A STRUCTURAL MODEL OF PRESTIGIOUS ORAL ARABIC[1]

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Prestigious Oral Arabic, the substandard noncolloquial oral medium of the present-day Arab cultural elite, is an unstable linguistic entity with diffuse structural contours. The following inquiry aims at creating a tentative structural model of this emerging linguistic medium in terms of its deviation from the synthetic norm of Standard Arabic, and at defining its position in the recent system of diglossia.

Key words: diglossia, substandardness, noncolloquialness, oralness, cultural significance, synthetic norm of Standard Arabic, *iʿrāb*-less language, diglossic continuum, mono-/multifunctional indicators, structural/graphical limit

1.In the recent system of Arabophone communication, currently identified with the notion of diglossia[2] the linguistic and socio-cultural status of the substandard noncolloquial oral Arabic, henceforward Prestigious Oral Arabic (POA), is not easy to define, neither is its position in the diglossic hierarchy quite clear. POA, a parallel of Mitchell´s Educated Spoken Arabic /ESA/,[3] Karin C. Ryding´s Formal Spoken Arabic /FSA/,[4] etc., is here used

as a generic term for *all* substandard noncolloquial, typically oral varieties of Arabic, irrespective of the names they actually bear.

When retaining the notion of diglossia as a working framework, POA appears as an in-between medium, *luġa wusṭā*, oscillating between both poles of diglossia: Standard Arabic (Ferguson's H-variety), at the synthetic pole of the typological space, and any of the set of local colloquials, at the analytic pole thereof (Ferguson's L-variety).

The classical concept of diglossia, however, did not gain general acceptance with all those concerned with problems of communication in the Arabophone world. The binary model of diglossia is challenged by several more refined hierarchies.

The system proposed by H. Blanc[5] distinguishes five varieties or style levels.

Doubts about the utility of the latter type of finely graded systems are recognized by Blanc himself when admitting that it is rare 'to find any sustained segment of discourse in a single one of the style varieties alluded to'.[6] In formal classification, however, Blanc's system made it possible to identify both polar values of the diglossive space: Standard Classical and Plain Colloquial. The non-polar rest of the system, disregarding its subdivision into three separate units (Modified Classical, Semiliterary or Elevated Colloquial, and apparently also Koineized Colloquial), might be taken for a POA-related segment of the Arabophone diglossic continuum.

A similar, though not overlapping and terminologically quite different, hierarchy of levels (*mustawayāt*) of the contemporary Arabic of Egypt was developed somewhat later by as-Saʿīd Badawī.[7] As in Blanc's system, the five levels of this hierarchy are delimited by two structural maxima: synthetic and analytic. Badawī's maximum of synthetism, however, is subdivided between *fuṣḥā t-turāṯ* or Standard Arabic of the heritage, true Classical Arabic, and *fuṣḥā l-ʿaṣr* or Standard Arabic of the present. The analytic maximum coincides with *ʿāmmīyat al-ummīyīn*, colloquial of the illiterate. The two in-between levels, *ʿāmmīyat al-muṯaqqafīn*, colloquial of the educated, used in formal communication without recourse to any written text, and *ʿāmmīyat al-mutanawwirīn*, colloquial of the enlightened, used in the everyday needs of educated interlocutors, might seemingly be identified with what we call POA, the substandard noncolloquial linguistic entity.

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[5] BLANC, H. Stylistic Variations in Spoken Arabic. In FERGUSON, Charles A. (Ed.). *Contributions to Arabic Linguistics*, pp. 79–161.

[6] Ibid., p. 85.

[7] BADAWI, as-Saʿīd *Mustawayāt al-ʿarabīya al-muʿāṣira fī miṣr.* (Linguistic levels of contemporary Arabic in Egypt).

Several other attempts at hierarchizing elements of the Arabophone diglossic communication are left out of consideration.

In contrast to Blanc's system of varieties or Badawī's hierarchy of levels, Mitchell argues[8] that ESA has to be conceived as a result of the constant interplay of written and vernacular Arabic rather than as a series of separate entities. Substantially the same approach to the educated nondialectal oral Arabic may be deduced from El-Hasan´s ´critical view of diglossia´.[9]

1.1. In the Arab cultural tradition, the vague notion of an *i°rāb*-less noncolloquial Arabic, used in culturally highlighted communicative events, is not unknown to recent *izdiwāǧīya* debates. Anīs Frayḥa's simplified Arabic[10] is an *i°rāb*-less language defined as a common spoken language (*al-lahǧa al-°arabīya al-maḥkīya al-muštaraka*), free from clear regionalisms, with reduced verbal paradigms and a reduced inventory of personal pronouns due to the loss of gender distinction in the 2P and 3P of the plural, and with a simplified syntax of numerals. In the field of lexicon, Frayḥa's simplified Arabic depends on Standard Arabic as a source of its lexical borrowings.

Henri Fleisch's attitude toward Frayḥa's common spoken language is that of a scholar and conservative supporter of Classical Arabic, an Arabic modernized and somewhat simplified, but not *i°rāb*-less. An *i°rāb*-less Arabic is not even a language in the proper sense of the word. The future lies in an *arabe classique moderne* written in the fully vocalized script.[11]

The 20th century attitude of the leading Arab scholars towards fundamental synthetic manifestations of Arabic, namely those related to the case and verbal mood inflection, may further be illustrated by Ibrāfīm Anīs' view on *i°rāb*. Although it cannot be affirmed that Anīs' presentation of the (vowel-based) *i°rāb*-markers in terms of mere cluster-preventing word-connecting operators is fully representatitve of the Arab scholarship, an *i°rāb* deprived of its grammatical function is certainly worth consideration: "It seems that providing the word ends with vowels was one of the distinguishing marks of junction, both in poetry and prose. Whenever a speaker makes a pause or concludes his sentence, he has no need of these vowels, he stops at the last word of his utterance with what is known as

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[8] MITCHELL, T.F. *What is Educated Spoken Arabic*, p. 12.

[9] EL-HASSAN, S. *Educated Spoken Arabic in Egypt and the Levant*, pp. 112–132.

[10] FRAYḤA, Anīs *Naḥwa °arabīya muyassara*. (Towards a simplified Arabic) In DIEM, Werner *Hochsprache und Dialekt im Arabischen. Untersuchungen zur heutigen Zweisprachigkeit*, p. 141.

[11] FLEISCH, H. *Arabe classique et arabe dialectal*, pp. 23–62.

sukūn. It may be inferred from this premise that the basic rule for all inflective words is to end in this *sukūn* and the speaker has to resort to the voweling of words but in the case of a phonetic necessity called forth by the (word) junction."[12]

2. The first attestable manifestation of the evolutional process of analytic reconstruction of Arabic, which is assumed to have started around the time of the Islamic conquest in the 7th and 8th centuries A.D.,[13] appears in the dichotomy of pausal and contextual forms, recorded and carefully analysed in the works of early Arab grammarians and in numerous *qirāʾāt* treatises. The very existence of the pausal-contextual dichotomy contributed to the assumption that dropping the word-final short-vowel markers does not produce any noticeable loss of grammatical information and that these elided elements can easily be dispensed with in the communicative process. The subsequent spread of pausal forms in contextual positions gradually led to the constitution of the structural basis for modern Arabic dialects.

POA, the promising *luġa wusṭā* of the present-day Arabic diglossia and the prestigious oral medium of the Arab intellectual elite, is itself the product of this evolutional trend. As a so-far normless linguistic entity, POA may best be approached as a linguistic continuum of relatively diffuse and permeable structural states alternating between both poles of the diglossic space, maximum of synthetism (ms), supported by the synthetic norm of Standard Arabic (SA) and maximum of analytism (ma), represented by the analytic structures of Colloquial Arabic (CA), subsuming the whole of modern Arabic colloquials (local dialects), without being fully identifiable with any of the two structural maxima.

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CA: ma   SA: ms   POA: ms/ma

As the synthetic norm of Standard Arabic is the unique stable point in the whole typological space of diglossia, all structural manifestations of POA will be classified in terms of their identity with or their deviation from this synthetic norm, materialized in various sets of inflectional indicators (the domain of derivation stands outside the scope of the present study). The following considerations will purposefully be restricted to the *iʿrāb*-related categories of case and verbal mood, the ones most immediately affected by the ongoing process of analytic restructuring of Arabic. Beyond this narrow

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[12] ANĪS, Ibrāhīm *Raʾy fī l-iʿrāb.* (My opinion on *al-iʿrāb*), pp. 55–56.
[13] FÜCK, J. *Arabīya*, pp. 2–3, 5–6; BLAU, J. *The Emergence and Linguistic Background of Judaeo-Arabic*, p. 8.

iʿrāb space only the perfective paradigm will be taken into account to complete the verbal counterpart of the nominal domain.

2.1. POA, defined in terms of two structural maxima still offers space for a largely unpredictable alternation of synthetic and analytic structures. Any valid linguistic statement about POA, structurally reduced to the sum of its inflectional indicators, may only be derived from a sort of hierarchical organization of the latter. To this purpose, the whole inventory of the inflectional markers of Standard Arabic is classified in terms of their structural stability. The latter expresses the relative capability of synthetic inflections to resist the impact of pausalization in non-pausal contexts of oral communication, that is, in a wider evolutionary perspective, to resist the process of analytic reconstruction of the synthetic structural model of Standard Arabic. This classification leads to a dichotomous division between:

(1) relatively stable, and

(2) relatively unstable inflections.

Stable inflections, functionally represented by inflectional indicators (markers) that signal several grammatical categories, hence multifunctional or multicategorial indicators, contrast with unstable inflections whose indicators tend to signal one category only, hence monofunctional or monocategorial indicators. The ability of multifunctional indicators to resist the impact of pausalization in oral contexts is markedly greater than that of monofunctional ones.

The former class may be illustrated by portmanteau morphemes, such as -*ūn(a)* [14] /-*ū* which, in nominal paradigms, mark case (nominative), gender (masculine) and number (plural), in a nonconstruct/construct opposition; in verbal (imperfective) paradigms, they indicate gender (masculine), number (plural), mood (-*ūn(a)* for indicative /-*ū* for subjunctive and jussive) of the third/second person (the 3P/2P distinction being specified by the prefix).
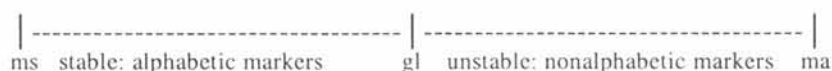
The latter class includes suffixes like -*u,* as in *muslim-u,* signalling, in the nominal domain, only case (nominative, with the definite singular and broken plural nouns of both triptotic and diptotic declension types), and, in the imperfective paradigm, verbal mood (indicative), as in *ya-ktub-u.*

The dividing point between the two types of indicators is termed *structural limit* (sl).

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ms   stable: multifunctional markers   sl   unstable: monofunctional markers   ma

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[14] Brackets indicate elements elided in pre-pausal positions (for convetions adopted see §4).

2.2 The Arabic *scriptio defectiva* (*kitāba nāqiṣa*) offers another clue for the classification of inflectional markers. Multifunctional indicators of the stable class, the only ones to be represented by autonomous alphabetic symbols of the Arabic script, patently differs in this respect from the unstable monofunctional markers where such graphical representation is missing. From this point of view, the stable indicators may alternatively be classified as alphabetic, as against those belonging to the unstable class, which will be classified as nonalphabetic indicators. The dividing point between them is marked by *graphical limits* (gl), the graphical parallel of the structural limit.

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ms   stable: alphabetic markers   gl   unstable: nonalphabetic markers   ma

Graphically classified stable or multifunctional indicators have to satisfy the prerequisite of what we call *syllabic minimum* in the pausal representation. On the strength of this syllabic constraint each multifunctional indicator, alternatively classifiable as an alphabetic marker, has to consist of at least one syllable in the pre-pausal position.

The prerequisite of syllabic minimum for the alphabetic classification of inflectional indicators along the alphabetic/nonalphabetic dichotomy is inherently satisfied by all stable or multifunctional indicators of the *i'rāb*-categories of case and verbal mood, for some markers of the perfective paradigm, however, especially for-*t(u)* and-*t(a),* as against, say, *-ti* and-*na,* it has be postulated as a taxonomic convention.
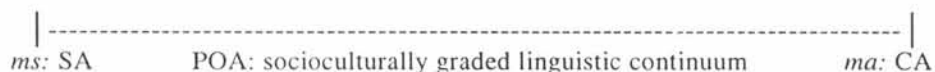
On account of the failure of syllabic constraint, the perfective -*t(u),* 1P singular, gender-neutral, or -*t(a),* 2P singular masculine, for instance, with unstable, pause-sensitive vowels, have to be classified as monofunctional, hence nonalphabetic indicators (of person, contrasting with the unmarked gender and number values of masculine and singular resp.), as against, say, the perfective -*ti,* 2P singular feminine, ending in a stable, pause-resistant vowel, which belongs to the multifunctional, hence alphabetic class of markers (person, gender).

2.3. The main criterial devices used in classifying the Standard Arabic inflectional markers by their functional power are (1) criterion of structural stability, and (2) that of graphical representability. While the latter might easily be regarded as a mere external manifestation or attribute of the former, we find it preferable to list them separately at the same taxonomic level since they may, with only a rather limited number of exceptions (see 2.2), operate as autonomous criteria. Nevertheless, a certain difference between the two still exists. The criterion of structural stability, entirely

based on the behaviour of inflectional morphemes in the pre-pausal position, is a fully self-contained device, largely independent of phonological and related prosodic features, and their written representation. On the other hand, the criterial value of what we call graphical representability cannot satisfactorily work without the help of some structural phenomena (syllabic constraint, see 2.2), ultimately derived from the former criterion. The autonomous position of this graphical criterion in our hierarchy is further supported by the function it plays in visualizing the difference between function and redundance. In spite of the well-known fact that Standard Arabic, in the recent system of diglossia, mostly operates as a written medium, the Arabic defective script exercises nevertheless a noticeable impact on oral communication as it, on the part of communicants, strengthens the feeling of redundance and uselesness of the unrepresented markers as against those alphabetically represented. This impact may be either active, through oral reproduction of a written Standard Arabic text, or passive and implicit, by way of linguistic awareness and speaking habits stimulated by the latter. The criterial value of the alphabetic classification is nonetheless manifested in the close correlation between the functional range of inflectional markers and their alphabetic representability.

3. Conventions adopted for the treatment of morphemic data:

(1) Arabic, as used in this text, refers to Standard Arabic (SA), identifiable with all synthetic variants of Arabic, irrespective of whether Classical Arabic of the pre-Islamic poetry, Koran and canonized literature of the Middle ages, or Modern Written Arabic. SA, the unique codified linguistic entity in the diglossic space is located at the *ms* pole of the latter. Colloquial Arabic (CA), collectively referring to the sum of analytic variants of Arabic, namely regional colloquials, occupies the *ma* pole of the diglossic diagram. The in-between space is filled by the normless linguistic continuum of what we call POA, the ever variable result of the *ms/ma* hybridization or, in Mitchell's words, the result of the constant interplay between written and vernacular Arabic.[15]

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ms: SA   POA: socioculturally graded linguistic continuum   *ma:* CA

(2) The Standard Arabic verbal-mood distinction is reduced to only three modal paradigms: indicative, subjunctive and jussive, inclusive of imperative (summarily labelled as imperfective paradigms); the reduction

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[15] MITCHELL, T.F. *What is Educated Spoken Arabic*, p. 12.

has to bring the Standard Arabic modal system closer to the oral characteristics of the moodless POA.

(3) Unstable (pause-sensitive) vowels, as parts of inflectional markers of various types, are put in brackets: *ya-ktub-ān(i)*, *katab-t(u)*, etc., as against those themselves operating as inflectional markers, which are not: *ya-ktub-u, -a,* etc.

(4) In defining the marking capability of inflectional morphemes, the prefixal component of the combined prefixal-suffixal markers operating in the imperfective paradigms will be ignored, since only the suffixal components can be affected by the impact of pausalization. Accordingly, mono- and multifunctionality are defined with exclusive reference to the suffixal markers (in the perfective and case paradigms) and to the suffixal components of the combined prefixal-suffixal markers (in the imperfective paradigms): the combined *ta-* ~ *-u* in *ta-ktub-u* 3P.sing.fem, for instance, has to be classified as a multifunctional indicator (person-gender-verbal mood), when stripped of the prefixal component, however, its function is reduced to the indicative marking, in contrast to the subjunctive *-a* or the jussive *zero*; on the other hand, the suffixal *-u* in *ta-ktub-u,* as a monofunctional marker, contrasts with the corresponding perfective inflection *katab-at* 3P./sing./fem. whose suffixal morpheme has to be classified as a member of the multifunctional class; the redundant nature of *-u* in *ta-ktub-u* is confirmed, in turn, by the graphical evidence (its deletion in pre-pausal position in tune with its pause-sensitive, nonalphabetic nature).

(5) Formally identical markers operating in the same paradigm, such as *ta-ktub-ān(i)*, 3P dual, feminine /2P dual, masc/fem, are listed only once with no attention paid to the number of their recurrent occurrences.

(6) *zero*-morphemes, such as the jussive *zero*-markers *ya-/ta-/ʾa-/na-ktub-Ø*, are not listed as separate items;

(7) Spelling conventions involving alphabetic symbols, as in *ya-ktub-ū* (*wāw+ alif*), are not taken into account.

(8) The alphabetic representation of monofunctional markers is reduced to the pre- pausal *-ā* of the context-pause correlation *-an/-ā* → *malik-an / malik-ā*, in contrast to *-un/zero* and *-in/zero*,[16] and to a few of other cases; for the exclusion of *-t(a)*, *-t(u)* from the category of alphabetic (multifunctional) markers, see § 2.2 above.

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[16] Cf., The special status of the *tawīn -an,* as opposed to *-un* and *-in,* seems to have a phonological background, since it cannot be safely explained by a higher functional rank (BIRKELAND, H., *Altarabische Pausalformen,* p. 46); additional pausally motivated prosodic phenomena (FISCHER, W., *Grammatik des klassischen Arabisch,* p. 32) are found irrelevant for the purposes of this inquiry.

(9) Suffixal morphemes in the weak-stem verbal inflections, such as *r-ḍ-y : ta-rḍ-
-awn(a) < *ta-rḍay-ūn(a) or ta-rḍ-ayn(a) < *ta-rḍay-īn(a), and the like, are regarded as represented by their strong-stem counterparts listed in the inventory that follows.

(10) Alphabetic symbols in graphically classified multifunctional indicators (§ 2.2) are indicated by the symbol A; the latter, in relation to the syllabic structure or the lack of any syllable, in the pre-pausal position, may occur as *asyllabic* A, e.g. *katab-t(u); monosyllabic* A, as in *katab-na,* or AA, as in *ya-ktub-ūn(a); bi-syllabic* AAA, as in *katab-tumā.*

4. Inflectional indicators of Standard Arabic operating in the *iʿrāb* - categories of case and verbal mood.

4.1 Stable, multifunctional indicators, alternatively classifiable as alphabetic markers, are morphemes consisting of:

(1) a single long vowel (a single alphabetic symbol: monosyllabic A):

(11) case paradigm: *-ū, -ī, -ā → muslim-ū, -ī, -ā* (for the pausal *muslim-ā,* see 3(8) above);

(12) imperfective paradigm: subjunctive, jussive; imperative: *-ū, -ī, -ā* :

-ū → ya-ktub-ū, ta-ktub-ū; u-ktub-ū;

-ī → ta-ktub-ī; u-ktub-ī;

-ā → ya-ktub-ā, ta-ktub-ā, u-ktub-ā;

(2) a consonant combined with a stable (pause-resistant) short vowel (monosyllabic A): imperfective: indicative; imperative): *-na → ya-ktub-na, ta-ktub-na; u-ktub-na;*

(3) a long vowel combined with a consonant and an unstable vowel (monosyllabic AA):

(31) case: *-ūn(a), -īn(a), -ān(i):*

-ūn(a) → muslim-ūn(a);

-īn(a) → muslim-īn(a);

-ān(i) → muslim-ān(i);

(32) imperfective: indicative: *-ūn(a), -īn(a), -ān(i):*

-ūn(a) → ya-ktub-ūn(a), ta-ktub-ūn(a);

-īn(a) → ta-ktub-īn(a);

-ān(i) → ya-ktub-ān(i), ta-ktub-ān(i).

(4) a single diphthong (monosyllabic A): case: *-ay → muslim-ay;*

(5) a diphthong combined with a consonant and an unstable vowel (monosyllabic AA): case: *-ayn(i) → muslim-ayn(i);*

4.2 Unstable, monofunctional indicators, unclassifiable in terms of alphabetic markers, hence nonalphabetic indicators, are morphemes that display the following structures:

(1) a single short vowel (unstable, pause-sensitive, maintaining its status of a fully competent synthetic indicator like any marker of the stable, pause-resistant type):

(11) case: -*u*, -*i*, -*a:*

-*u* → *kitāb-u, kutub-u; masāǧid-u;*

-*i* → *kitāb-i, kutub-i;*

-*a* → *kitāb-a, kutub-a; masāǧid-a;*

(12) imperfective: indicative:-*u;* subjunctive, jussive:-*a* (for *zero*, see §3 (6)):

-*u* → *ya-ktub-u, ta-ktub-u, a-ktub-u, na-ktub-u;*

-*a* → *ya-ktub-a, ta-ktub-a , a-ktub-a, na-ktub-a;*

(2) a short vowel combined with the indefiniteness marker -*n* (*tanwīn*) in the triptotic case paradigm: -*un*, -*in* (nonalphabetic morphemic complex deleted in the pre-pausal position; for -*an/-ā*, as against -*un/zero* and -*in/zero* (see § 3(8)).

5. Perfective paradigm:

As previously hinted at in 3 (4), the marking power of the suffixal markers of the perfective, compared with that of the suffixal components of the combined prefixal-suffixal inflection of the imperfective, markedly differs and affects thereby the functional classification.

(1) Stable, multifunctional or alphabetic indicators display the following morphemic structure:

(11) a single long vowel (monosyllabic A, § 3(7)): -*ā* → *katab-ā;* -*ū* → *katab-ū;*

(12) a consonant followed by a long vowel (monosyllabic AA): -*nā* → *katab-nā;*

(13) a consonant followed by a stable short vowel (monosyllabic A): -*na* → *katab-na, -ti* → *katab-ti* (for pausal phenomena due to the syllabic constraint, see (3(8));

(14) a short vowel followed by a consonant (monosyllabic A): -*at* → *katab-at;*

(15) a short vowel followed by a consonant and a long vowel (bi-syllabic AA): -*atā* → *katab-atā;*

(16) a consonant followed by a short vowel and a consonant (monosyllabic AA): -*tum* → *katab-tum;*

(17) more complex bi-syllabic morpheme of the (AAA) type: -*tumā* → *katab-tumā;*

(18) bi-syllabic morpheme involving gemination (/g) of one consonantal phoneme (AA/g): -*tunna* → *katab-tunna.*

(2) Unstable, monofunctional or nonalphabetic indicators:

(21) alphabetically represented, technically, however, nonalphabetic indicators, consisting of a consonant and an unstable vowel (asyllabic A) (see §§ 2.2; 3(8): failure of the syllabic constraint): -*t(u)* → *katab-t(u),* and -*t(a)* → *katab-t(a);*

(22) alphabetically unrepresented monofunctional indicators, consisting of a single unstable vowel (see §3(3)): *-a* → *katab-a*.

6. In notions used in this study, the linguistic continuum of POA is delimited by the two structural maxima: the maximum of synthetism (ms) and the maximum of analytism (ma). The essential attribute of this linguistic entity, encompassing both features of substandardness and noncolloquialness, may be reduced to a unique generalized attribute of its nonidentifiability with either of the two structural maxima, represented by Standard and Colloquial Arabic.

The symmetrical statement of what POA is not, cannot be paralleled by an equally symmetrical claim of what POA actually is. In spite of the incontestable fact that POA is the result of the constant interplay taking place between the two structural maxima, its structural features can be meaningfully defined with reference to only one of them, to the possessor of the codified linguistic norm, namely Standard Arabic. Any positive statement about POA is marked by an unbridgeable asymmetry of basic attributes:

(i) structural, inherent in basic defining notions: ms - synthetic, ma - analytic;

(ii) socio-cultural significance: Ferguson´s classic H-L dichotomy or what may equal it in the Arab *izdiwāğīya* discourse.

(iii) linguistic acquisition: SA, substantially active, performance acquired by study, [17] CA (regional vernaculars), substantially passive, performance acquired by being subject to the linguistic impact of the diglossic Arabophone milieu;[18]

(iv) communication type: SA, typically written; monologic; RCs, typically oral; dialogic;

(v) communication range: SA - pan-Arabic, CA - regional; etc.

6.1. When examined separately, the two basic attributes of POA: substandardness and noncolloquialness, for all their permeability and lack of a clear-cut distinction between their formal manifestations, seem to show nevertheless a certain amount of autonomy.

The attribute of substandardness, alluding to the non-identity with Standard Arabic, determines at the same time the method of structural analysis adopted: detecting, describing and classifying structural deviations from the synthetic norm of this polar entity, such as deletion, pseudo-

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[17] MŪSĀ, Nihād *Nadwat al-izdiwāğīya fī l-luġa al-ᶜarabīya*, pp. 83–105: *al- fuṣḥā al-mutaᶜallama.* (Symposium on the Arabic Diglossia).

[18] Ibid., *al-ᶜāmmīya al-muktasaba.*

correction [19] of both hyper- and hypo-types, or any other faults or inconsistencies, substantially no matter whether due to a mistake or in accord with the speaker's linguistic habits, materialized in his idiolect. The following examples of potential POA deviations from SA have to offer a rapid survey:

→ deletion: POA: *al-ǧumhūrīy-a l-ᶜarabīy-a l-muttaḥid-a* (caseless); SA: *al-ǧumhūrīy-at-u l-ᶜarabīy-at-u l-muttaḥid-a(t-u)* (nominative) 'United Arab Republic', and the like;

→ hyper-correction: POA: *taǧallabū ᶜalā l-muǧāhid-ūn;* SA: *taǧallabū ᶜalā l-muǧāhid-īn* 'they defeated the (Mujahidin) fighters' (pseudo-correct substitution of the SA *-ūn* for the correct *-īn,* to avoid the colloquial caseless *-īn,* and similar cases;

→ hypo-correction: POA: *al-muǧāhid-īn taǧallabū ᶜalā l-ᶜadūw;* SA: *taǧallaba l-muǧāhid-ūn . . .* 'the fighters defeated the enemy' (substituting the colloquial caseless *-īn* for the correct SA nominative *-ūn(a);* moreover, the postclassical SVO word-order pattern stands for the regular, discourse-neutral VSO order of Standard Arabic, etc., etc.;

→ various structural features of pseudo-correct or any other background, mostly due to the structural and lexical impact of the local vernacular (colloquialism are illustrated with Egyptian Arabic (EA), contrasting SA items retain their undeviated form):

– dual restricted to substantives, plural agreement with dual nouns: EA: *bet-ēn kubār,* SA: *bayt-ān(i) kabīr-ān;* EA: *walad-ēn maṣrīy-īn,* SA: *walad-ān(i) miṣrīy-ān;*

– feminine plural *-āt* restricted to substantives: EA: *sitt-āt ṭuwāl* / SA: *sitt-āt ṭawīl-āt;*

– impersonal nouns with impersonal or personal agreement: EA: *biyūt kibīra* or *kubār,* SA: *buyūt kabīra;*

→ syntax of numerals: EA: *talat kutub, banāt* / SA: *talāt-at-u kutub-in, talāt-u banāt-in,* etc.

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[19] As demonstrated by Blau for the Judaeo-Arabic variant of Middle Arabic (1965, p. 31, n. 1), hyper-correct features may have their origin in hypo-correct forms, as in (subjunctive, dual) *an yaqtasimān* 'that they divide' for the Classical *an yaqtasimā,* the latter displaying, in turn, a hypo-correct relationship to the true plural-substituted Middle Arabic *an yaqtasimū* (rewritten from unvowelled Hebrew script).

6.2. The attribute of noncolloquialness manifests itself in the rejection of culturally tabooing colloquial features as dominant linguistic characteristics:

→ possessive patterns[20]: EA: *il-ugra-bta°t-ak*, SA: *uǧrat-u-ka* (nom); EA: *il-biyūt bita°it-na (bitu°-na)* , SA: *buyūt-u-nā* (nom);

→ *bi*-indicative (EA *bi-* operates as an indicativizer and *aktionsart*-marker: continuative or habitual action;[21]: EA: *bi-til°ab*, SA: *tal°ab-(u)*, etc.

→ phonological: EA: *āl;* SA: *qāl;* EA: *ik-kitāb*, SA: *al-kitāb*, etc.; phonologically motivated: EA: *ām - yi'īm,*[22] SA: *aqām - yuqīm ;*

→ morphonologic reconstruction of the syllabic system (elision, epenthesis, vowel quantity, stress /here unmarked/): EA: *kunt ¹-f maṣr*, SA: *kunt-u fī miṣr;* EA: *kitab-ha* (caseless), SA: *kitāb-u-hā* (nominative /nom/)*;* EA: *bint ᵃ⁻ha*, SA: *bint-u-hā* (nom)*;*

→ verbal patterns: voweling of the middle radical: EA: *°irif - yi°raf*, SA: *°araf - ya°rif*, etc.

→ lexical selection: EA: *šāf*, SA: *ra'ā;* EA: *ḫall*, SA: *tarak;* etc., etc.

7. Deviations from the synthetic norm of Standard Arabic may be presented as processes affecting two different levels of the functional hierarchy:

(1) deviations exclusively affecting monofunctional indicators (simple deviations), typically taking place in the synthetic interval of the diglossic space, and

(2) those involving both mono- and multifunctional inflections (complex deviations), in the analytic interval of the diglossic space;

(11) synthetic interval (the term has to reflect the presumed predominance of synthetic structures) delimits the type of POA communication where standard structures co-occur with simple deviations (POA-i);

(111) POA-i: mainly used in the oral reproduction (reading) of a Standard Arabic text, less commonly, in culturally significant acts of oral communication;

(21) analytic interval (the term is motivated by the presumed predominance of analytic structures) defines another type of POA communication that exhibits an interplay between standard structures and complex deviations (POA-ii);

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[20] ´analytic genitives´, see HARNING, S., *The Analytic Genitive in the Modern Arabic Dialects.*

[21] For *by2šrab-mn2šrab* in Damascus Arabic, see Grotzfeld´s *b-Imperfekt*, p. 58.

[22] BADAWI, El-Said–Hinds, M. *A Dictionary of Egyptian Arabic*, pp. 723–724.

(211) POA-ii: predominantly used in spontaneous oral, chiefly dialogic communication at various levels of cultural significance, except the highest-ranking acts thereof;

7.1. The duality in POA communication is certainly more than a mere taxonomic convention. The notion reflects, in a reduced inter-polar space, the duality of structural maxima at the two poles of the diglossia itself. It is moreover supported by the dual functional distinction of inflectional markers into mono- and multifunctional morphemes. The duality of POA communication may best be paraphrased as a dual representation of the unique linguistic continuum resulting from the constant ms/ma interaction. In spite of all arguments uttered in favour of the POA-i / POA-ii duality, it is hardly possible to refute the claim that the cleavage of POA communication at exactly the sl/gl point, and with exactly the POA-i / POA-ii structural properties, listed in the foregoing paragraphs, is quite free from the idealization, typical of any far-going and risky abstraction.

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ms synthetic interval (POA-i) sl/gl analytic interval (POA-ii) ma

Abbreviations:

CA — Colloquial Arabic, denoting all analytic varieties of Arabic, represented by modern vernaculars;

SA — Standard Arabic, generic term for all synthetic varieties of Arabic, Classical and Modern Written Arabic;

ms — maximum of synthetism (represented by the synthetic norm of Standard Arabic (§ 3(1));

ma — maximum of analytism (represented by the analytic structure of Colloquial Arabic (modern vernaculars);

ms-ma — typological space of the Arabic diglossia which is substantially coextensive with that of POA excluding, however, the full identifiability of the latter with any of the two structural maxima;

sl — structural limit dividing the typological space of diglossia into two intervals in terms of structural stability (§ 2.1): synthetic and analytic interval;

gl — graphical limit: graphical parallel of sl; the division of the typological space into two intervals depends on the criterion of alphabetic representability of the inflections operating therein.

Appendix

The massive spread of POA in the educated milieu of Arab intellectuals has also aroused the attention of native scholars towards this normless idiom. The inventory of Western terms is enriched by the addition of Frayḥa's *lahǧa ʿarabīya maḥkīya muštaraka* ʿcommon spoken language /colloquial/ʿor al-Mūsā's calque of Mitchell's (and others') ESA : *ʿarabīyat al-mutaʿallimīn al-maḥkīya.*[23]

Another proof of the steadily improving position of POA in the hierarchy of communicative devices in the Arabophone world is its serving as a teaching model for a vaguely defined noncolloquial oral Arabic. Serious linguistic studies, some of which are mentioned in the introductory part of this paper, are being paralleled by a number of instructionally conceived manuals, each of them with its own presentation of the POA's structural continuum.[24] Several fairly differring versions of a ʿsimplified Arabic'[25] which promise simplicity combined with an inter-regional usability, are their final result.[26]

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[23] FRAYḤA, Anīs *Naḥwa ʿarabīya muyassara.* (Towards a simplified Arabic) MŪSĀ, Nihād *Nadwat al-izdiwāǧīya fī l-luǧa al-ʿarabīya* (Symposium on the Arabic Diglossia), pp. 89. Towards a simplified Arabic.

[24] SMART, J.R. *Arabic*; JUMAILI, M. *Gesprächsbuch Deutsch-Arabisch*; RYDING, K.C. *Formal Spoken Arabic,* and others.

[25] The term modelled on Frayḥa's *ʿarabīya muyassara: Naḥwa ʿarabīya muyassara*; (Towards a simplified Arabic) see also note 9. Towards a simplified Arabic

[26] For particulars, see DROZDÍK, L. *Prestigious Oral Arabic as a linguistic model in the instruction of Arabic.*

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