the direct framing strategies of Classical Arabic use, prosody, and quotative expressions, hosts of Islamic advice programmes also mobilise aspects of their personae as learned religious scholars in order to

³⁹ “Fatāwā, 12 February 2015,” *Fatāwā* (Amman: Hayat FM, February 12, 2015), [RR083], author's archive, 28:26-28:31.

⁴⁰ Goffman, *Forms*, 144; Eisenlohr, “Materialities,” 320-1, 325; Chafe, “Seneca Speaking Styles,” 86-7.

assert the authority of religious texts. One aspect of this is their general facility with Standard and Classical Arabic, which hosts such as Nouh and al-Jarmi use extensively and with much greater fluency than broadcasters on other kinds of radio programmes – even outside quotations from religious texts, for which Classical grammatical rules appear to be mandatory.

While quotative practices involve primarily metapragmatic switches in production format and degrees of entextualisation, the use of the ‘High’ code elsewhere within the Islamic advice programme setting can be more accurately described as “codeswitching” of the kind authors such as Albirini have focused in their analyses of media Arabic.⁴¹ Highly skilled broadcasters such as Nouh also put colloquial Arabic linguistic resources to good use; however, their performances nevertheless include a greater *range* of registers – from flowery formal Arabic to ‘everyday’ vernacular Jordanian – than are typically produced by radio hosts in other contexts. Through extemporaneous acts of “communicative virtuosity” involving Classical Arabic, Islamic scholars therefore exhibit a deep familiarity with the grammatical and lexical peculiarities of the idiom – exactly as one would expect for an individual that professionally engages with such an idiom through intense study of the Classical religious tradition.⁴²

But hosts of Islamic advice programmes also occasionally declare their religious expertise more explicitly. Their status as competent animators of

⁴¹ Albirini, “Sociolinguistic,” 548-50.

⁴² Richard Bauman, *A World of Others’ Words: Cross-Cultural Perspectives on Intertextuality* (Malden, MA: Blackwell, 2004), 9; Haeri, *Sacred Language*, 25-51.

discourse authored by God or the Prophet is upheld through statements and narratives in which they describe their experience and knowledge of Islamic religious interpretation and jurisprudence (*fiqh*), in ways that present this tradition as an authoritative source of information on matters of pious conduct. The habitual recurrence of such statements, then, contributes to the characterological build-up of the personae of hosts as individuals qualified to convey authoritative Islamic discourse – and, concomitantly, authorises and legitimises the advice for pious conduct that they dispense.

The excerpt below is one example of this kind of performance. In it, Muhammad Nouh, addressing an Algerian-born listener who had called in to complain of her alienation in Jordan, recounts a story of the Prophet Muhammad’s Companions (*ṣaḥāba*) and their feelings of homesickness after they had migrated from Mecca to Medina:

[RR030]: [11:27]

MN: *səyyidnā n-nebī ‘aleyhi ṣ-ṣalātu wa-s-salām*
lammā
 ((uh)) *hādžarū wə-hādžar aṣḥābu ‘aleyhi ṣ-ṣalātu wa-s-salām*
idžū ṣ-ṣaḥāba u-šakū lahu nafs iš-šakwa yā uḳtī
u-gellū li-rasūl ʔlāh ya’nī iḥnā waʔlā hādžar- u-mutāb’īn min mekke l-
medīne ya’(nī) kullā arba’mīyt kīlo
yā rasūl aʔlā ištagnā le-mekka w-iḥnā hēk miš ḥāssīn
ya’nī ḥāssīn ḥālnā ġurba w-əštagnā lə-mekka
fa-n-nabī ‘aleyh ṣ-ṣalātu wa-s-salām
qāl aʔlāhumma

ḥabbib ilaynā l-medīna
aḷḷāhumma ḥabbib ilaynā l-medīna
aḷḷāhumma ḥabbib ilaynā l-medīna id-du‘ā’
fa-l-medīna ism el-balad fa-inti
law da‘awti llā ‘azza w-džall aḷḷāhumma ḥabbib ilayy hāḍa l-balad
aḷḷāhumma ānis waḥṣatī
aḷḷāhumma
as‘aluka an tunīra qalbī ya‘nī id‘u ḷḷāh ‘azza w-džall lə-innu hāḍi
mas‘alt el-‘awāṭif
min aḷḷāh tabāraka wa-ta‘āla

[RR030]: [11:27]

MN: Our master the Prophet, prayers and peace be upon him

When

Uh, they emigrated, (he and) his Companions emigrated, prayers and peace be upon him

The Companions came and complained to him – the same complaint (as yours), sister

And they said to the Prophet of God: ‘We have (emigrated)’ – and they’d followed (him) from Mecca to Medina, which is all of 400 kilometres –

‘Oh Prophet of God, we miss Mecca, and so we don’t feel’ –

I mean – ‘we feel alienated, and we miss Mecca’

So the Prophet, prayers and peace be upon him

He said, ‘Oh God

Make us love Medina

Oh God, make us love Medina

Oh God, make us love Medina' – the supplication
So, Medina is the name of the country, and so you
If you prayed to Almighty God, 'Oh God, make me love this country'
'Oh God, give me companionship in my loneliness'
'Oh God
I ask you to enlighten my heart' – I mean, pray to Almighty God,
because this is an issue of feelings
(That come) from God, Blessed and Sublime⁴³

Here, Nouh supplies information from the Islamic tradition as a direct solution for the caller's troubles, by giving the appropriate supplication to direct to God upon feeling alienated in a foreign country. He also, however, asserts a deep knowledge of said tradition by explaining in some detail the context under which the Prophet uttered this supplication – by, for example, voicing the Companions and their concerns directly, and describing the distance between Mecca and Medina. The authority of Islamic religious discourse is, in this case, presented through reference to the most perfect model of pious behaviour – the Prophet – but also through its performance by a broadcaster that affirms his extensive knowledge of this discourse and its context of production.

al-Jarmi's persona performances similarly entwine assertions of expertise with declarations of authority of religious texts as models for pious conduct. The following excerpt is part of a longer justification why listeners

⁴³ "Iirmi hammak, 4 December 2014," *Iirmi hammak* (Amman: Radio Hala, December 4, 2014), [RR030], author's archive, 11:27-12:16.

should value long-established books of Islamic jurisprudence – and, presumably, respect the authority of those who know them – over various contemporary interpretations and opinions one is able to read on the Internet:

[RR082]: [27:37]

IJ: *wa-li-dālik wadʒadt il-imām al-‘aḏīm*
abū ishāq aš-šātībī ṣāhib al-muwāfaqāt wa-l-i’tisām min akbar
‘ulamā’ al-uṣūl
annahu kāna lā yu’nā
bi-kutəb fuqahā’i ‘aṣrih
wa-innamā kān ya’tamid ‘ala kutubi l-fiqhi l-qadīma
l- laysa ta’aṣṣuban
lākin le-ennu kutəb el-fiqh el-qadīma maṭalan ka-r-risāle li-š-šāfi’
ka-kitābihi l-umm
ka-muwaṭṭa’ mālik ka- ka-l-mudawwana ‘and al-imām mālik
mm- ((uh)) tab‘at saḥnūn
ka-hāḏi l-kutub nafadhā l-‘ulamā’
wa-nabašūhā wa-qara’ūhā mirāran tekrāran
ṣaḥḥaḥūhā bi-keṭret el-murādža’a
hāḏa yu’ṭī ṭiqa bi-hāḏa l-kitāb

[RR082]: [27:37]

IJ: And so you would find the great imam
Abu Ishaq al-Shatibi, author of the *Muwafaqat* and the *I’tisam*, one of
the greatest
Scholars of the principles (*uṣūl*) (of Islamic jurisprudence)

That he would not trouble himself
With books by jurists of his time
Rather, he would depend on the old books of jurisprudence
Not out of zealotry
But because the old books of jurisprudence – for example, the *Risala*
of al-Shafi'i
Like his *Kitab al-umm*
Like Malik's *Muwatta'*, like the *Mudawwana* by the imam Malik
Uh – (written down) by Sahnun
Like these books which the scholars have exhaustively (studied)
Dug through them, read them time and again
Corrected them through numerous revisions
This gives confidence in this book⁴⁴

Though al-Jarmi's style here is more scholarly than Nouh's, his ultimate aim is nevertheless the same. Like Nouh, he espouses the double goal of assigning authority to Islamic religious texts – via their interpretations by generations of scholars and jurists – while also performing a persona knowledgeable enough to convey the wisdom of these texts: one who knows jurisprudential texts well enough not just to rattle off their titles and authors at speed, but also to be aware of the historical conditions of their production and why some texts might in this context be more trustworthy or authoritative than others. As such statements and narratives occur time and again throughout Islamic advice programmes, they thus contribute to constituting the persona of

⁴⁴ "Fatāwā, 10 February 2015," 27:37-28:13.

an Islamic religious scholar fully capable of quoting and drawing lessons from a learned, considered, and highly stable body of texts.

6.2.3 The internal dialogicality of textual framing

The intertextual and interdiscursive links that Islamic advice programme hosts establish with texts of the Islamic religious tradition are, therefore, not merely neutral instances of quotation. Rather, their practices of framing and persona constitution perform explicit metapragmatic work that entextualises the quoted discourse as authoritative. It is, first, set apart linguistically, in a formal register of Arabic tightly linked to written religious discourse in the Sunni Islamic tradition, as well as being differentiated from surrounding talk through prosodic means. It also often involves authorship attributions to either God (in case of Qur'an quotations) or the Prophet (in case of hadiths), as inimitable sources of advice regarding pious behaviour. Second, and just as importantly, the constitution of host personae as knowledgeable Islamic scholars accomplishes the same goal in a more diffuse manner, sanctioning broadcasters as legitimate dispensers of religious advice – dispersing the authoritative 'aura' of textual quotations onto broadcaster language more broadly, while still preserving religious texts as the singular ultimate source of authority.⁴⁵

⁴⁵ Jane H. Hill and Judith T. Irvine, "Introduction," in *Responsibility and Evidence in Oral Discourse*, ed. Jane H. Hill and Judith T. Irvine (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992), 13-15; Vološinov, *Marxism*, 115-23.

While these links can be conceived as “monologic” in the sense that they are all contained within language emanating from a single broadcaster, they nevertheless function *dialogically* as well. They engage, namely, in metapragmatic dialogue with an absent text, by both quoting and commenting upon elements from an external body of discourse.⁴⁶ Again, the framing of this discourse as textually stable and religiously authoritative is far from a necessary concomitant of textual quotation; the quotation of portions of religious texts could, potentially, be less faithful to the original, or develop more ironic or dismissive commentary. Such subversion, of course, never occurs on Islamic advice programmes, whose very existence hinges on the authority of Islamic texts as models for pious thought and action. Still, it is primarily through discourse-internal dialogical processes, rooted in broadcasters’ linguistic performance, that Islamic texts sustain their authoritative status.

This internal dialogicality is matched, on another level, by processes that reach out beyond the talk of individual broadcasters and their personae. Hosts of Islamic advice programmes also address and develop relations with particular publics, as well as communicate directly with other participants in on-air talk – that is, callers – in a way that further contributes to the constitution of Islamic texts as authoritative. I examine these external dialogical dynamics in the following section.

6.3 Publics and participation in Islamic advice programmes

⁴⁶ Caton, “What Is an ‘Authorizing Discourse?’”, 45-56; Vološinov, *Marxism*, 115-40.

As we have seen, even the singular personal voices of Islamic advice broadcasters form dialogical relationships with the texts they quote and frame as authoritative. Call-in programmes, however, are also dialogic environments in a more conventional sense. As we have seen in Chapter 5 in the case of service programmes, the constitution of a specific broadcaster persona is also dependent to an extent on callers' contributions through their own linguistic performance. Likewise, in Islamic advice programmes, the participation of callers – in this case, via advice calls in particular – introduces multiple speaker voices that broadcasters must engage with in order to promote their agendas.

Notably, however, the presence of such voices is also discernible outside the context of phone-ins. Just as service programme broadcasters direct their performances towards an assumed audience of ordinary Jordanian citizens, the hosts of Islamic advice programmes also make specific linguistic choices that betray their ideal listenership. Their forms of address, namely, imply an audience that is composed in particular devout Sunni Muslims – in other words, a pious Jordanian public.

According to Brian Larkin, Warner's concept of publicity presumes publics to be groups that exist in homogenous, secular space-time, focusing on horizontal deliberation and emptied of vertical authority typical of hierarchical religious and political systems.⁴⁷ In his examination of appropriation of Christian religious texts by a South African Muslim TV preacher to delegitimise Christianity, Larkin thus defines the notion of 'public' as somewhat contradictory to classic conceptions of religion. For Larkin,

⁴⁷ Larkin, "Ahmed Deedat," 103-4; Warner, *Publics*, 96-124.

religious publics are therefore “transgressive,” in that they appropriate forms of circulation and addressivity – namely, horizontal deliberation and stranger sociability – that had developed precisely in opposition to social groups formed on the basis of following authoritative discourses.⁴⁸ Charles Hirschkind, in his work on audiocassette sermons in Egypt, likewise prefers the term “counterpublic” to characterise pious mass media. He notes that such media intertwine both “deliberation” and “discipline” – that is, subjection to religious authority – in a way that Warner’s “self-organising” publics, “conceptually immunised from what are understood as the necessarily distorting effects of power,” do not.⁴⁹

Despite these contradictions, I argue that the concept of public is still relevant for analysing the listenership of Jordanian Islamic advice programmes. The “liberal public sphere,” the development of which Warner traces and which forms the crux of Larkin’s and Hirschkind’s reservations regarding the term ‘public,’ is but one possible manifestation of a group of anonymous strangers united through distinct forms of address.⁵⁰ As long as publics are viewed as fundamentally *discursive* phenomena, formed via acts of addressivity in linguistic performance, they can plausibly be constituted on any grounds – including the authority of a textual tradition such as Islam.⁵¹ I now examine how this is accomplished by Jordanian Islamic advice

⁴⁸ Larkin, “Ahmed Deedat,” 103-5.

⁴⁹ Hirschkind, *Ethical Soundscape*, 106.

⁵⁰ Warner, *Publics*, 67-89.

⁵¹ Francis Cody, “Publics and Politics,” *Annual Review of Anthropology* 40 (February 2011), 42-3.

programme hosts in the following section, before turning to the role of members of this pious public themselves in upholding Islamic authority on the air.

6.3.1 Addressing pious publics

The public of Islamic advice programmes emerges most clearly in communicative segments where broadcasters address listeners in a general sense. These include the previously examined programme-initial addresses and monologues, but also instances where hosts generalise, or ‘publicise,’ advice given in response to a specific issue brought up by an individual listener.

In the following excerpt, Muhammad Nouh is responding to a caller who had asked for an explanation of *tayammum* (Islamic ritual ablution without the use of water), in a way that exposes both the discourse-authorising and public-constituting functions of his performance:

[RR030]: [34:09]

MN: *ət-tayammum yā əkwānnā*
((uh)) min ḥāyṭ en-na- en-nāḥye l-‘amaliyye sahel
ḍarəbetēn eḍ-ḍarba l-ūla
bi-l-kaffēn baḍrub eḍ-ḍarba l-ūla
u-bemsaḥ
el-wadžəh
ke-enni ġassaltu

kēf lemā yakūn ġasu- hassa' raḥ agūlku lə-ēš aḍrub
bas lə-a'fīku el-'amaliyye

[RR030]: [34:09]

MN: *Tayammum*, our brothers

Uh, in terms of – the operational perspective, it's easy

Two hits, the first hit

I first hit with both palms

And (then) rub

The face

As if I had washed it

How, when it's – now I'm going to tell you what I'm hitting

But just to give you the process (first)⁵²

Nouh then goes on to finish describing the *tayammum* process – which involves rubbing both hands up to the elbows – as well as listing the various substances, such as stone or sand, that can be “hit” or “beaten” to perform it properly. Finally, he turns to broader ritual considerations pertaining to this form of ablution:

[RR030]: [35:31]

MN: *wā ((uh)) kul ṣalā*

taḥtādž kul ṣalāt farīḍa

taḥtādž ilā tayammumin džadīd

⁵² “Iirmi hammak, 4 December 2014,” 34:09-34:24.

fa-tatayammam tuṣalli s-sunne l-qabliyye tuṣalli l-farīda
tuṣalli s-sunne l-ba'diyye fa-idā aḍḍan el-mu'aḍḍin li-ṣ-ṣalā t-tāniye
nirdža' intyammam marra t-tāniye

[RR030]: [35:31]

MN: And, uh, every prayer
It requires – every obligatory prayer
Requires a new *tayammum*
So you perform *tayammum*, you perform the preceding
(supererogatory) *sunna* (movements), you perform the obligatory
prayer
You perform the succeeding *sunna*, and if the muezzin calls for the
next prayer
We perform *tayammum* again⁵³

This segment is more than simply the description of a ritual act. Note that Nouh has already explicitly broadened the addressee of his talk to include the listenership at large: he invokes them at the beginning of his explanation as *yā aḵwānnā* (“our brothers”), betraying the underlying assumption that his listeners constitute a pious public for which ritual details such as the proper performance of a *tayammum* ablution are, in fact, relevant. Moreover, his description of the need to perform *tayammum* before each new prayer includes reference to supererogatory prayer movements – *s-sunne l-qabliyye* and *s-sunne l-ba'diyye*, literally the “preceding” and “succeeding *sunna*,”

⁵³ “Irmī hammak, 4 December 2014,” 35:31-35:46.

respectively, performed in addition to the “obligatory” (*farīḍa*) core prayer on the model of the Prophet Muhammad. As they are not technically required for Muslim believers, such prayers serve as markers of increased devotion for especially pious Sunnis. Nouh’s casual mention of them as a natural part of prayer thus suggests that such singularly devout individuals are precisely the model listeners for whom he is explaining the process.

Similar concerns can be discerned in al-Jarmi’s on-air performances. Like Nouh’s above, the following excerpt is taken from an extended response to a listener with a broadened scope of address. In answer to a caller worried about her young daughter’s supposed doubts regarding religion, al-Jarmi gave the following advice about how to present core ideas about Islam to one’s child – again, in a public-making frame that presupposes a pious Muslim listenership:

[RR081]: [08:13]

IJ: *nabda’ bi-l-afkār el-basīṭa*
((uh)) *wə- wə-ndarribhum ‘aleyā fikret il- il- il-ilāh el-ḥaqq*
el-ilāh il-wāḥid
kullu hel li-yadżūz li-l-illā
an yakūn lahu šarīk
hādī l-fikra nu’ammiqhā ‘and eṭ-ṭifəl fa-našil
ma’hu ilā qanā’a annanā ‘a-l-ḥaqq
miš ((uh)) bi-l- ((uh)) l-əm’ābaṭa kemā yuqāl wa-lākin bi-l-iqnā’
wa-l-ḥudždža

[RR081]: [08:13]

IJ: We begin with simple ideas
And accustom them to the idea of the – the true god
The one god
All of it; is it appropriate for God
To have a partner?
We deepen this thought for the child, and so arrive
With them to (the point of) satisfaction that we are correct
Not, uh, mindlessly, as it is said, but rather through persuasion
And argument⁵⁴

al-Jarmi's use of the first person plural (e.g. *na-bda'* "we begin," *nu-ammiqhā* "we deepen it") for dispensing advice in the segment above is a hortative strategy inclusive of his addressees. But it also carries a number of implicit assumptions regarding the identity of these addressees. For inclusion in *Fatāwa's* audience, one must, first, ideally be a parent, in consonance with established conservative Islamic views on family values and the procreative role of the individual. But more than that, one should be a parent concerned with exposing one's child to proper Islamic teachings – in particular, the belief in God's unity and indivisibility. al-Jarmi's public is thus defined and delimited through its acceptance of the authority of Islamic theological discourse, and implicitly excludes listeners – such as non-believers, non-Muslims, or even non-pious Muslims – for whom such issues are not relevant.

⁵⁴ "Fatāwā, 10 February 2015," 08:13-08:34.

al-Jarmi, however, also simultaneously performs an authorising move with regard to this discourse itself. The truths of divine revelation – the non-existence of a partner for God, His unity, and so on – are presented in a self-evident, straightforward manner, as a common ontological ground for the broadcaster and his public. It is never questioned that children are already being socialised in an Islamic manner by listeners; al-Jarmi is only detailing *how* this should be done. The texts of Islam – from which the theological precepts al-Jarmi alludes to are ultimately derived – are thus endowed with a naturalised authority as the singular appropriate basis for child-rearing.

6.3.2 Performing pious participation

Complementing these addressee invocations is another dialogical process – namely, interaction with participants co-present with broadcasters on the air. In advice calls, in particular, broadcasters define callers as pious individuals seeking advice validated by virtue of its basis in the Islamic religious tradition. Callers themselves, on their part, also regularly contribute to this process. Their practices of questioning and reacting to broadcaster advice metapragmatically define Islamic texts as authoritative sources of belief and pious action. In Pierre Bourdieu's terms, they thus help establish the "symbolic efficacy" of Islamic discourse, by "recognis[ing] the person who exercises it as authorised to do so."⁵⁵

⁵⁵ Bourdieu, *Language*, 116.

In line with differences in their on-air personae, Nouh and al-Jarmi tend to respond to callers in somewhat different ways. Nouh's friendly, paternalistic, and occasionally patronising style contrasts somewhat with al-Jarmi's more brusque and straightforward approach. Even so, in advice calls, both hosts face a very similar range of questions. These include, broadly speaking, questions regarding appropriate ritual practice, especially prayer; appropriateness of particular social practices according to Sunni Muslim doctrine; details of interpretation with regard to particular Islamic texts, in particular verses of the Qur'an and prophetic hadith; financial questions, often concerning the appropriate distribution of inheritance or attempts to avoid exploitative interest (*ribā*); and subjective experiences of religion, such as dreams, lack of religious commitment, or feelings of alienation.

The common motivation behind all these questions is a Muslim believer's concern for appropriate pious behaviour. The very act of phoning in to an Islamic advice programme, therefore, already presupposes a pious Islamic orientation on part of the caller, as well as tacitly accepting the authority of Islamic religious texts – as memorised, interpreted, and ultimately channelled on the air by the scholarly persona of the programme's host.

But the authority and acceptance of this tradition is not just a pre-given motive for on-air communicative interaction. Rather, it is also actively *performed* in instances of such interaction. The authorisation of religious texts, as well as the participation motivated by accepting the authority of such texts, is thus a discursive interactional accomplishment grounded in the specific linguistic performances of both hosts and callers. Below, I analyse two call-ins

that demonstrate this process, as model case studies reflecting tendencies across Jordanian Islamic advice programmes.

In the first excerpt, from *Irmi hammak*, a caller, not introduced by name on the air, is asking Muhammad Nouh about the appropriateness of leaving a building she owns to the youngest of her five sons. The caller frames this inheritance issue explicitly in soteriological terms, affirming herself as a pious Muslim subject concerned with the particular implications of this act in God's eyes when her actions – and, through them, her fate in the afterlife – will come to be weighed and judged:

[RR030]: [44:14]

MN: *əḵwatu šū byigūlu lemmā biddek tsadždžilī le-l-walad*

C: *waḷḷāhi ibn- ya'nī hum al-ḥamdu li-llāh yər- rāḍiyīn ya'nī ū- u- mətḡabblīn el-mawḍū' anā ya'nī anā gult biddi atrukhā waṣīye ya'nī*

MN: [*na'am*]

C: [*šāyif*]

MN: *na'am*

C: *ū- ḡālū iḥnā mā 'andanā māni' bas mn il- el-ḥalāl wa-l-ḥarām enā 'endī ḡams banāt w-'endī ḡams əwlād huwa l-ḡāmis ya'nī wa-anā biddī iṣī yarḡī ((uh)) səbhāna wa-ta'āla ya'tī le-āḡira mərəḡḡātī(??) id-dənyā anā ya'nī 'innī iṣī mā bəḥḡəsəb 'aleyh fī yōwm ya'nī fī l-āḡira*

MN: *na'am*

C: *ya'nī innu huw aḡtar iṣī 'aley ya'nī*
[*w-yḡūl kullhum ya'nī*]

- MN: [*wa||āh yā uktī šūfi*]
šūfi ya- ya'nī a||ā yaḥfaḍum in šā' a||ā yumidd ib-'umrek wə-ḥayātek
[*w-ḍallek*] *ilhum* [*in šā' a||ā*]
- C: [*ā*] [*a||ā yuṭawwil*]
bi-'umrek yā rabb
[*w-ṣ-ṣiḥḥa w-l-'āfiye na'am*]
- MN: [*awlādek*] *awlādnā wlād es-sāmi'in wə-l-ḥāḍrīn w-*
kull man yaqūl minhum āmīn
- C: *āmīn āmīn āmīn* [((inaudible))]
- MN: [*el-mawḍū'*]
ka-t-tālī yā uktī innēk tūk- tə- tsadḏzilī le-wāḥed min el-awlād biddik
amrēn
- C: *ā*

[RR030]: [44:14]

- MN: His brothers, what do they say, when you want to register it for the son? (= in his name)
- C: Really – I mean, they, praise be to God, they are happy (with it), I mean, they accept it – I mean, I said I want to give it as a bequest
- MN: [Yes]
- C: [Do you see?]
- MN: Yes
- C: And they said 'we don't have any objections,' but from – the standpoint of permitted (*ḥalāl*) and forbidden (*ḥarām*) (actions), I have five daughters and I have five sons – so he is the fifth
And I want something that pleases, uh, the Glorious and Sublime, gives to the afterlife, what gratifies me (??) in this world – I...

I mean, to have something that one will not be taken to account for
on the Day of – I mean...

In the afterlife

MN: Yes

C: I mean, he's the most valuable thing for me –

[and they all say, well –]

MN: [Really, sister – look]

Look – I mean, God keep them, God willing, (may He) extend your
age and life

[And keep you] with them, [God willing]

C: [Yes] [God lengthen]

Your life, oh Lord

[And health and vigour, yes]

MN: [Your children,] our children, the children of those
listening and present, and all of them who say 'amen'

C: Amen, amen, amen...

MN: [The issue]

Is as follows, sister: if you wish to – to register (it) for one of the sons,
you need two things

C: Yes⁵⁶

Nouh then proceeds to add that the caller should make sure that all the
siblings agree to her plans, in order to avoid discord – sown, in his words, by
“the Devil” – regarding her property in the future. This further reinforces the

⁵⁶ “Iirmi hammak, 4 December 2014,” 44:14-45:04.

alignment towards religious concerns already explicitly expressed by the caller with her remarks on the “permitted and forbidden,” “this world” and “the afterlife,” and so on.

The manner in which the aforementioned call was concluded is equally telling. After Nouh had spoken in some detail about her issue, the caller responded with a string of blessings, demonstrating not only her respect for the broadcaster but also full acceptance of his textually authoritative answer:

[RR030]: [46:03]

MN: *wa-in šufti nnu hāḍa l-mawḍū‘ byisawwī ḳilāf bēyn əl-iḳwa la’ la’ mā ti’məlī*

wə-r-rizəg min aḷḷā [‘azza] w-džall

C: [ā]

aḷḷā [yəṭawwil] bi-‘umrək [yā ustād ((inaudible))]

MN: [‘arifti] [yā marḥaban yā halā uḳtī]

C: [yā rabb al-‘ālamīn ed-doktōr] əmḥammad nūḥ

MN: [aḷḷā ysalləmək aḷḷā ysalləmək]

yā halā uḳtī yā marḥaba

[RR030]: [46:03]

MN: And if you see that this is causing conflict between the brothers,
(then) no, no, don’t do (it)

And sustenance (will come) from God [the Almighty]

C: [Yes]

God [lengthen] your life, [sir...]

MN: [You know?] [Welcome, welcome, my sister]

C: [Oh Lord of Both Worlds, Doctor] Muhammad Nouh

MN: [God give you health, God give you health]

Welcome, my sister, welcome⁵⁷

Within the communicative space of the call, the caller here performs a wholehearted acceptance of advice dispensed by Nouh – and, through it, the authority of the textual tradition from which he draws his knowledge. No matter her internal psychological attitude, her language thus effects a clear *interactional* alignment with Islamic textual authority within the call. Acceptance of Islamic texts as authoritative was, presumably, what motivated the caller to contact an Islamic advice programme in the first place, as she is seeking a specifically *religiously validated* solution to what would otherwise appear to be a solely legal or familial inheritance problem. But once the call comes on the air, the authorisation of religious discourse also plays out in the interaction itself, as a real-time communicative process: both by the broadcaster, who draws on religious knowledge and vocabulary to provide legitimate advice – thus tacitly accepting it as true – and in turn by the caller, who accepts his advice without hesitation.

A similar process is evident in the following call from an episode of *Fatāwa*. Here, the reference to Islamic religious texts is even more explicit. In the excerpt, a listener introduced as Zayd is asking al-Jarmi on the ritual propriety of postponing an obligatory noon prayer he had missed, and only performing it after he had already prayed the next (afternoon) prayer. al-Jarmi

⁵⁷ “Iirmi hammak, 4 December 2014,” 46:03-46:15.

points out that this is erroneous, since any missed prayer should be prayed immediately after a person realises they had missed it – according to no lesser a source than a Prophetic hadith:

[RR082]: [12:14]

- IJ: *əqđī la' lēyš ba'd el-'aşə*
lēš mā qađētu mubāšara
- Z: *āāā*
- IJ: *eş-şalā aķī zeyd tuqđā mubāšara*
ənsīyt ət'ibət ((uh)) keđā
matā-mā đakart bəţşallēyh məbāšara hāđa (h)uwa l-ħukm eš-şar'ī
- Z: *'and marra ħakēytli innu*
bəţşallī l-ħāđira wə-l-bāqi bəktamilhā
- IJ: *kēf ((uh)) la' la' ((uh)) inta fhimt ((uh)) kīlāf đālik ya'nī fī l-ħadīť eş-şahīħ*
man nāma 'an şalātin aw nasiyahā fa-li-yuşallīhā matā đakarahā
hāđa huwa [l-ħadīť]
- Z: *[āā]*
- IJ: *matā əmtađđakar bəţşallīhā [bārak aļļā fik yā aķī]*
- Z: *[şukran ilek kīr] şukran*
- IJ *şukran zeyd idan*
intebhu yhā l-kirām ilā qađāyā ((uh)) adā' aş-şalā wə-qađā' eş-şalā

[RR082]: [12:14]

- IJ: I perform – no, why after the afternoon (prayer)?
Why didn't you perform it straight away?

- Z: Aaah – yes
- IJ: A prayer, brother Zayd, is performed straight away
If you forgot, if you were tired – (anything) like that
When you remember, you pray it straight away – this is the sharia ruling
- Z: (But) once you told me that
You pray the current (= next) prayer and (then) finish the rest
- IJ: How? No, no, you understood – (it’s) different, I mean, (it stands) in the sound hadith:
Whoever has slept through a prayer or has forgotten it should pray it when they remember it
That is [the hadith]
- Z: [Ah, yes]
- IJ: When you remember, you pray it – [God bless you, my brother]
- Z: [Thank you so much]
Thank you
- IJ Thank you, Zayd – so:
Pay attention, honourable (listeners), to issues of the performance of prayer⁵⁸

al-Jarmi’s language in this call exhibits many Colloquial Arabic features, including the use of the imperfective verbal aspect marker *b-* and distinctly Levantine Colloquial vowel patterning on perfect verbs – such as *ənsīyt* “you forgot” and *ət’ibət* “you were/became tired.” This is generally reflective of al-

⁵⁸ “Fatāwā, 10 February 2015,” 12:14-12:48.

Jarmi's linguistic practice when talking to callers: maintaining a linguistic level reflective of informal, everyday conversation presumably lends his pronouncements an air of authenticity and accessibility, directed at those who may have less detailed knowledge of the Islamic textual tradition. And yet al-Jarmi also explicitly draws on this tradition for his answer. In his signature business-like manner he wastes no time in reminding Zayd of the correct text of the hadith – marked in bold in the transcript above – which unequivocally states the principle of performing a missed prayer directly after one has remembered it.

Curiously, Zayd at first disputes the advice he has been given, claiming that al-Jarmi had once told him the “current” (*ḥādīra*) prayer should be performed first – that is, that a believer should only perform a missed prayer after a following prayer according to the ordinary prescribed schedule. Once al-Jarmi quotes the hadith, however, he immediately defers to the broadcaster and accepts the advice.

Here, the authority of religious texts once again functions as the motivating factor for interaction. The very fact of Zayd calling in regarding a very detailed point of Islamic ritual, the appropriate sequence for the performance of prayers, already marks him out as an individual especially concerned with his piety – though also one who believes knowledge drawn from textual sources, such as that possessed by al-Jarmi, will help him achieve his desired pious status. Islamic textual authority is also, however, constituted in the interaction itself: first by al-Jarmi as he provides a direct quotation in

support of his answer, and then by the caller who aligns to this explanation in the conclusion to the call.

Like public addressivity, then, direct caller participation in Islamic advice programmes functions to authorise the Islamic textual tradition in an dialogic manner. Both broadcasters – the putative transmitters of the tradition – and their callers presuppose the authority of this tradition as the common ground for interaction. This complements, moreover, the assumptions underlying broadcaster linguistic behaviour more generally, for instance in practices of framing and quoting textual fragments. Only those Sunni Muslim Jordanians who are truly devout and pious are invited to participate in Islamic advice programmes. Other kinds of audiences and participants are excluded, thus implicitly validating and naturalising the authority of Sunni Muslim religious texts.

#

The present chapter has analysed various aspects of language use in Islamic advice programmes on contemporary Jordanian non-government radio. This analysis demonstrates that, in these programmes, the authority of the Islamic tradition and Islamic religious texts is to an important extent discursively constituted. In addition to generic features of advice programmes, such as initial addresses and the manipulation of sonic background, their orientation towards pious discourse is reinforced and actively performed

through linguistic means – primarily, by framing Islamic texts as a discourse that can authorise pious thought and action.

This framing utilises linguistic strategies that function in what may be termed a doubly dialogic manner. They are dialogic, first, on a discourse-internal level, as with entextualisation of Islamic religious texts through register distinctions, prosody, and quotative phrases, as well as the persona build-up of broadcasters as authorities on these texts. They also, however, enter into external dialogic relationships with other discourse participants. These include audiences – addressed as fundamentally pious publics by the broadcasters – and callers in advice calls, whose linguistic performance further emphasises the authorising function of religious texts. Thus, while Islamic textual authority is presupposed as a common ground for Islamic advice programme interactions, it is also constituted in these interactions themselves. It is, in other words, a communicative achievement, rather than merely an externally imposed precondition for communication.

As these practices are predominantly linguistic, they reveal a number of implications for language use in mass media such as radio – particularly regarding textual discourses and traditions with overwhelming social and cultural dominance, such as Sunni Islam in Jordan. First, linguistically framing such texts as a precondition for interaction defines the audience as one who accepts the authority of Islamic religious texts in the first place. The ideal public is not only Sunni Muslim, but also devout, eager to enhance their piety and ensure they are not sinners by contacting a religious expert immediately regarding even the finest points of Islamic ritual and creed. It excludes listeners

who do not accept this presupposition; and it legitimises mass circulation of discussions which never question Islam as an authoritative source of pious behaviour.

While authors such as Eickelman and Anderson have celebrated the potential redistribution of religious authority that they see as inherent in Islam's entry into "new" media circuits, here the result is less a democratisation of religious thought than a solidification of hierarchies along a particular pattern of mediated participatory dynamics.⁵⁹ This recalls Morgan Clark's analysis of mediated Islamic legal discourse among Lebanese Shi'a, where despite the ability to access rulings and statements instantly in online repositories there is nevertheless a concerted effort to legitimise such rulings through traditional means, by assigning authority to prominent religious figures.⁶⁰ Live radio broadcasting and phone calls allow believers to instantly get in touch with religious experts and acquire pious knowledge – but they still involve a hierarchical distribution of this knowledge from 'expert' to 'lay believer,' and allow no participation outside this particular framework.

On the other hand, the very fact that language is used to perform Islamic textual authority demonstrates that such authority is not self-evident. Even Bourdieu, otherwise an unfaltering advocate of the determination of linguistic authority by external social conditions, recognises that the production of authoritative language requires a "process of continuous creation" through

⁵⁹ Eickelman and Anderson, "Redefining," 1-18.

⁶⁰ Morgan Clarke, "Neo-Calligraphy: Religious Authority and Media Technology in Contemporary Shiite Islam," *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 52, no. 2 (2010): 351–83.

which institutions and specialists struggle to assert their “monopolistic power to impose the legitimate form of expression.”⁶¹ Given the broader socio-cultural heft and public presence of Sunni Islam in Jordan, it is questionable to what extent linguistic strategies can challenge the hallowed status of the Islamic textual tradition. It is also likely that Islamic advice programmes filter participation in call-ins before individuals appear on the air, and only select those whose issues and performances promote a pious Islamic orientation – a point that merits further research. Nevertheless, once language is understood to be a main aspect of upholding Islamic authority in a radio setting, its authorisation strategies can be directly identified and interrogated, opening them up to potential challenges and reconsiderations.

This authorising role of language in the mass media is, finally, especially relevant in the case of Arabic. It recalls Noha Mellor’s findings regarding the process of establishing “cultural authority” on part of Arab journalists reporting on Middle Eastern events through broadly discursive strategies such as experiential narrative and “witnessing.”⁶² However, my study of Islamic advice programmes has demonstrated that such strategies also have important metapragmatic and linguistic dimensions. Speakers of Arabic possess a wide variety of ideologically loaded linguistic resources, from lofty Classical Arabic quotations to contemporary Colloquial Arabic used in day-to-day conversation. But they also use these resources in strategic and creative ways, with varying

⁶¹ Bourdieu, *Language*, 58.

⁶² Noha Mellor, “The Culture of Witnessing: War Correspondents Rewriting the History of the Iraq War,” *Language and Intercultural Communication* 12, no. 2 (2012): 103–17.

implications according to details of communicative context. Using Standard Arabic to expound principles in a political speech, for example, is very different from using Classical Arabic to quote a prophetic hadith when giving advice on prayer sequence – as is, indeed, quoting such a hadith to legitimise advice-giving on an Islamic radio programme versus quoting it in an off-hand manner in daily conversation. While the actual language used may be very similar, in these two cases, production format and stance produce quite different communicative effects.

When studying Arabic in the mass media, it is therefore insufficient to note merely that switches in ‘code’ occur, or that one broadcaster is more skilled than another in interpreting Islamic texts in a local colloquial idiom. It is, rather, in discrete, highly context-laden moments of language use, drawing on the meanings and ideologies of particular linguistic resources, that broadcasters invoke their pious audiences and callers demonstrate their alignment to Islamic authority. These aspects of language deserve full attention if the reach and scope of Islamic radio programmes is to be ultimately appreciated and defined.

#

7. Conclusion

Exploring the language of Jordanian non-government radio reveals a great degree of diversity in form, structure, and meaning. The diglossic framework, which has guided so much research on Arabic use in public settings, is only able to capture this diversity to a limited extent. For a taxonomic framework such as that of Ferguson or Badawi, most of this language would be consigned to the 'colloquial' bracket, or to one or the other of the various intermediate stylistic levels.¹ A more dynamic codeswitching framework, such as that of Holes or Albirini, would still miss a great number of strategies and processes – such as the choice between different dialect variants, intertextual quotation, and audience and caller addressivity.² These processes, moreover, are relevant not just as examples of linguistic variation, but also as vehicles of meaning-making. As Debra Spitulnik has argued, following Greg Urban, the social circulation of language in mass media and beyond is “essential for the existence of every society or culture because it creates a kind of ‘public accessibility’ that is vital for the production of shared meaning.”³ This thesis has shown that, although ‘public’ in the sense that they are transmitted and accessible to a wide listenership of anonymous Jordanians, the meanings produced in Jordanian non-government radio broadcasting are nevertheless very diverse, depending on their linguistic

¹ Ferguson, “Diglossia,” 1-10; Badawi, *Mustawayāt*.

² Holes, “Uses,” 13-17; Albirini, “Sociolinguistic Functions,” 537.

³ Spitulnik, “Social Circulation,” 162; Greg Urban, *A Discourse-Centered Approach to Culture* (Austin, TX: University of Texas Press, 1991), 10.

expression and framing. They contain discourses both inclusive and exclusive of various groups, invoking listeners and callers as participants with various degrees of agency. Attention to language is, therefore, of crucial importance not only for understanding existing socio-cultural beliefs and stereotypes, but also for exploring discursive strategies that might challenge them.

My research contributes to the literature on Arabic linguistic variation by examining aspects of this variation in one particular setting – that of Jordanian non-government radio – but also exploring the broader social and cultural meanings that stem from this variation, and the discursive processes through which they are produced. The present thesis draws extensively on the twin concepts of publics and participation as a framework for these insights. It provides, first, an empirical application of Michael Warner’s concept of discursively constituted ‘publics’ – social collectivities constituted through linguistic address alone, and shaped by strategies of language use that delimit and police their boundaries.⁴ Second, it also builds on Erving Goffman’s concepts of role structures and production format in disaggregating just what kind of roles – animators, overhearers, ‘equal’ participants – the users of radio language actually perform; and on Mikhail Bakhtin’s concept of “dialogic” discourse, demonstrating that meanings in such performances are always produced in relation to other participants, texts, and social imaginaries.⁵

Chapter 3 has explored how linguistic strategies that invoke publics and enable participation are affected by the media form of radio – in particular, its

⁴ Warner, *Publics*, 67-76.

⁵ Goffman, *Forms*, 124-57; Bakhtin, *Dialogic Imagination*, 324-40.

schizophonia and temporal linearity – but also, in a complementary manner, through digital media, remediated through radio talk by broadcasters. Though broadcasters use different techniques adapted for different media environments, these strategies nevertheless serve similar goals: delimiting particular social structures – the unified Jordanian nation, the audience of social media followers, the listeners linked ‘authentically’ through individual digital message address – through linguistic means.

In Chapter 4, these dynamics were explored in greater detail through a consideration of stylistic language choices in producing everyday language on contemporary Jordanian non-government radio. It revealed the assumption of a high-level Ammani Arabic as the linguistic norm for radio hosts – implying a listening public that can recognise this form of Arabic as a normal, everyday idiom, but also holding broader implications for participation, particularly with regard to the language of female hosts, whose speech is stereotyped as less authentically Jordanian due to being in certain respects to pan-Levantine urban speech styles than East Jordanian and Bedouin dialects. But these norms of linguistic variation are not immutable: they can also be subverted through overt mention of identity categories, implicature, and evaluative stance. These form viable strategies for resisting broader discourses of urban refinement, nationalism, and gender identity, and the public-making and participation-limiting practices that they enable.

It may, however, be difficult to deploy such strategies in a consistent manner in the contemporary Jordanian non-government radio field. Chapters 5 and 6 have each examined a programme genre that exerts its own limitations

on broadcaster discourse. Service programmes, for example, are dominated by the favour-dispensation model reminiscent of *wāṣṭa* clientelist dynamics which may be difficult to challenge. Even here, however, linguistic performance provides potential for variation. Although a broadcaster such as Muhammad al-Wakeel might delight in the role of problem-solving hero, there is also scope for subversion and pushback on part of listeners making jokes and participating on an overall more equal level – if the broadcaster *persona* is structured differently, as in the case of the ‘ordinary citizen’ Hani al-Badri. For Islamic advice programmes, language conversely plays a more authoritative and limiting role: strategies such as quotative framing, prosody, and register shifting limit publics and participation to those willing to accept the model of dispensing pious advice through the textual expertise of programme hosts, and re-legitimise top-down transmission of religious knowledge despite the appearance of multiple voices of Muslim believers through phone calls and advice messages. While resistance is less likely here, these findings nevertheless suggest that language should be a main ground for intervention if these dynamics are to become more inclusive and equal.

The four themes that emerged as prominent aspects of language use on Jordanian non-government radio – the relationship with media form; linguistic indexicality and identity; broadcaster *persona*; and the authoritative discourse of religion – thus demonstrate the multiple and sometimes conflicting roles language can play in mass-mediated settings. Three major points can be brought forward from this analysis regarding mediated language use and variation in the contemporary Middle East. The first concerns discourses of

power and resistance; the second the influence of media form on communication; and the third the relevance of language for particular political and ideological projects in which media play a part – in particular, ideas regarding localism and authenticity.

Language can, first, be used to reassert dominant ideologies and discourses – through practices which, following Pierre Bourdieu, reproduce the “orthodoxy” of existing forms of social differentiation and inequality.⁶ This is the case with the authoritative Islamic tradition examined in Chapter 6; the gender and ethnic origin stereotypes implied by ‘everyday’ broadcaster language examined in Chapter 4; and the reassertion of patriotic Jordanian nationalism, a trend most explicit in the *Şawṭunā wāḥid* programme examined in Chapter 3 but running throughout much of Jordanian non-government radio today, including service programmes.

But rather than a simple reproduction of dominant symbolic values that would be implied by a crude application of Bourdieu’s framework, these same settings also provide scope for resisting such discourses – again, by means of language. Contingent indexical uses of language, examined in Chapter 4, can challenge language-linked stereotypes of gender and urban refinement. Specific aspects of broadcaster persona, such as Hani al-Badri’s tendency (examined in Chapter 5) to frame himself as an ‘ordinary citizen’ who jokes with his callers regarding serious issues and allows them to make their own jokes in turn, likewise hold potential for more equal participation than framing the host as simply a mediator for disbursement of official favours – even as

⁶ Bourdieu, *Language*, 127-32.

this role remains the central motivation for staging and participating in service programmes such as al-Badri's. Dominant ideologies can thus be reinforced, but also disrupted, through linguistic performance, as it invokes a plurality of ideological positions and social voices which make assessment of resistance inherently indeterminate and ambiguous.⁷ I hope this thesis will stimulate further debates regarding the role of language in discourses of power and resistance in the contemporary Arabic-speaking Middle East – among linguists and sociolinguists of Arabic, but also Middle East scholars more broadly. In particular, better recognition is needed of the role of *indexicality* in these processes, with full acknowledgment that language use is often strategic, creative, and cannot simply be subsumed under the taxonomic categories of diglossic variation.

Both power and resistance thus assert themselves at different points in Jordanian non-government radio today. In order to recognise the processes by which they do so, language must be given its due as a central locus of meaning-making. But – and this is my second point – it must also be recognised as such a locus *within its specific media context*. Language is sited; and *where* it is sited affects both linguistic variation and how it invokes broader social meanings. The affordances of radio, its sonic exclusivity (or schizophonia) and temporal evanescence, are two particularly relevant aspects here. Radio, as a classic schizophonic medium, amplifies the potential of what is *said* in the live broadcast setting at the expense of other semiotic channels; and temporal evanescence has similar linguistically relevant effects,

⁷ Jaffe et al., "Introduction," 136.

such as the perceived need to perform ‘spontaneous’ language appropriate to everyday conversational settings (examined in Chapter 4), or the dominance of live interactions with callers as a way of lending authenticity to programmes and demonstrating that they are directed at real, local publics – of ordinary Jordanian citizens in the case of service programmes explored in Chapter 5, or Jordanian Sunni Muslim believers in the case of Islamic advice programmes analysed in Chapter 6. Digital media displace these affordances to an extent, as Chapter 3 has shown; but their relevance persists, at the very least, as a “media ideology” of what radio-mediated communication is *supposed* to be like.⁸

In a broader sense, the mass media context also amplifies the significance of individual speaker idiosyncrasies, as we have seen in the construction of broadcaster persona in Chapter 5 – where the character quirks and habitual ways of interaction specific to different broadcasters result in quite different ways of constructing publics and interacting with audiences. Again, this is a function of the media setting, the *performance context* of radio language, suggesting that mediated language cannot simply be equated with other kinds of linguistic production as far as its social and cultural significance is concerned.⁹

While sociolinguistic studies of Arabic have so far not acknowledged the influence of media form extensively, this thesis has thus demonstrated that this aspect deserves more attention as a contextual factor. Radio and other

⁸ Gershon, “Media Ideologies,” 283.

⁹ Bauman and Briggs, “Poetics,” 66-7.

mass media are not merely neutral vessels for transmission of language. It is, likewise, insufficient to claim in a general sense that a linguistic ideology is prevalent and shared by all simply because it is publicly accessible through a media channel – as, for example, Reem Bassiouney suggests in a recent essay on religious identity in the language of popular culture in Egypt.¹⁰ Rather, both the properties of a medium's form – its affordances and associated media ideologies – and the specific dynamics of mass media communication influence how language will be used in it, and its broader cultural and societal implications in turn.

A final point concerns the discourses of localism and authenticity that appear in many of the linguistic performances discussed in this thesis. Contemporary Jordanian non-government radio, with its direct, live representation of Jordanian citizens' voices through call-ins and digital messages, aims at a form of authentic locality that better known Arabic-language media – such as transnational satellite channels, websites, and film and TV productions – are less able to accomplish. Although perhaps not the unwavering “guardian[s] of national identity” that Muhammad Ayish has identified among comparable local media outlets (including radio) in the United Arab Emirates, it nevertheless clearly seeks to engage with a primarily local, Jordanian audience, examining issues of local interest and communicating in a vernacular linguistic idiom marked by ‘authentically’ Jordanian features.¹¹

¹⁰ Bassiouney, “Religion,” 48-50.

¹¹ Muhammad I. Ayish, “Broadcasting Traditions in the United Arab Emirates,” in *National Broadcasting and State Policy in Arab Countries*, ed. Tourya Guaaybess (Basingstoke & New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2013), 13–27.

Linguistic anthropologists and sociolinguists who have recognised the constructed nature of “linguistic authenticity” have been especially apt in pointing out how this concept can also be pressed into service for political projects of varying orientations – both inclusionary, pluri-vocal projects such as use of multiple languages in the minority language context of Corsica examined by Alexandra Jaffe, to studies on exclusionary anti-immigrant discourse of ‘authentic’ North Italian dialects studied by Sabina Perrino.¹² It should be noted that similar insights have recently also gained prominence in media studies: as described by Lunt and Livingstone in their comments on Habermas’ public sphere theory, the field has in the past three decades shifted towards evaluating public participation in the mass media through its discursive norms and communicative styles, rather than utilising the idealised yardstick of a rational-critical deliberative ‘public sphere’ of bourgeois liberalism.¹³

Language-focused studies with a high awareness of mass media contexts must play a central role in providing empirical data for these insights. In order to effectively navigate the complex discursive terrain with which they are faced, media producers and consumers must be aware of the role of language in media communication, including the various possible meanings of minute linguistic choices that invoke particular ideologies of locality and authenticity, and their potential for including – or excluding – specific audiences and participants.

¹² Jaffe, “Staging,” 166-82; Perrino, “Performing,” 143-8.

¹³ Lunt and Livingstone, “Media Studies’ Fascination,” 91-5.

This thesis has analysed a number of contexts and practices in Jordanian radio where these processes take place. Chapter 3 has shown that ideologies of media, such as the sonic unity of radio and the ideal of concrete individuals behind each social media profiles, can be utilised to define and enumerate a definite, authentic, local public of listeners and media users. But at the same time, this is a public which is explicitly defined as consisting of *Jordanians* alone – excluding, by implication, anyone whose feelings of national belonging fall outside this bracket, or seek to challenge it. Similar ideas motivate the choice of a specific, gender-differentiated Ammani dialect for most non-government radio programming, as examined in Chapter 4 – a choice which, moreover, implies a compromised authenticity on part of female speakers due to the association of female pronunciations with non-Jordanian Levantine dialects of Arabic. The service programme hosts explored in Chapter 5 are likewise adept at sustaining audience and participation boundaries through their host personae: they exploit the real, supremely *authentic* problems of individual listeners as raw material to bolster their legitimacy, but they also situate themselves firmly as a local, Jordanian media service, aimed at Jordanian citizens alone. And similar motivations can be discerned in linguistic practice on Islamic advice programmes analysed in Chapter 6 – though in this case the audiences and participants around which exclusionary boundaries are being drawn are Sunni Muslim more than Jordanian. My research thus also contributes to the broader sociolinguistic and linguistic anthropological literature on media language by demonstrating how

processes of localist authentication function in a mediated setting, and their use for both inclusive and exclusive purposes.

The task remains, however, to take this research further. One crucial avenue for enriching the present, predominantly transcript-focused study is a greater empirical focus on contexts of production and consumption of mediated language. One of my future goals is to conduct longer-term observation and interviews with radio station personnel, which will provide greater depth to the ideological aspect of radio language – more information on the motivations, stereotypes, and limitations that lie behind linguistic performances. Conversely, more extensive interviewing and socialising with radio listeners will enable nuanced understandings of which particular linguistic ideologies, but also ideas of publics and participation, are relevant for audiences. An especially important aspect of this is engagement with callers and following up on their experiences of participation in radio discourse. It will be interesting to explore how these might support, or perhaps contradict, the discursive conclusions drawn from the present thesis.

But there is also scope for further discourse-oriented study. I am particularly intrigued by the possibility of examining linguistic anthropological concepts across contexts of mediated language use. The data gathered for this thesis include a number of non-participatory religious talk shows, which can be examined for processes such as entextualisation of authoritative discourse, indexical links to identity category stereotypes, and persona constitution. These could be compared to other sound media, such as recorded sermons; Islamic television programmes; and digital or written

engagements with Islamic discourse. Such a comparative examination will retain the methodological focus on texts and transcripts, while uncovering whether there are similarities in discursive principles at work across Arabic-language media – and the extent to which context affects the range and applicability of different linguistic strategies. In evaluating the relevance of language and devising strategies for its social and cultural impact, understanding the effects of the choice *of* media setting will supplement the present thesis's conclusions regarding choice *within* a specific setting.

None of these conclusions would, of course, be possible if Jordanian radio were not the vibrant, heterogeneous field of media production that it is today. Even in the mid-2010s, and despite the ascent of new media and a less-than-liberal media legislation climate, non-government radio in Jordan retains broad relevance in social and cultural terms – not least as a result of the specific strategies of language use that it exhibits. This thesis has looked at radio language through the twin conceptual lens of publics – the audiences that such language addresses and, through this address, helps constitute – and participation – how radio language enables or forecloses members of the public to participate in media discourse. Its findings offer important contributions to scholarship of Arabic media language, and to sociolinguistic and linguistic anthropological literature more broadly, regarding who such language speaks to, and who is properly included in its audiences and debates. Radio language constructs, amplifies, and occasionally downplays differences between various social groups – Jordanians and non-Jordanians, Ammanis and non-Ammanis, pious Muslims and unbelievers, men and

women. It provides a platform for sharing social values and convictions, but also exposes the limits of such sharing. With the present thesis's contribution on these issues, Jordanian radio will hopefully no longer be "forgotten," but rather appreciated as the dynamic and captivating social phenomenon that it is.

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8. Bibliography

For organisational purposes, the present bibliography lists sources in four separate sections:

1. Radio broadcasts. Lists the recordings and transcripts referenced in the body of the thesis in alphabetical order. The tags in square brackets (e.g. [RR024], [MR010]) indicate the label of the recording in the author's personal archive.

2. Field interviews. Lists the interviews recorded by the author in the field. The tags in square brackets (e.g. [FI02]) indicate the label of the recording in the author's personal archive.

3. Sources in Arabic. Lists all references originally in Arabic. Titles are provided in transliteration.

4. Other sources. Lists all references originally in English or French.

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