

The differences in language use and attitude towards language between men and women in Saudi Arabia

by

Fatimah Muhammed Alzahrani

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Supervisor: Professor Rada Tirvassen

Co-Supervisor: Dr. Koos Kritzinger

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DECLARATION BY CANDIDATE

“I hereby declare that the dissertation submitted for the degree MA Applied Language Studies, at the University of Pretoria, is my own original work and has not previously been submitted to any other institution of higher education. I further declare that all sources cited or quoted are indicated and acknowledged by means of a comprehensive list of references”.

Fatimah Alzahrani

June 2022

ETHICS STATEMENT

The author, whose name appears on the title page of this dissertation, has obtained, for the research described in this work, the applicable research ethics approval. The author declares that she has observed the ethical standards required in terms of the University of Pretoria's Code of Ethics for Researchers and the Policy guidelines for responsible research.

Fatimah Alzahrani

June 2022



DEDICATION

It is that medal made of feeling and word to those who shared me

“The success” ...

My dear father, Muhammad

For his unconditional support, patience, and prayers.

My dear mother, Safya

For her care, patience and eternal love.

My hero, Zaher

For his endless support, kindness and devotion.

My brothers and sisters,

For their encouragement, compliment and inspiration.

My doctor, Hassan

For his constant support, recognition and motivation.

Myself

For this achievement.

This dedication will remain, forever, a testimony of my gratitude to you...

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SUMMARY

The topic of gender differences has attracted considerable critical attention from linguists because of the importance that sociolinguistics offers to the complex relationship between language and gender. Gender separation in the social setting could be a significant factor in the disparities in language use between men and women. Consequently, this study aims to investigate the relationship between language and gender in Saudi Arabia, a gender-segregated society. This involves determining if the male and female students differ in their language use and attitudes towards Saudi Arabic varieties.

To provide the conceptual basis for the research, a review of studies on the relationship between language and gender is constructed. Considering the above-mentioned aims, an integrated methodology based on a mixed methods design that incorporates both quantitative and qualitative techniques is adopted. The findings reveal that there are gender-based variations among adolescents in the use of Saudi Arabic varieties. Female adolescents demonstrate a more positive attitude towards using Saudi youth language compared to their male counterparts, which differs from what is extracted from the theoretical principles of this research for women's speech features.

The study concludes by providing a framework that determines the gender-preferential linguistic choices, which includes all influential factors on students' attitude towards Saudi Arabic varieties. This adds valuable information to related studies. Considering all findings, the study recommends that the social evolution and the importance given to religion must be taken into account when investigating the relationship between language and gender. Furthermore, because of significant changes in women's status in Saudi Arabia, frequent qualitative observations of language practice are required to obtain a more accurate picture of language behaviour.



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Chapter 1: Introduction

1.1 Background

Language and gender is a major area of interest within the field of sociolinguistics. The study of language and gender started in the 1970s when Lakoff published an article entitled “*Language and woman’s place*”. Lakoff’s work (1973) was controversial; however, it succeeded in motivating researchers to further develop the study of the relationship between language and gender. Baxter (2011) states that Lakoff’s article received considerable attention among applied linguists employing ideological and ethnographic approaches. Ideologically, Cameron (2014) argues that linguists aim to represent language as a gendered phenomenon, used differently by male and female speakers. Ethnographically, Baxter (2011) says that language and gender scholars were keen to gather data to investigate the linguistic attitudes that males and females speak and behave differently.

The field of language and gender emerged from sociolinguistics, defined as "the study of language as it is used by real speakers in social and situational contexts of use" (Milroy & Milroy, 2002, p. 279). More broadly, the discipline focuses on the relationship that exists between language and society. It further investigates the impact of language on a society and that of society on language. One major theme in the discipline is sociolinguistic variation.

Variation in the use of language is indeed one of the most important phenomena in sociolinguistics. This research contributes to understand the nature of linguistic changes and how these changes are socially determined within communities in the very specific context of Saudi Arabia. Labov (1966), as a sociolinguist, concerned himself with the study of sociolinguistic variation. He conducted research to determine how certain factors in society may affect language, and how speakers of a language may impact on language variation and language choice for socio-political and cultural reasons. One of the most important findings of Labov’s study (1966) is that gender study in sociolinguistics has the capacity to contribute to an understanding of language variation. Labov’s (1966) research concludes that there are different ways of speaking, and these are influenced by the social factors within a society. There are various social factors that can

potentially explain sociolinguistic variation. However, for the purpose of this study the emphasis will be on the differences concerning gender.

Several published studies on whether men and women use language differently have led to broad generalisations that can be inaccurate. Thus, the relationship between language and gender in a specific society, as well as the impact of social rules on linguistic distinctions between men and women, must be clarified. (Eckert & McConnell-Ginet, 1999). This points to the need for empirical research to understand the various perceptions of different genders towards their use of language from a sociolinguistic perspective. Therefore, the present study endeavours to bridge this gap and focus on this issue of concern.

1.2 Rationale of the Study

The rationale behind conducting this study is to investigate the differences that seem to prevail across both genders with regard to language use and attitudes towards language among adolescents in one town in Saudi Arabia. Such differences in speech are ubiquitous across all of the world's languages, and the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia is no exception in this regard. These differences can be seen, for instance, in education and social activities; therefore, conducting this study is of paramount importance to shed light on this universal phenomenon in general and its incidence in Saudi Arabia in particular. It is also believed that gender separation within the social context may be a significant factor that contributes to the differences in the lives as well as the speech patterns of men and women. While one can speculate on gender's impact on languages, only empirical research that is undertaken by employing adequate analytical tools can reveal whether and in what different ways gender affects language use and attitudes towards language. Moreover, despite the attention given to the importance of understanding the relationship between language and gender worldwide, scant attention has been given to this issue in the Arab world in general and in Saudi Arabia in particular. Consequently, this dissertation will focus on the interaction between language and gender in one Arabic speaking country, Saudi Arabia. It will adopt the theoretical framework that has emerged from the work of William Labov to investigate if there are particular linguistic features that can be found in the Saudi society as a result of the social rules that characterise social interactions in the community. In particular, it will investigate if there are differences in language use and attitudes towards language among male and female students in Saudi Arabia.

1.3 Research Problem

While sociolinguistics as a discipline has provided extensive knowledge on the strong but complex relationship between language and gender, there is a paucity of research on this issue in Saudi Arabia, a segregated society. Schools, in Saudi Arabia, are separate for boys and girls, with different genders not allowed to intermingle to protect the chastity of female adolescents. Also, there are overt rules that guide communication between women who work and/or deal with men in some workplaces such as hospitals, industrial companies, media and some business institutions. For example, men cannot shake hands with female workers. Furthermore, Saudi female professionals are conservatively dressed in Islamic attire (hijab), which consists of loose clothes and head covers. Some are fully veiled in black ‘niqab’ which covers the face and body from head to toe, except for the eyes.

In view of the above considerations, the present study aims to investigate whether these social rules have an impact on language use. It will also examine whether male and female students in Saudi Arabia adopt different attitudes towards languages, and if so, in what specific ways. The present study can be considered to be an addition to the literature concerning differences that emerge in language use based on gender and the attitude of the interlocutors, as the existing sociolinguistic literature concerning gender-based variations in Saudi Arabia is quite limited.

1.4 Purpose of the Study

The present study aims to investigate the relationship between language and gender in Saudi Arabia by providing a deeper understanding of adolescent males and females attitudes towards the use of Saudi Arabic varieties, which include Classical Arabic, Standard (local) Saudi Arabic and Saudi youth language. More specifically, the current research has three main objectives. The first objective is to investigate whether there is a link between, on the one hand, gender and, on the other language use and attitudes towards language in Saudi Arabia. The second objective is to describe some of the differences, if any, in the language use of male and female students in Saudi Arabia. The third objective is to analyse the attitudes, if any, of male and female students towards sociolinguistic variation.

1.5 Research Questions

This study aims to answer the following research questions:

1. Is there a link between gender and language use and, consequently language attitudes among male and female students, in Saudi Arabia?
2. What is the current level of gender differences in using Arabic language varieties in a gender-segregated education environment?
3. How does the relationship between language and gender impact the attitudes of male and female adolescent students towards Arabic language varieties?

1.6 Methodological Framework

The section outlines the methodological framework utilised for this study. It provides a concise description of both theoretical and practical parts used throughout this study. In the theoretical framework, an investigation of the literature review, including the historical background and the current studies of language and gender and the role of social factors in this field will be undertaken. It gives an overview of the history, current studies and the influence of social factors within the differences in language use between men and women, situating it more particularly within the sociolinguistic field of language and gender. Particular attention will be given to the impact of social factors on the use of language varieties by men and women in Saudi Arabia.

In the practical framework (data collection), mixed-method research that combines both quantitative and qualitative approaches, will be used. This mixed approach provides different perspectives on the topic and more complete picture of the phenomenon under study. Thus, the questionnaire and interview help to find out the differences in language use among respondents and assist the researcher in discovering the attitudes of male and female participants towards the use of language in Saudi Arabia. Furthermore, the factors behind the expected differences in language use between the two genders will be investigated.

1.7 Structure of the Dissertation

This dissertation consists of five chapters. Chapter 1 gives the background to the problem. It presents the problem statement, motivation and objectives of the study besides the main questions of the study. Chapter 2 provides the result of the literature review and outlines the theoretical background of the study. Chapter 3 presents the research design, methodology and instruments used to collect the data. Descriptions of the sampling techniques used are also included. Chapter 4 focuses on the findings of both the qualitative and quantitative research data that were collected. It also presents a discussion on and an in-depth interpretation of the most significant findings. Lastly, Chapter 5 summaries the main conclusions and contributions that are drawn from this research. In addition, recommendations for future work directions are presented.

1.8 Conclusion

The present study uses a mixed-method design to explore and understand the differences that emerge in language use based on the gender and the attitudes of the interlocutors among the male and female students in Saudi Arabia. This chapter offers an overview of the background and rationale for the research topic of this study. In addition, it provides a description of the research problem, purpose of the study, research questions, and methodological framework used for this study. The next chapter discusses the available literature pertinent to the research objectives and research questions.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

2.1 Overview

The study of language use and attitudes towards languages from a social perspective is known as sociolinguistics. This includes the study of language variation, its social dimension, cultural norms, the way language is used, and society's effect on language. The aim of the discipline is to describe and analyse language behaviour as well as attitudes towards languages. Over the years, several types of research have been carried out. In the 1970s, vast sociolinguistic experiments are carried out and based largely on differences in syntax, phonology and morphology (Hymes, 1971; Churchill, 1978; Malkiel, 1976). The aim of these studies is to show that there exists a correlation between language use and social variables. One of the social variables is gender.

The link between gender and language is an important topic researched by scholars in the field of sociolinguistics (Litosseliti, 2006). Fundamentally, language in its social dimension is the central focus of the discipline. According to Dong (2014), sociolinguists are inclined to adopt the belief there is a significant difference between the two genders in terms of their linguistic behaviours. Despite the general trend on this issue, there is also research which states that similarity does exist leading to different views concerning the relationship between gender and language.

This chapter provides a description of the literature relevant to the gender differences in language use and language attitudes from various perspectives. The chapter is divided into four main sections. Section 2.2 describes language variation from a sociolinguistic standpoint, including the variation in Arabic with the focus on the diglossic situation in Saudi Arabia. This section is considered the starting point for understanding the nature of the relationship between language and gender in Saudi society. Section 2.3 explores concepts associated with the relationship between language and gender, including the impact gender has on language use, major theories, use of standard and non-standard varieties, and its relationship in social practices. Section 2.4 discusses the socio-cultural background of Saudi society and social factors that affect the linguistic behaviour. Finally, Section 2.5 analyses the attitude towards language taking into consideration Arabic language varieties.

2.2 Language Variation

According to Cameron and Larsen-Freeman (2007), language is a dynamic and complicated phenomenon that keeps changing. There is not a single static language, and all languages are open to changes and adjustments according to the needs of speakers (Cameron & Larsen-Freeman, 2007). Changes in language are due to the transformation and communication of speakers, and this may be the main reason for linguistic variation.

Different varieties of languages are linked to conversations and interactions in society or the community itself. This variation can be attributed to many factors, such as gender, age, ethnicity, and type of social networking (Chambers, 1995). The way people use language and how they interact with other language speakers are the main reasons for language variation. Wolfram (2006) states that "If structure is at the heart of language, then variation defines its soul" (p. 333). William Labov (1966) has been considered as the founder of variationist linguistics (De Garavito & Schwieter, 2021). Labov's findings have been considered helpful in generating more research, including how language variation occurs and how they come to their conclusions.

Research in sociolinguistics presents a similar idea from a broader perspective. Labov (1972) argues that language is a communication tool that speakers use in a community with the purpose to communicate and interact. Language not only helps us to communicate and express our points of view for a specific thing, it also conveys ideologies, thoughts, feelings, and even imaginations. According to Rabiah (2012), language is a tool of self-expression and serves to reveal our identity as well. Through language, we can show our understanding of different matters, our level of education, our character, and even our sensibility. Likewise, through someone's use of language, their background and culture can be judged. In this case, language has a close relation to the attitude and behaviour of a speaker.

This opens doors to another idea, which explains the presence of language in diverse cultures in diverse forms; these are linguistic attributes that differentiate a group of people, community, and country/state from the other. Variability can be seen and can happen in all aspects of a language, numerous things can change like dialect, style or speaker, or changes may also happen in grammar

(Krug & Schlüter, 2013). Crystal (1963) says: "A language is what all its users make it; it is a social, not just an academic phenomenon" (p. 09). In addition, Sunahrowi (2007) argues that the use of language in social life provides chances to learn more about the reasons behind variations. Mesthrie (2009) puts forward another point of view, where he suggests that rapid variation happens as a result of social interaction. Spolsky (1998) states that "people tend to talk like the people they talk to most of the time" (p. 41).

As reported in Bailey (1973) and Labov (2001), studying how language variation occurs helps to understand social behaviour. Crystal (2003) explains one of the important elements in linguistic variation is the "linguistic variable" (p.189); a variable can be defined as "a structural unit that includes a set of fluctuating variants showing meaningful co-variation with an independent set of variables" (Wolfram, 2006, p. 333). Variables are usually linked with dialects and there are no standardised criteria to separate two distinct languages from two dialects (i.e. varieties) of the same language. A characteristic pronunciation, or accent, is therefore correlated with spoken dialects. Dialects can be formed in any language that has a large number of speakers, especially if there are geographical boundaries that distinguish groups from each other or if there are societal determinants (Crystal, 2008).

2.2.1 Arabic Language History

During the seventh century, Arabic emerged as a global language. Following the passing of Prophet Mohammed, the extent of Islamic spread drew international attention to Arabic as a language and Islam as a faith. Previously, countries outside of the Arabian Peninsula only had a vague notion of what was going on within the peninsula (Versteegh, 2014). Farghaly (2010) argues that after the Islamic conquests, after the death of Prophet Mohammed, the Arabic language developed from an unknown and non-prestigious language into a significant world language. Notably, before this, Arabic was standardised in two primary literary sources, the Quran and Pre-Islamic poetry (Versteegh, 2014). The link between the Holy Quran and Arabic led to the dissemination of the language and to its prestige among Muslims all over the world. Apart from religion, commercial exchange between the Arabs and other nations can explain the spread of Arabic. Arabs have been described globally as merchants and migrants; these two causes,

exchange and migration, have produced a significant number of communication opportunities between non-Arab and Arab speakers in places such as Iraq, Egypt's Nile Delta, Palestine, and Syria. This interaction has built a good foundation for familiarity with Arabic in certain places.

At the same time, the propagation of Islam in numerous parts of the world has had far-reaching repercussions for the growth of Classical Arabic. Arabic became the main tongue of the Middle East and North Africa in the midst of the rise of Islam, from being confined solely to the Arabian Peninsula (Comrie, 2008). Native speakers of Arabic spoke numerous dialects that varied from region to region. The dialect of Mecca, was considered as respectable as Modern Standard Arabic because it was the Quraish dialect. Importantly, Prophet Mohammed was a member of the Quraish tribe. Further, the Quraish tribe had a high status among other Arab tribes and a strategic position as a target for trade, pilgrimage, and exchanging of commodities. Therefore, they became the masters of the Arabian Peninsula (Al-Huri, 2015).

2.2.2 Arabic Language Variation

Diglossia, initially a French word coined by Marçais (1930), has been given academic attention by the American linguist Ferguson. The characteristics of bidialectal (as opposed to bilingual) situations that exist in linguistic communities are known as "diglossia". According to Ferguson (1959), diglossia is a situation in which there are two distinct codes (varieties) with clear functional separation; that is one code is employed in one set of circumstances and the other is an entirely different set. In addition, Ferguson (1959) indicates that Arabic diglossia seems to reach as far back as our knowledge of Arabic goes, and the Classical language has remained relatively stable.

Also, the linguistic condition in the Arab world can be identified as diglossic following Georgiou and Themistocleous's (2020) description. Bani-Khaled (2014) mentions that Arabic can be seen as including three varieties: namely Classical Arabic (CA), Modern Standard Arabic (MSA), and Colloquial Arabic. These three language varieties serve specific functions in specific domains. Additionally, there is a loose agreement among linguists that Arabic varieties originated as a consequence of the social and linguistic interaction between the Arabic-speaking nomadic tribes of the Arabian Peninsula and inhabitants of the other regions. Versteegh (2014) argues that, as a

result of its distribution over a vast area and its interaction with several various languages (South Arabian, Persian, Berber and Greek), major developments have arisen in the Arabic language. It is important to mention that the concept of diglossia can be challenging. Despite the possibility of functional differentiations, languages operate in several domains. As a result, constructing a hierarchy relationship between languages is not recommended.

As mentioned above, there are three varieties of Arabic, known as CA, MSA and Colloquial Arabic. CA is the language of the Holy Quran, pre-Islamic period, and literature (Bani-Khaled, 2014). It should be noted that the Quran is the divine religious book of Islam and Muslims believe that the Quranic content from Allah (God), cannot undergo any change. It was revealed in Arabic and declares itself explicitly as the Arabic Quran, as asserted in the following quote from Surah Zukhruf (in Arabic text: الزخرف).

"قُرْآنًا عَرَبِيًّا" Arabic Quran

(Chapter 43 of the Quran, verse 3)

Quranic content is characterized by affluent syntactic structures, morphology, and vocabulary. Its language is distinctive, a factor which differentiates it from other Arabic varieties (Alrabiah et al., 2014; Nasr et al., 2015).

The second variety is MSA, which can be considered as a modified form of CA. It is used in formal domains such as scholarly teaching of religious education, legal circumstances, and the educational environment. MSA is practically not used as a first language by any individual, this is in fact due to it requiring more than an elementary education level to master and practice (Bhatia & William, 2004). The third variety, Colloquial Arabic, is in fact a group of the different colloquial dialects spoken in different countries and regions across the Arab world. These varieties are not used for official, governmental, religious, or educational domains. It is the language used in daily communication and serves as an identity marker reflecting regional, geographical, and ethnic distinctions (Al-Huri, 2015). Speakers of these varied dialects find it difficult to establish comprehensible communication because of the phonological, lexical, and discourse variation that marks such dialects. For instance, Arabic speakers from Saudi Arabia fail to comprehend the Arabic spoken by Moroccans, and Moroccan Arabic speakers are unable to understand the Arabic

spoken by Saudi Arabians. Consequently, it is important to provide an explanation for different Arabic dialects according to their main uses and locations. Table 2.1 summarizes the main groups of Arabic regional dialects as described in (Biadisy et al., 2009; Zaidan & Callison-Burch, 2014).

Table 2.1.
Summary of main groups of Arabic dialects

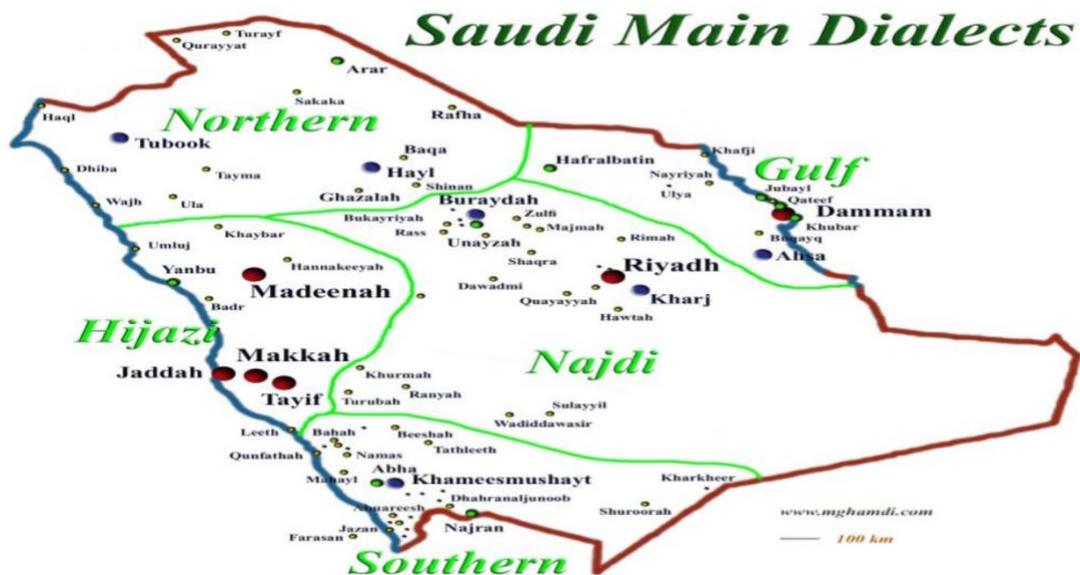
| Dialect | Description |
|------------------|---|
| Gulf | Dialects of Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, Bahrain, Qatar, Oman, and United Arab Emirates. It is considered as the nearest dialect to MSA. |
| Egyptian | Considered the most widely understood dialect in the Arab world, due to the industry of Egyptian films, TV series, and songs. |
| Iraqi | The dialect of Iraq. It is possible to think of it as a sub-language of Gulf Arabic. However, it has its own distinct characteristics. |
| Levantine | Dialects of Palestine, Syria, Lebanon, and Jordan. Differ slightly in pronunciation. Widely circulated dialects due to the wide spread of Syrian dramas. |
| Maghrebi | The dialects of Morocco, Tunisia, Algeria, and Mauritania. Have been influenced by the Berber and French language through the ages. Arabs in the Middle East find these dialects to be unintelligible in spoken form. |

2.2.3 Varieties in Saudi Arabia

In Saudi Arabia, there are in fact two varieties of Arabic, which are different from that given in 2.2.2. These are MSA and Saudi Colloquial Arabic (Saudi dialects). MSA refers to the Arabic taught at school and used in formal domains. It represents a linguistic development from Classical Arabic, whilst the Saudi Colloquial Arabic can be described as a spoken dialect used in daily life, which can sometimes contain sub-set of Saudi Colloquial such as youth language.

According to Aldosaree (2016), there are many sub-dialects of Colloquial Arabic in Saudi Arabia, including five main distinct colloquial dialects depending on location; these sub-dialects are Hijazi, Najdi, Janoubi, Shamali, and Sharqi. Hijazi is spoken throughout the West region of the country which includes the main cities such as Mecca, Madinah, and Jeddah. Najdi is spoken most in the Central region and is considered as a widespread dialect in the Al-Qassim province and in the area around Riyadh (capital city). The Janoubi dialect is spoken in the Southern region, notably some cities in the Southern region are located on the border of Yemen, which may produce some distinctions. In the North of Saudi Arabia, the Shamali dialect is frequently used. Lastly, the Sharqi dialect is spoken in the Eastern coastal regions. This dialect also spreads to countries around the gulf regions. Figure 2.1 displays the map of Saudi dialects (as cited in Alhazmi, 2017, p. 11). The language used by young people which can sometimes contain improper expressions or what is sometimes called vulgar expressions, could perhaps be described as common Saudi youth language.

Figure 2.1
Dialectal Map of Saudi Arabia



Note: Extract from Alhazmi (2017, p. 11).

The explanation of the diglossic situation in Saudi Arabia raises the question of the impact of such a situation on the use of these varieties by men and women in the country. An interesting study conducted by Al-Essa (2009) examined the language varieties in Saudi Arabia. The research explores the dialect relation of two varieties, the Najdi and Hijazi dialects (considering their several alterations), in the town of Jeddah. The findings show that older women are more conservative towards the Najdi dialect. This may be due to their lack of contact with the Hijazi dialect due to social segregation. Al-Rojaie (2013) further investigated the Najdi dialect, particularly the Qasimi dialect, in terms of associated social factors, including age, gender, and level of education. The findings indicate that older illiterate speakers, regardless of their gender, preserve the use of the local variant. Nonetheless, this is not the case for middle-aged literate speakers, particularly women. In Saudi Arabia, the substantial socio-economic changes play an important role in the linguistic shift acceleration (Al-Rojaie, 2013). Most of the studies conducted are on Najdi Arabic and Hijazi Arabic (Aldhali, 2019). To the best of the researcher's knowledge, there are at present no studies available to investigate the gender differences with respect to the use of the three mentioned varieties in Saudi Arabia. The next section reviews the relationship between language and gender in further detail.

2.3 Language and Gender

Factors such as habitual activities, social networks, status, and identities influence how people utilize language. These factors, and others, are potentially influenced by gender divisions in society. Research has come to a consensus that gender influences the linguistic behaviour of speakers in many languages (Motschenbacher, 2015). However, the study of Arabic from the perspective of the impact of gender and language is still in its infancy, unlike several other languages (Sadiqi, 2006). This issue is discussed in the following sub-sections.

2.3.1 Early Studies and Theories

Early studies on language and gender have their origin in the development of feminist concerns and in the interests that anthropologists started to have on language use and attitudes towards languages (Hermosilla, 2013). Within these inquiries, Alhumaid (2017) states that the feminist

sociolinguists and linguistic anthropologists tended to investigate the fundamental analytic concepts including standard and vernacular language, and theories of language and social identities. In addition, she highlights the most important pieces of works that spurred analysing the linguistic gender peculiarities to include the works of Cameron & Coates (1988), Morgan (1994), Ochs (1992), and Holmes & Meyerhoff (1999).

Language and gender research is dominated by three main theories, known as deficit, dominance, and difference theories. The “Deficit” approach expresses women’s language as lacking and weak (Simpson & Mayr, 2013). Whereas, “Dominance” stands for the power and domination over women by men in language use and sees women as being in a weak position when it comes to interacting with men (Eckert & McConnell-Ginet, 2003). The last theory is called “Difference”, which describes variations in how men and women communicate as a consequence of their different ways of interacting within their communities and cultures (Unger, 2004). These theories focus on the various ideas about the use of language by women, and the explanations for potential discrepancies in the way women and men convey themselves (Regber, 2009). The variations between men’s and women’s speech were perceived as biologically determined at the initial stages of gender research. According to Bell et al. (2006), biological variations simultaneously contribute to gender-differentiated language; in other terms, the variations are a result of the sex into which an individual is born. However, Wolfram and Schilling-Estes (1998) argue that this position was abandoned after further studies revealed that biological sex does not support such dichotomy.

Lakoff (1973) was a pioneer scholar in the research touching on gender variations in speech; she claimed that women are inclined to utilizing more intensifiers and hedges, speaking in polite forms, and using descriptive adjectives. According to Jaspers et al. (2010), most gender differences in language are always related to an examination called "women’s language" (p. 60). Litosseliti (2006) shows that language and gender are often referred to as "ways by which languages are used between men and women, also the ways in which language is used to say things about men and women" (p. 2). However, studies on gender differences have faced much criticism, from feminists and linguists (Brock et al., 1989). Researchers like Litosseliti and Sunderland (2002) mentioned "gender difference" in language use was criticised for many reasons, such as not considering the importance of context, variations, and intragroup/intergroup overlaps. Another criticism is that

research conducted on gender differences has "created gender stereotypes" (Holmes & Meyerhoff, 2008, p. 475).

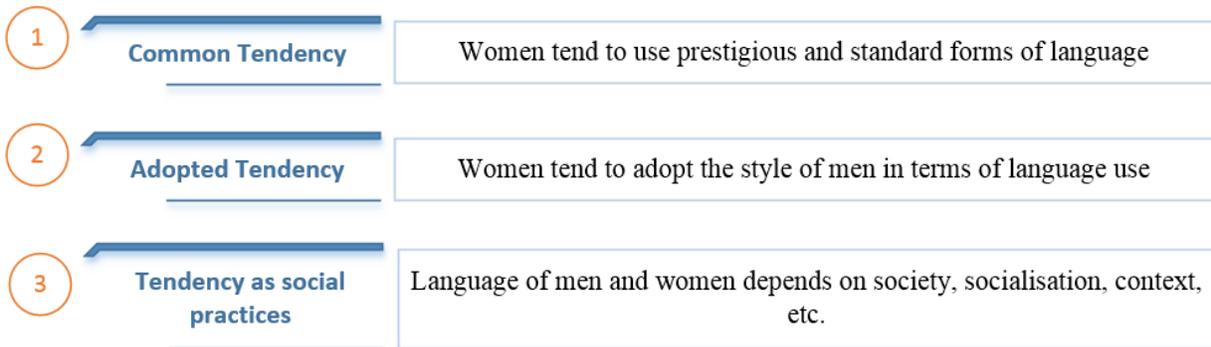
2.3.2 Language of Men and Women

For many years, the question of women interacting in a different way from men has been in the spotlight of many studies carried out by pioneering sociolinguists and scholars (Holmes & Meyerhoff, 2008; Trudgill, 1972; Labov, 1966). In essence, these studies are keen on how women's and men's language differ especially on syntax, pronunciation, use of vocabulary, etc. Ladegaard and Bleses (2003) investigate gender variations in Danish children's language. Their study shows that girls prefer speaking in standard forms, while boys prefer vernacular. Using picture elicitation to test this, the children are asked to call out words in the past tense. The results show that girls pronounce standard past tense with more ease than boys. The studies also show that boys find it easier to pronounce vernacular past tense than girls. Ladegaard and Bleses (2003), conclude that gender differences may occur at an early age in children's language. It is easier for kids to master their mother tongue and unintentionally develop gendered language use (Li & Bu, 2006).

Cameron (2000), however, states that the link between gender and language is a complex one. The complexity in this relationship arises from the overlapping and interdependency of many linguistic, social, and contextual factors. The review of studies on women's and men's speech show different aspects. The following sub-sections will review research according to the observed three tendencies as described below in Figure 2.2.

Figure 2.2

Observed Tendencies in Reviewed Research of Women's and Men's Language



2.3.2.1 Common Tendency

Research in sociolinguistics on language and gender links women with the standard variety of a language to the extent that, in some textbooks, it is presented as a fundamental tenet of sociolinguistics. For example, Fasold (1990) refers to "the sociolinguistic gender pattern" (p. 92), and Chambers (1995) claims that this pattern is 'a sociolinguistic variety'. Many researchers, such as Milroy and Margrain (1980), Cheshire (1982), Brown (1987), and Gomm (1981), are of the view that women tend to use the standard language for effective communication in certain situations, while others claim that the Standard language is imposed on women through formal education (Xia, 2013). According to Deuchar (1988), women's higher use of standard forms is linked to their desire to be seen as polite compared to men. Trudgill (1972) argues that women need to make an effort to claim a high social status, this is why they are more likely to use overtly prestigious variants. In addition, he claims that women reject being associated with toughness and roughness that is linked with both masculinity and working class life. These explanations have been criticised because they tend to give a simplistic account of a complex phenomenon.

Evidence regarding the use of non-standard varieties by male speakers appears in Vasko's study (2010). The author conducted a study aimed at delineating the salient features that mark the differences in speech patterns of males and females in Cambridgeshire. The adopted methodology in the investigation was relying on interviews carried out with 38 speakers drawn from 26 localities in Cambridgeshire. The findings of the analysed data revealed that male speakers are inclined to

use more non-standard or colloquial speech patterns if compared to female speakers. The justification Vasko (2010) provides for such result is based on the assumption that male speakers select non-standard forms because of their masculine connotations of “roughness” and “toughness”. This result appears to conform with previous research studies conducted earlier by Cheshire & Gardner-Chloros (1998; Trudgill, 1974).

Holmes and Meyerhoff (2008) investigated the reasons why women employ more standard forms. The findings of their study reveal that women use standard forms because society expects women's behaviour to be a model. According to this view, women are considered to be the guardian of society's values. The study also viewed women as more status-conscious than men, this is mainly because women lack status in society, so they tend to use standard forms of speech. Women also appear to be more sensitive to context when interviewed, for this reason they use Standard forms more often if compared to male speakers. Finally, the study indicates that women's language is conservative unlike men. This is due to the fact that men are tough, while women are polite and status-conscious.

2.3.2.2 Adopted Tendency

Despite the common trend in sociolinguistics that women (when compared to men) tend to use more standard varieties, it appears that in contrast to the above opinion, women tend to use non-standard language as a sign of freedom from the roles attributed to them. Such instances are limited in scope and domain in that the use of colloquial varieties is limited to specific social contexts such as talking with family members, relatives, and friends. Hamdan's (2011) research seeks to identify the linguistic characteristics that can aid in establishing if a novel is written by an Arab man or woman. He gathers his data via two novels; one is authored by a male, Naji (2008), *When wolves get older*, and the other by a female, Khrais (2002), *The tree of the leopards: love rhymes*. His analysis is based on the use of language by the two authors.

Through this study Hamdan (2011) evaluated the use of word, and sentence construction and focuses on the distinction between the standard language and slang. He then attempts to reveal some classes of syntactic and lexical features that identify the difference between the two writers.

In addition, Hamdan (2011) notes bare variations between the Standard and non-standard language employed in Khrais and Naji's writings. Khrais, a woman author from Jordan, utilizes hundreds of non-standard terms all over her novel. Naji, on the other hand, does not employ a single slang word in the entire novel. Abu-Haidar (1989) found that men use a dialect similar to the standard variety. For instance, Baghdadi Arabic dialect is closer to Standard Arabic and uses more of its features. Khatib (1988) further established that men employ Standard Arabic variants more often compared to women in Irbid city (Jordan).

2.3.2.3 Tendency as Social Practices

Edwards (2009) argues that using a standard variety has been more appealing as a status marker to women than to men. This is associated with the widespread view that women are allegedly more polite and formal in their use of language and that profanity is not a trait of women's language. Nonetheless, Edwards claims this is "linguistic insecurity" that is possibly embedded in "femaleness" over a period of time as a result of social factors. Coates (1993) avers that the dichotomy between women and men is reflected in day to day social interactions and subsequently in language. Gu (2013), however, recommends a cautious approach as opposed to the gender dominance or gender differences position. Speech patterns are not only impacted by gender but also by ethnic and national cultures, therefore, caution is required when discussing ways in which males and females use language to express themselves as this may cause erroneous generalisations. It is essential to control the content and be conscious of ethnic culture when focusing on gender differences in language. Likewise, it is critical to consider underlying similarities. Hyde (2005) suggests the "gender similarities hypothesis" and claims that male and female speakers are identical in almost all elements, though they differ in some aspects. In this regard, the speech styles of men and women share considerable features. Baker (2014) claims that similarities are frequently ignored in gender research because the intention is always to create a distinction. Further, attitudes towards gender-related speech are evolving constantly. Considering these grounds, each generation should evaluate its gender problems afresh. Eckert and Mc-Connell-Ginet (2003) argue that both women and men are now likely to be more success-oriented, categorical, and aggressive as a consequence of socialisation. Therefore, they affirm that gender is defined by an aggregate of complex factors as opposed to biological difference only.

2.3.3 Gender and Language Varieties in Saudi Arabia

There are demographic, cultural, and socioeconomic disparities across countries and within societies that affect the everyday pursuits and potential opportunities of individuals. Therefore, in Arabic countries as a whole, global generalisations about language and gender problems remain simplistic until a study investigates the level of the particular dialect and is placed in the social context of the local society. Scrutiny of complexities associated with gender as a social construct in the Arab communities is still in its primary stages of development. Absence of gender analysis in Arab nations has negatively affected the understanding of the phenomenon (Bassiouney & Walters, 2020).

The findings of reviewed studies show that the correlation between gender and language is far more complex than what is usually believed. In a dynamically changing social context, language is influenced by social, cultural, and psychological factors, rather than only gender. In Saudi Arabia, the variation in language use with regard to men and women is highly influenced by social perceptions and attitudes. Consequently, a clear understanding of the social situation in Saudi Arabia is crucial in comprehending the different speech patterns of men and women. Some studies, such as Al-Essa (2009) and Al-Rojaie (2013), have considered this issue with respect to local dialects in Saudi Arabia as mentioned in Section 2.2.3. However, the study of the Arabic language from a perspective of gender and language needs to be considered in terms of language use and the influence of several social factors. Moreover, the discussion on diglossia and the intricate relationship between language and gender linguistically shows that there is a potential interconnectedness between gender and language in Saudi Arabia. Such relationships may or may not follow the expected tendencies of men and women's speech characteristics. Therefore, it is essential to examine the language use of men and women in Saudi Arabia, as the relationship between language and gender is governed and impacted by several factors. The following section describes the social factors in more detail.

2.4 Socio-Cultural Background of Saudi Society

Since it is now clear that there are variations in the use of language by men and women, how do we establish them and link them to social aspects in Saudi Arabia? Hamdan (2011) affirms that

gender and language can be grouped into two separate categories: sexism in language employed by male and female speakers or gender-based ideologies. The social structure of societies in the Arab world, in general, and in Saudi Arabia, in particular, poses certain levels of barriers to the equal participation in most of the activities in Arabic countries. In Saudi Arabia for example, barriers are reflected in the restrictions imposed on socialisation, for example women are not allowed to interact verbally with men that they do not know. These social barriers also impact women's liberty and their lack of rights and opportunities (Seikali et al., 2014). For example, women have been limited to work in specific professions like schools, banks, and universities (Reda & Hamdan, 2015). Researchers have observed that recently there have been achievements in women's professions in education, health and other sectors.

The majority of Saudi men and women live separately. In communal places like shops, banks, restaurants, and transportation women are compelled to utilize separate facilities. For example, restaurants are divided into a "family area" and another section for "men only" (Gorney, 2016). In the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, banking is similar. Moreover, in houses males and females have separate quarters to host their men and women friends and relatives separately. Besides gender separation in education, in many places, Muslim and Arabic teaching happens separately. This kind of separation tends to perpetuate established social norms in Saudi Arabia. Gender segregated education is an element that can cause variation in how men and women use language. The aforementioned restrictions may impose different norms in terms of speech patterns of communication and gender difference in language use. Thus, it is difficult to generalise these norms, specifically for a gender-segregated society.

2.4.1 Social Factors Influencing Saudi Language

As previously stated, sociolinguistics can be explained as the study of language within its social setting; it is a good tool to understand the part played by social factors in society and how they influence linguistic variations. Within this discipline there are numerous topics a linguist can concentrate on. Linguists, particularly Labov (1966), carried out a study to establish how certain aspects in society are likely to impact upon language use and attitudes towards language. What is most relevant in Labov's research, is his work on language variation. In Labov's (1966) view, gender impacts language difference by influencing the language selection between women and

men. A man and a woman's speech varies to a certain extent influenced by social factors within a society.

Social factors are critical in identifying variation of language use between women and men in Saudi Arabia. There are numerous social factors influencing Saudi society, however, factors that influence gender and reflect on language such as gender segregation and assigned gender roles of men and women are the focal point of this research. These factors, in large, can be attributed to the impact of religion on social behaviour. Other social factors like education, age, and social class also play an important role (Alsubhi, 2016). ElSafty (2005) elucidates that it is imprudent to consider the issue of gender separately without giving consideration to society from broader perspectives. As such, he claims that the issue of gender should be analysed within its social context.

2.5 Language Attitude

Attitude is narrowly characterised as the feeling, bias or opinion of a person regarding a given subject. The word attitude is described as "an inference which is made on the basis of a complex of beliefs about the attitude object" (Likert, 1932, as cited in Ianos, 2014). This implies that people can form attitudes about virtually everything, including existence, schooling, faith, and language. Garrett (2010) thus describes the word as "an evaluative orientation to a social object of some sort, whether it is a language, or a new government policy, etc." (p. 20). In terms of language, people typically have their personal opinions, values, and bias towards a single language or a range of languages. Generally, individuals can connect personal characteristics of intellect, self-confidence, sociability, and obligation with a specific language and its speakers (Lambert et al., 1960). They often show their preferences or dislikes for a particular language, taking the native language as a sign of loyalty, etc.

The example of Welsh English is offered by Garrett (2010). He believes that non-Welsh speakers regarded Cardiff English as less prestigious than bilingual speakers of Welsh/English did. The consequence is that individuals have particular judgements and assessments regarding a phrase. Garrett et al. (2003) alluded to three components of attitude in the analysis of decisions, reactions,

and assessments of people regarding language: intellect, affect, and actions. The researcher Crystal (2008) explains language attitude as a set of feelings concerning a language, either to their language or another language. Studies on language attitude are useful in capturing any changes that might occur in behaviour or attitude towards a language. Besides that, due to globalisation and increased connectivity between language communities, this research field will become potentially more significant and interesting. Ianos (2014) provides a comprehensive review of language attitudes toward multilingual and multicultural contexts, including a list of attitude definitions and measurement methods.

2.5.1 Measurement of Attitudes

In a variety of distinct languages and in a multitude of ways, there is a wide body of literature exploring perceptions towards language variance based on several methods. These methods are usually categorised into two main groups: direct and indirect methods. The direct method contains self-reports, where those taking part are asked directly to express their attitudes via questionnaires and interviews (Garrett, 2010; Ianos, 2014). It can be quantitative or qualitative based on chosen assessment instruments. Indirect methods involve two common techniques known as matched-guise technique (MGT) and verbal-guise technique (VGT) (Garrett et al., 2003; Eltouhamy, 2015). In MGT, those taking part are requested to listen to a recorded audio of one of the speakers reading and repeating the same paragraph or message in a different linguistic feature. This technique was established by Lambert et al. (1960) to investigate language attitudes toward English and French speakers in Canada. The other technique, where respondents are asked to listen to an audio file that contains a recording of a set of speakers from various language groups using their native tongue, is the VGT technique.

Indirect methods are mostly utilised to investigate language attitudes (McKenzie 2010; Garrett 2010). From the data obtained in these experiments, a strong degree of accuracy has been identified. Speakers who employ standard language varieties are overall grouped positively in terms of rank compared to those who use non-standard language (Dragojevic & Giles 2014; McKenzie et al., 2016). Indeed, the findings of a range of language attitude studies employing indirect methods have repeatedly demonstrated that the language variety utilised by a given

speaker may have wide ranging social effects. These include influencing job recruitment and career development as well as the expectations of teachers of the educational abilities of their students (Seligman et al., 1972; Powesland & Giles, 1975; Rakić et al., 2011).

2.5.2 Attitude towards Arabic Language Varieties

Most studies of Arabic language attitudes investigate the speakers' attitudes towards Modern Standard Arabic (MSA) and Colloquial Arabic. For example, the study by Al-Kahtany (1997) determines language attitudes toward MSA and the Damascene Arabic dialect, which is spoken in Syria. Age and region were considered as the two main variables in his study. The findings show that the majority of Arabian Peninsula speakers regard Damascene Arabic as lower in status than MSA. However, this finding needs to be explored more as the sample size in this study was small. Another study, by Reigh (2014) conducted in the American University in Cairo, investigates language attitudes toward MSA, Egyptian Arabic, English, and Egyptian Arabic-English switching. Mixed attitudes toward MSA with respect to prestige and importance were found in comparison with Egyptian Arabic. Sawaie (1987) conducted a study to observe the language attitudes of Jordanians and Palestinians toward the Standard Arabic phoneme. The results show that the standard form was preferred more than the regional dialect forms and this was associated with a subject's educational level inside the university domain. Note that this study was restricted to university students.

In terms of attitudes toward non-standard Arabic varieties, Herbolich (1979) studies the attitude towards Egyptian, Libyan, Saudi, and Syrian varieties. The ability of Egyptians to recognize other Arabic varieties is also investigated. Herbolich found that the pure Egyptian variety was recognized by Egyptian participants with 86% accuracy, whilst, other Arabic varieties were identified with lower percentages. In this regard, attitudes towards three Saudi dialects were investigated by Aldosaree (2016). The selected dialects were Najdi (Central), Hijazi (Western), and Janoubi (Southern). The Lambert's Matched-Guise test was employed to measure language attitudes toward the selected dialects. Among the three Saudi dialects, Najdi dialect is perceived as the most prestigious compared to other dialects. In contrast, Al-Essa (2009) stated that the Najdi dialect is considered as a "Bedouin" dialect. Although there are some studies that attempted to

consider the attitudes towards Saudi dialects in specific regions, there is still a lack of research in the gender differences with respect to the attitudes toward language varieties in Saudi Arabia.

2.6 Conclusion

This chapter has provided the historical and sociolinguistic background on research of gender and language. It has detailed the diglossic situation prevalent in Saudi Arabia, which highlights the significance of studying the impact of such a situation on the use of language varieties by men and women in a gender-segregated society. This type of segregation may impose different norms in terms of speech patterns of communication and gender difference in language use. Three main tendencies have been observed through reviewed studies on men's and women's language. Further, studies that examine the socio-cultural background of Saudi society and social factors influencing language varieties use have been discussed. The findings of the reviewed studies show that the relationship between gender and language is far more complex as language is influenced by social and cultural factors and not just gender alone. This chapter has also reviewed the findings of language attitudes studies, taking into consideration Arabic language varieties. The findings of some studies show that gender plays a role in determining differences of language attitudes. However, there is still a lack of research on gender differences with respect to the attitudes toward language varieties in Saudi Arabia. Finally, despite the significant accomplishments in the field of language and gender, there are still many important aspects that have not been thoroughly considered yet, especially with regard to social segregation between men and women. Consequently, further research is essential to investigate gender differences regarding the use of language varieties and attitudes toward these varieties in Saudi Arabia. Therefore, this study will attempt to address this deficit.

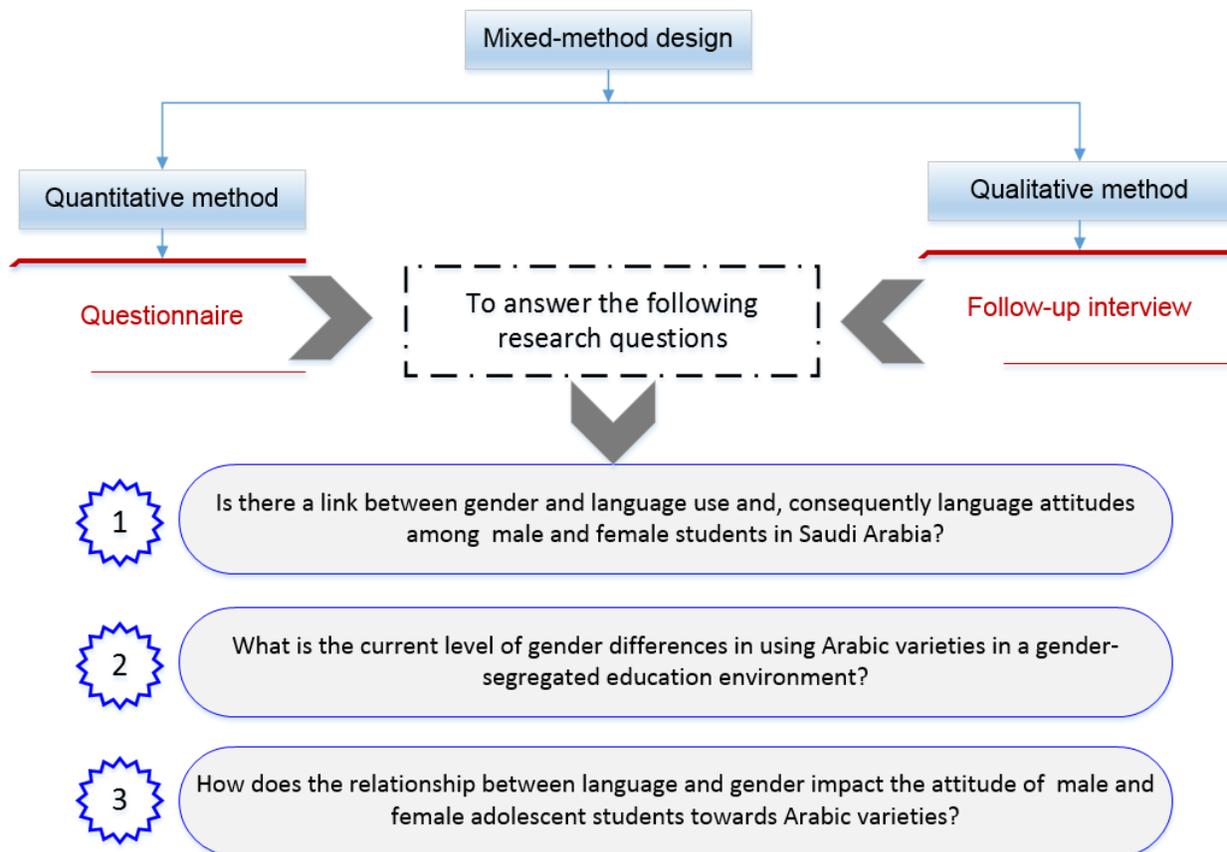
Chapter 3: Methodology

3.1 Introduction

In this chapter, the research design and methodology adopted by the researcher are explained. The researcher uses a mixed-method design comprising quantitative and qualitative methods employing a questionnaire and follow-up interviews, respectively, to answer the research questions. Figure 3.1 shows a schematic representation of the method used and research questions of this study.

Figure 3.1

A schematic representation of the method used and the research questions that have guided this study



3.2 Research design

A research design is the procedure used by a researcher to explore the research objectives and look for solutions to the research questions. According to Creswell (2009), research designs involve procedures and plans that demystify decisions from several variables based on the data collection and analysis methods. Further, the research design explores all viable possibilities to find the best solution that addresses the research question, depending on the topic of discussion. There are three categories of research designs, namely (a) qualitative design; (b) quantitative design; and (c) mixed-methods design (Johnson et al., 2007; Tashakkori & Creswell, 2007; Creswell, 2009; Wiggins, 2011).

The researcher employed a mixed-method design in this study. This design requires the knowledge about the topic, including its history, evolution, and pre-existing interest in mixed methods (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2011). On that note, this chapter has elucidated some relevant information about mixed methods design. By definition, mixed-method refers to research where quantitative and qualitative data are collected in a single study, analysed, and interpreted under the same fundamental phenomenon (Leech & Onwuegbuzie, 2009). The target of this research design is to harness the advantages of both qualitative and quantitative research and minimise their individual disadvantages, rather than replace one with the other (Johnson & Onwuegbuzie, 2004). This was reiterated by Onwuegbuzie and Johnson (2006), who averred that research is authenticated when using a mixed-methods design since quantitative and qualitative approaches are fused into one method. The intention is not to replace either of the designs, but to harness their specific advantages.

Several factors leading to the advancement of the mixed-methods design have been explored in the past. Hesse-Biber (2010) postulates that some aspects, such as government support, increased publications of the design, technological advancement, and funding from private agencies, have played a role in the evolution of new mixed-methods designs and analytical study. From a different perspective, Creswell, and Plano Clark (2011) argued that aspects such as the complication of research issues that cannot be addressed by quantitative research or qualitative research individually have fostered the mixed-methods design advancements. Additionally, the necessity

to incorporate several conceptualisations of information and documents about the research problems has led to improvement in mixed methods design (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2011). Creswell and Plano Clark (2011) outlined five advantages of adopting the mixed-methods design:

1. It strengthens the credibility of the research results by minimising the weakness of both qualitative and quantitative analyses.
2. The approach generates more evidence from the research than when using either quantitative or qualitative research individually.
3. It solves some research problems that are impossible to address using quantitative or qualitative research individually.
4. It averts the adversarial division existing between qualitative and quantitative researchers.
5. It offers the researcher an opportunity to incorporate all methods to reach a suitable solution for a study problem.

Despite the abovementioned advantages, there are notable challenges in the use of mixed methods in research (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2011). First, the researcher must be skilled in the collection of both qualitative and quantitative data. Second, the surveyor must be familiar with data manipulation and analysis techniques for qualitative and quantitative methods, such as measurement instruments and close-ended attitudinal scales. Third, the investigator must be an expert in drawing logic from hypothesis testing and using and interpreting statistical data. Lastly, the researcher must be conversant with reliability, experimental control, generalisation, and validity.

The rationale for using a mixed methodology design in this study was prompted by the presumption that it would lead to a comprehensive understanding of the research issues and increase the reliability and validity of the study. Further, the approach provided the researcher the freedom to draw data from different sources, subsequently combining them to arrive at an appropriate solution.

3.3 Population of the study

The study's population included male and female students from two public secondary schools in Taif, Saudi Arabia. In Saudi Arabia, schools are separated for boys and girls, as dictated by the Islamic religion, with different genders not allowed to intermingle to protect their chastity. As such, this research was carried out in two different secondary schools, one for boys and the other for girls.

3.4 Sample

As mentioned earlier, due to gender segregation in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, which is seen in almost every facet of society including educational facilities, the research was conducted separately for Saudi male and female students in two different secondary schools.

The researcher initially intended to use stratified random sampling to select schools randomly, which means that all male and female students in all public secondary schools in Taif city would have had the same chance to participate in this study. Further, the researcher intended to increase the representativeness of the sample and the validity of this study. However, when applying the research tools, schools were closed due to the COVID-19 pandemic, which prevented the researcher from visiting the schools for conducting the research. Thus, the researcher found it difficult to reach to all the public secondary schools in Taif. Even with that, attempts were made to reach the schools with the official letters issued from the authorities concerned in the schools and the Ministry of Education via email. This electronic communication resulted in an absolute lack of participation. To overcome this, the researcher communicated directly with the school principals to obtain their consent to conduct the study in their schools. Despite the researcher's persistent attempts to communicate with the schools, the researcher could secure the approval of three male schools and one female school. This forced the researcher to choose one male school and one female school according to their availability. Therefore, there was an urgent need to change the stratified random sampling to convenience sampling. Dörnyei (2007) described convenience sampling as "choosing participants for the purpose of the study if they meet certain practical criteria, for example, availability at a certain time, geographical proximity, easy accessibility, or the willingness to volunteer" (p. 98).

The second stage of sampling was to recruit male and female students to take part in the survey undertaken via questionnaires. The schools were closed because of the COVID-19 pandemic, which forced the researcher to use an online questionnaire instead of printed questionnaires. This initially resulted in a lack of enthusiasm for participating in the survey, which may be attributed to the apprehension of opening electronic links. To overcome this, the researcher continued trying to reach a large number of participants. However, the number of responses the researcher obtained was only 30 (15 male students and 15 female students). Consequently, convenience sampling was applied for selecting the participants.

Since the sample size of 30 is small, the researcher also used the qualitative method through interviews to enhance the findings. Thus, the third stage of sampling was purposive and aimed to select male and female students to participate in the interviews to elicit more explanations about the study topic from both genders. It is important to increase the representativeness even with a small size. As Vanderstoep and Johnston (2009) indicated, "a qualitative report might acknowledge a small sample size but attempt to prove that the sample is representative of similar people within the population from which it was drawn" is difficult (p. 179).

In the interview, the researcher mainly examined the link between gender and language use, as well as whether male and female students adopt different attitudes toward language varieties in Saudi Arabia. The interview consisted of open questions to elicit information that might not be revealed by the questionnaires. Since the research was a case study of the relationship between language and gender in Saudi Arabia, the choice of Saudi male and female students for the interview was necessary to provide an accurate understanding of the phenomenon under study.

3.5 Data collection

For this study, two data collection methods were used: a questionnaire and follow-up interviews. The following sub-sections discuss these two instruments in detail.

3.5.1 Questionnaire

Oates (2006) defines a questionnaire as a set of pre-written or pre-defined questions arranged in a systematic order. The respondents are expected to provide answers to the questions that can be analysed and interpreted by the researcher. In this study, after a literature review of previous

studies, the researcher designed a questionnaire with four main sections including 27 items or questions (See Appendix A for the questionnaire). The questionnaire was self-administered and carefully designed to provide the researcher with essential data that can be analysed and interpreted. The questionnaire aimed at investigating the relationship between gender and language use, and the attitude towards language and how it is manifested through language use between males and females in Saudi Arabia.

3.5.2 Ethical Clearance

The researcher obtained ethical clearance from the University of Pretoria and the Ministry of Education in the city of Taif for conducting the study at the two schools. The data was collected by requiring the participants to fill out a questionnaire and a consent form. As directed by the University of Pretoria, a letter of informed consent was attached to the questionnaire offering the participants sufficient information before participation. The letter of informed consent included the title and information on the objectives of the research. Participation in this study was voluntary and participants were allowed to withdraw at any time. The anonymity and confidentiality of the participants were ensured by securing the collected data (e.g., questionnaires and information) in a locked file cabinet, which only the researcher could access at a specific period, depending on the demands of the study. Additionally, informants were assigned codes connecting them to the data. Information sheets about the study were sufficient to inform the participants without prejudicing their (linguistic) behaviour and responses (i.e., the researcher did not want participants providing linguistic and attitudinal data that they think the researcher wants, instead of what they would naturally provide).

3.5.3 Questionnaire design

The three varieties referred to in the questionnaire, are:

- **Classical Arabic** which refers to the Arabic taught at school and used in the literature.
- **Standard Saudi (local) Arabic** which refers to Saudi Arabian Arabic used as a spoken dialect in daily life.
- **Common Saudi youth language** which refers to the language used by young people, which can sometimes contain improper or vulgar expressions.

The questionnaire was divided into four sections:

- **Section A:** Demographic questions
- **Section B:** Questions relating to gender differences in language use
- **Section C:** Questions on attitude towards Arabic varieties
- **Section D:** Questions on language preference and gender

The details of each section are presented below:

- Section A: questions 1 to 7: The demographic section consisted of seven questions focused on the participant's background, including age, gender, language-speaking activities, place of childhood, first language learned and parents' occupation.
- Section B: questions 1 to 3: Divided into three parts, this section investigated the gender differences in language use depending on the situation. The participants were asked to answer where and how often they heard the three language varieties of Classical Arabic, Standard local Arabic, and common Saudi youth language. In this section, the researcher asked the participants to place a check (✓) in the box to indicate their assessment of statements using a five-point Likert scale as follows: not at all, rarely, sometimes, often, or very often.
- Section C: This section was divided into three parts. Part 1 contained one question with nine statements about the attitude towards knowledge of Arabic varieties. The researcher employed a Likert scale, in which participants were asked to check (✓) in the box to specify

their level of agreement to a statement on a five-point scale that included strongly agreed, agreed, unsure, disagreed, and strongly disagreed. Part 2 consisted of three questions about the attitude towards speaking the three Arabic varieties. The participants were asked to answer how well they speak Classical Arabic, Standard local Arabic, and common Saudi youth language. In this part, the researcher used a numerical rating scale which required the participants to place a check (✓) in the box to indicate whether they spoke the three language varieties not at all, a little, fairly well, or very well. In part 3, three questions were formulated. The researcher asked the participants about their attitude towards the Arabic varieties by choosing their exact feelings (proud, ashamed, and no particular feeling) when they spoke each Arabic variety.

- Section D: This section consisted of two open-ended questions. Participants were required to indicate their preference of which Arabic variety they liked/ disliked the most and why. It was designed to examine the participants' language preference towards Arabic varieties and to explain the reasons therefor.

3.5.4 Follow-up interview

The second instrument in this study was the follow-up interviews. The researcher used this qualitative instrument to enhance the validity of the collected data and to acquire an in-depth understanding of the participants' language use. The aim of the interviews was to assist the researcher in discovering the attitudes of male and female participants towards the use of language in Saudi Arabia. If there were differences, the researcher looked at the reasons behind these differences. The qualitative study may serve to question the connection established in the quantitative approach. The output from these two approaches helped the researcher to conclude as to whether gender has an impact on the differences observed in language.

The purpose of the follow-up interviews was to gather detailed information and improve the quality and reliability of data collected through the questionnaires. Accordingly, the follow-up interviews were used as a remedy to address the weaknesses of the questionnaires, as stated by Dörnyei (2007), who asserted that including a subsequent qualitative element in research can correct the inadequacies of a quantitative approach. The follow-up interview adopted in this study

was in an individual format; therefore, the researcher used the same set of questions for each student during the session. To obtain extensive information about the study questions, the researcher employed semi-structured questions. During questionnaire distribution, the researcher requested contact information from respondents willing to participate in the follow-up interviews; thus, sample selection for this study was voluntary. Six male students and six female students from two different schools were randomly selected for the follow-up interview sessions. The researcher conducted the interviews through video meetings on Zoom, as physical interviews were impossible due to the closure of schools during the pandemic. Further, online interviews saved time for the researcher and the participants.

3.6 Validity and reliability

According to Eisenhart and Howe (1992), validity is the level of trustworthiness of a decision that can be drawn from given data. Ayodele (2012) referred to the term as the extent of relevant and applicable conclusions or inferences that can be arrived at based on the scores obtained from research instruments. For the inference of a study to be considered reliable and meaningful, the same results must be obtained when another research study is conducted with a similar group of participants in the same experimental environment (Ayodele, 2012). However, Dörnyei (2007) defines reliability as the degree of consistency of results produced by measurement procedures and instruments in a given population, despite using different circumstances.

In mixed-methods research, validity demands the inclusion of strategies that mitigate issues in analysis, collection, and interpretation of data that originate from the amalgamation of qualitative and quantitative study strands (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2011). For this study, the researcher adopted the following steps to bolster reliability and validity:

- A self-administered questionnaire was used where the researcher was responsible for administering the questionnaires and distributing them to all participants. The approach ensured the absence of bias in administering the questionnaire.
- The items in the questionnaire were written in Arabic to ensure the participants understood the questions before answering them. The questions in both the questionnaire and follow-up interviews addressed the research questions and objectives.

- The study adopted a mixed-methods research design, as it merged both quantitative and qualitative approaches. The research design facilitated maximising the validity of the research. As reported by Dörnyei (2007), methodological triangulation overcomes the inherent weaknesses of applying individual methods by harnessing the strength of both, subsequently enhancing both the internal and external validity of a study. Additionally, Scott and Morrison (2006) averred that sponsors and funders of educational research demand and advocate a methodology that applies this mixing to promote the validity of research findings.

3.7 Data analysis methods

Data analysis in mixed-methods research design includes analytic techniques used in both quantitative and qualitative research. According to Creswell and Plano Clark (2011), data analysis can occur at one point or multiple points in mixed-methods research. For this study, the parallel mixed analysis was adopted, where the collected data was not integrated or mixed before interpretation. Three independent conditions must be met for such analysis: (a) quantitative and qualitative data analysis must be performed separately; (b) each type of analysis should be independent in that one should not influence the other during the data analysis stage; and (c) the results of the two methods should not be compared or fused until both analyses have been finalised (Onwuegbuzie & Leech, 2004). The following sub-sections present the questionnaire and follow-up interview analysis in detail.

3.7.1 Questionnaire analysis

The answers to the questions in the questionnaire are analysed statistically using Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS). The collected data are then presented in a series of tables and graphs to interpret the relationship between the data and the research questions. Descriptive statistics are used to display the collected data in the form of percentages and frequencies. Detailed analysis of the questionnaire is presented in Chapter 4.

3.7.2 Follow-up interview analysis

Five semi-structured questions were designed for each follow-up interview. The participants were asked to answer the questions during the video interviews, which were recorded by the researcher. To analyse the answers to the interview questions, the researcher employed interpretive and descriptive analysis. The researcher recorded all the participants' perceptions and categorised them to analyse the gathered data. The main perceptions were arranged as per the answers given by the participants, followed by the formulation of the perceptions into expected main categories, which were coded for tabulation purposes. Tabulation of the perceptions was necessary to enable assigning each type a percentage depending on the total response. Kothari (2004) defines tabulation as a subset of the technical procedure where the classified data is arranged in a table format. The author considers tabulation important for the following reasons.

1. It saves on space and minimises explanatory and descriptive statements to a more manageable size.
2. It eases the comparison process.
3. It quickens the summation of items and easy detection of omissions and errors.
4. It forms the basis of several statistical computations.

3.8 Conclusion

This chapter details the methodology adopted in this study. The researcher shows the advantages of mixed-methods research design and triangulation of quantitative and qualitative methods to meet the research objectives and answer the research questions. For better clarity and understanding, the researcher conducts a literature review on the definition of mixed-methods and triangulation used for this type of research. The reason for selecting the mixed-methods research design is described. Each subset or stage of the methodology is explained, and in every part, the aim of the researcher is outlined. The criteria for sampling are identified, including why a convenience sampling was selected. Questionnaires were one of the instruments of data collection used, and items in each section were explained. Moreover, the qualitative method using follow-up interviews was applied to afford a more comprehensive understanding of the research questions. Both qualitative and quantitative data analysis are elucidated, which facilitate interpreting the collected data, before arriving at the study findings.

Chapter 4: Results and discussion

4.1 Introduction

The methodology employed in the current study is discussed in the preceding chapter, while this chapter presents the findings made using questionnaires and interviews. One of the main objectives of this study is to investigate gender differences in using Arabic language varieties among young students in public secondary schools in Saudi Arabia. To fulfill this objective, the researcher conducted a quantitative analysis of 30 male and female students and qualitative analysis of 12 interviewees. The first section of the chapter introduces the quantitative data results, followed by the qualitative data analysis. The chapter concludes with a discussion and an in-depth interpretation of the most significant findings related to objectives, research questions, and the motivation behind this study.

4.2 Quantitative data analysis results

As mentioned in Chapter 3, the researcher designed a questionnaire with four main sections, including 27 items. It consisted of demographic information, gender differences in language use, attitude towards Arabic varieties, language preference and gender sections. The results of the data analysis are presented in the following sub-sections.

4.2.1 Demographic information results

The demographic information section focuses on the participants' background, including age, gender, language activities, place of childhood, the first language learned, and the occupation of the parents. These characteristics may influence the participants' language use and their attitudes towards Arabic varieties. Additionally, demographic information helps to see if there are correlations between social factors and the preference of particular linguistic varieties.

Table 4.1.
Background data on the male and female students

| Variable | | Male participants | | Female participants | |
|------------------------------|-----------------------------|-------------------|---------|---------------------|---------|
| | | Frequency | Percent | Frequency | Percent |
| Age | 0-15 | 0 | 0% | 0 | 0% |
| | 16-20 | 15 | 50% | 15 | 50% |
| Gender | Male | 15 | 50% | 0 | 0% |
| | Female | 0 | 0% | 15 | 50% |
| Speaking language activities | Yes | 6 | 20% | 4 | 13% |
| | No | 9 | 30% | 11 | 37% |
| Place of childhood | City | 15 | 50% | 15 | 50% |
| | Village | 0 | 0% | 0 | 0% |
| First language learned | Classical Arabic | 1 | 3.33% | 0 | 0% |
| | Standard Saudi Arabic | 5 | 16.66% | 5 | 16.66% |
| | Common Saudi youth language | 9 | 30% | 10 | 33.33% |
| Father's work | Professional/academic | 10 | 33.33% | 10 | 33.33% |
| | Not professional | 5 | 16.66% | 5 | 16.66% |
| Mother's work | Professional/academic | 2 | 6.66% | 6 | 20% |
| | Not professional | 13 | 43.33% | 9 | 30% |
| Primary school | Private/international | 0 | 0% | 0 | 0% |
| | Public | 15 | 50% | 15 | 50% |

Table 4.1 summarizes the demographic data of male and female students. As the convenience sampling technique was applied for selecting the participants due to the situation of COVID-19 pandemic and the closure of schools, the total number of responses that the researcher obtained was 30 in total (15 male and 15 female students). This achieves the parity of sample size and facilitates comparison between the two genders. It should be noted that the female students show a lower percentage in terms of participation in speaking language activities such as poetry competitions, which can be attributed to the lack of social language activities for female students. Table 4.1 shows no significant variation between male and female students in their first language learned, although only one male student learned Classical Arabic as the first language. By comparing participants' parents' jobs, a notable difference was found. This implies that many participants' mothers have non-professional jobs or no work at all. There were not many job opportunities for women in the past decades in Saudi Arabia, due to religious reasons, which may

contribute to language differences between the two genders in using Classical Arabic. Since Classical Arabic is considered as a sign of education, mothers who do not have professional jobs or who do not work at all lack language proficiency, which affects the use of Classical Arabic with their daughters. Indeed, boys attempt to speak and behave like their fathers, while girls attempt to be like their mothers. This demonstrates that the language spoken by the adolescents is influenced by the language variety learned as well as the occupations of the parents.

4.2.2 Gender differences in language use depending on situation

To examine the differences in language use between male and female students, the researcher asked the participants where and how often they hear Classical Arabic, Standard Saudi (local) Arabic, and common Saudi youth language. This question aimed to evaluate their responses depending on different situations and places. The following sub-sections present the participants' answers.

4.2.2.1 Classical Arabic

Table 4.2.

Frequencies and percentages for gender differences in using Classical Arabic

| The question asked | | (Where and how often do you hear Classical Arabic?) | | | | | | | | |
|--------------------|------------------|---|---------|------|------|------------|--------|-----------|-------|------------|
| Language Type | Situation | Gender | f/p | Mean | SD | Not at all | Rarely | Sometimes | Often | Very Often |
| Classical Arabic | Community center | Male | Freq. | 2.47 | 1.19 | 4 | 4 | 3 | 4 | 0 |
| | | | Percent | | | 26.7 | 26.7 | 20.0 | 26.7 | 0.0 |
| | | Female | Freq. | 1.93 | 1.03 | 6 | 6 | 1 | 2 | 0 |
| | | | Percent | | | 40.0 | 40.0 | 6.7 | 13.3 | 0 |
| | Shops | Male | Freq. | 1.67 | 1.11 | 9 | 4 | 1 | 1 | 0 |
| | | | Percent | | | 60.0 | 26.7 | 6.7 | 6.7 | 0.0 |
| | | Female | Freq. | 2.80 | 1.37 | 4 | 2 | 3 | 5 | 1 |
| | | | Percent | | | 26.7 | 13.3 | 20.0 | 33.3 | 6.7 |
| | Friends' homes | Male | Freq. | 1.93 | 1.10 | 7 | 4 | 2 | 2 | 0 |
| | | | Percent | | | 46.7 | 26.7 | 13.3 | 13.3 | 0.0 |
| | | Female | Freq. | 1.33 | 0.72 | 12 | 1 | 2 | 0 | 0 |
| | | | Percent | | | 80.0 | 6.7 | 13.3 | 0 | 0 |
| School | Male | Freq. | 3.53 | 0.92 | 1 | 5 | 8 | 1 | 0 | |
| | | Percent | | | 6.7 | 33.3 | 53.3 | 6.7 | 0.0 | |
| | Female | Freq. | 3.20 | 0.86 | 0 | 3 | 7 | 4 | 1 | |
| | | Percent | | | 0.0 | 20.0 | 46.7 | 26.7 | 6.7 | |



| | | | | | | | | | |
|-----------------|--------|---------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|
| Sporting events | Male | Freq. | 3.13 | 1.36 | 2 | 4 | 1 | 6 | 2 |
| | | Percent | | | 13.3 | 26.7 | 6.7 | 40.0 | 13.3 |
| | Female | Freq. | 2.73 | 1.33 | 4 | 2 | 4 | 4 | 1 |
| | | Percent | | | 26.7 | 13.3 | 26.7 | 26.7 | 6.7 |
| Mosque | Male | Freq. | 3.33 | 1.29 | 1 | 4 | 2 | 5 | 3 |
| | | Percent | | | 6.7 | 26.7 | 13.3 | 33.3 | 20.0 |
| | Female | Freq. | 3.33 | 1.40 | 2 | 2 | 4 | 3 | 4 |
| | | Percent | | | 13.3 | 13.3 | 26.7 | 20.0 | 26.7 |

Figure 4.1

“Often” and “very often” answers by male and female students for hearing Classical Arabic at different places

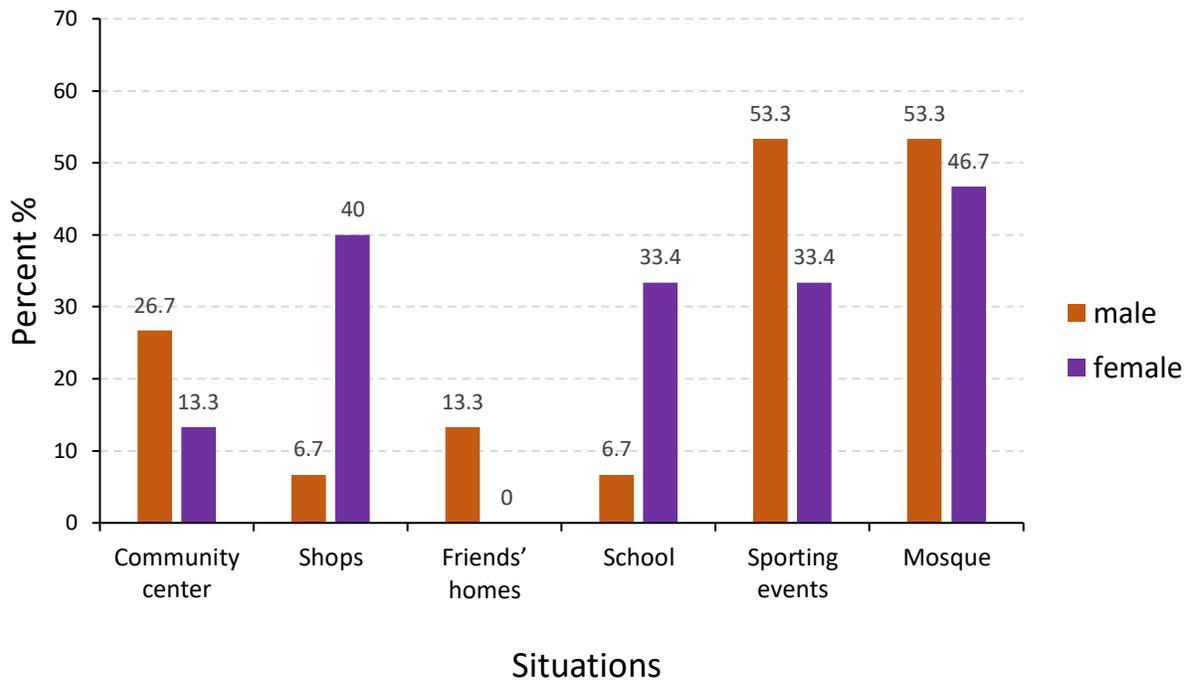


Table 4.2 shows frequencies and percentages of male and female students using Classical Arabic based on different situations. Additionally, table 4.2 shows the mean and standard deviation (SD) for each situation. The mean for male students ranged between 1.67 and 3.53, with a SD from 0.92 to 1.36, while the mean for female students ranged between 1.33 and 3.33, with a SD from 0.86 to 1.40. The mean was calculated for each question by multiplying the score of each level by the number of responses, adding the totals, and dividing them by the total number of respondents. The SD describes the distribution in relation to the mean, which indicates how far specific answers to

a question deviate from the mean (see Table 4.2). In this case, the highest mean indicates many respondents answered by “often” or “very often” as far as hearing Classical Arabic is concerned based on different situations presented in Table 4.2. While the lowest values show the number of “not at all” or “rarely” answers. The SD reflects how closely the data is clustered around the mean. Data that are concentrated around the mean have a low SD, while data that are spread away from the mean have a high SD. The significance of these values is discussed with relevance to all three language varieties in Section 4.4.1 (Figure 4.5 and 4.6).

Figure 4.1 shows all percentages of “often” and “very often” answers by male and female students. Examining the “often” and “very often” results give a better reflection of a respondent’s true evaluation because it provides the higher degree of the measurement of language use. This, in turn, provides the measurement of the frequency of occurrence based on the five-point Likert scale; “often” and “very often” have the highest weight of 4 and 5, respectively. It should be noted that the male students show higher percentages in more cases in answering “often” or “very often”. By analysing each situation independently, it is found that the male students show higher percentages of observing more Classical Arabic in most cases (except shops and school). At the community center 26.7% of male students have often and very often heard Classical Arabic, versus 13.3% of female students. In shops, only 6.7% of male students have often and very often heard Classical Arabic, compared to approximately 40% of female students. In terms of hearing Classical Arabic at a friends’ home 13.3% of male students have often and very often heard it, compared to no female students. However, 33.4% of female students have heard Classical Arabic at school, versus only 6.7% of male students. Regarding the place of sporting events, percentage difference between the genders was around 46%:53.3% of male students have often and very often heard Classical Arabic at sporting events, compared to 33.4% of female students. In similar findings, 53.3% of male and 46.7% of female students have often and very often heard Classical Arabic at mosques. Mosques are places of worship, lecturing, preaching, and Quran recitations. These activities performed in mosques are related to speech in Classical Arabic. In Saudi Arabia, mosques are separate for males and females. Mostly, these activities are carried out by religious scholars among males and have not received adequate attention among females. This may contribute to the increase of hearing Classical Arabic among males at mosques. Generally, a possible explanation for the higher figure of percentages for male students in hearing Classical Arabic in most places may be

related to the availability of language activities of males compared to that of females in Saudi society. In other words, the religious activities and poetry competitions which are associated with speaking Classical Arabic are more popular among males than females.

4.2.2.2 Standard (local) Saudi Arabic

Table 4.3.

Frequencies and percentages for gender differences in using Standard Saudi (local) Arabic

| The question asked | | (Where and how often do you hear Standard Saudi (local) Arabic?) | | | | | | | | |
|-------------------------------|------------------|--|---------|------|------|------------|--------|-----------|-------|------------|
| Language Type | Situation | Gender | f/p | Mean | SD | Not at all | Rarely | Sometimes | Often | Very Often |
| Standard Saudi (local) Arabic | Community center | Male | Freq. | 3.40 | 1.35 | 2 | 1 | 5 | 3 | 4 |
| | | | Percent | | | 13.3 | 6.7 | 33.3 | 20.0 | 26.7 |
| | | Female | Freq. | 3.80 | 0.86 | 0 | 0 | 7 | 4 | 4 |
| | | | Percent | | | 0 | 0 | 46.7 | 26.7 | 26.7 |
| | Shops | Male | Freq. | 3.07 | 1.22 | 2 | 2 | 6 | 3 | 2 |
| | | | Percent | | | 13.3 | 13.3 | 40.0 | 20.0 | 13.3 |
| | | Female | Freq. | 3.33 | 0.72 | 0 | 0 | 12 | 1 | 2 |
| | | | Percent | | | 0 | 0 | 80.0 | 6.7 | 13.3 |
| | Friends' homes | Male | Freq. | 3.13 | 1.41 | 3 | 1 | 5 | 3 | 3 |
| | | | Percent | | | 20.0 | 6.7 | 33.3 | 20.0 | 20.0 |
| | | Female | Freq. | 3.60 | 1.12 | 0 | 2 | 7 | 1 | 5 |
| | | | Percent | | | 0 | 13.3 | 46.7 | 6.7 | 33.3 |
| | School | Male | Freq. | 3.33 | 0.90 | 0 | 2 | 8 | 3 | 2 |
| | | | Percent | | | 0.0 | 13.3 | 53.3 | 20.0 | 13.3 |
| | | Female | Freq. | 3.93 | 0.96 | 0 | 0 | 7 | 2 | 6 |
| | | | Percent | | | 0 | 0 | 46.7 | 13.3 | 40.0 |
| | Sporting events | Male | Freq. | 3.33 | 1.11 | 0 | 4 | 5 | 3 | 3 |
| | | | Percent | | | 0.0 | 26.7 | 33.3 | 20.0 | 20.0 |
| | | Female | Freq. | 3.73 | 1.10 | 1 | 0 | 5 | 5 | 4 |
| | | | Percent | | | 6.7 | 0 | 33.3 | 33.3 | 26.7 |
| | Mosque | Male | Freq. | 2.87 | 0.99 | 1 | 4 | 7 | 2 | 1 |
| | | | Percent | | | 6.7 | 26.7 | 46.7 | 13.3 | 6.7 |
| | | Female | Freq. | 3.27 | 1.16 | 2 | 0 | 7 | 4 | 2 |
| | | | Percent | | | 13.3 | 0 | 46.7 | 26.7 | 13.3 |

Figure 4.2

“Often” and “very often” answers by male and female students for hearing Standard Saudi (local) Arabic at different places

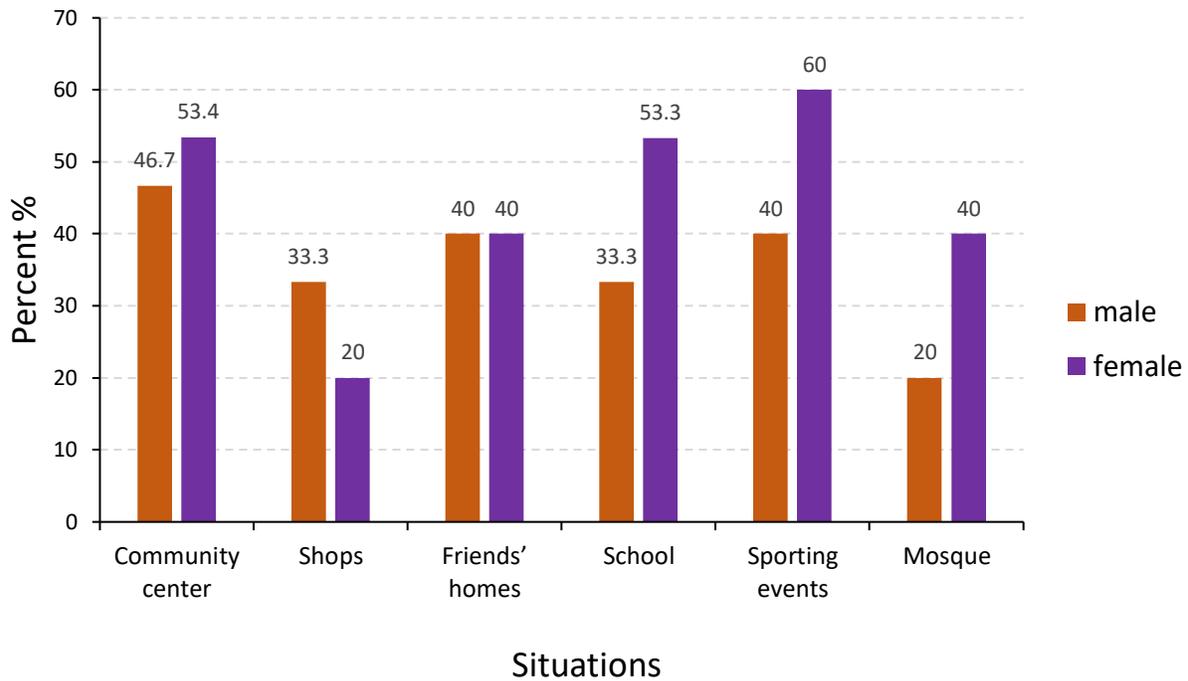


Table 4.3 shows the frequencies and percentages of male and female students using Standard Saudi (local) Arabic in different situations. Additionally, Table 4.3 shows the mean and the SD for all cases. The mean for male students ranged between 2.87 and 3.40, with the SD from 0.90 to 1.41, while the mean for female students ranged between 3.27 and 3.93, with the SD from 0.86 to 1.40. In this case, the highest mean indicates many respondents answered by “often” or “very often” as far as hearing Standard (local) Saudi Arabic in different situations is concerned (please see Table 4.3.) while the lowest values of mean show the number of “not at all” or “rarely” answers. The SD reflects how closely the data is clustered around the mean. Data that are concentrated around the mean have a low SD, while data that are spread away from the mean have a high SD. The significance of these values is discussed with relevant to all three language varieties in Section 4.4.1 (Figure 4.5 and 4.6).

Figure 4.2 shows the percentages of male and female students who said they heard Standard Saudi Arabic "often" or "very often" based on various locations. It should be noted that the female

students showed slightly higher percentages of "often" or "very often" responses in most situations. At the community center, 53.4% of female students have often and very often heard Standard Saudi Arabic, versus 46.7% of male students. In shops, 33.3% of male students have often and very often heard it, compared to 20% female students. In comparable contexts, 40% of both genders have often and very often heard Standard Saudi Arabic at a friends' home. At school, 53.3% of female students have often and very often heard Standard Saudi Arabic, compared to 33.3% of male students. In similar contexts, 60% of female and 40% of male students have often and very often heard Standard Saudi Arabic at sporting events. In mosques, 20% of male students have often and very often heard Standard Saudi Arabic, compared to approximately 40% of female students. As can be seen, the female students showed higher percentages of chosen Standard Saudi Arabic, compared to male students in most situations such as community centers, schools, sporting events and mosques. This may be attributed to the occupation of the parents. As reported previously, many participants' mothers have non-professional jobs due to religious reasons and social rules in the past decades in Saudi Arabia, which reflects on the speech of their daughters. As a matter of fact, girls attempt to be like their mothers. More specifically, Classical Arabic is associated with high linguistic aptitude due to its strict grammatical rules which require knowledge and skill. Classical Arabic is frequently thought to be a sign of education. Accordingly, mothers who have non-professional jobs or no work at all lack language proficiency in Classical Arabic which is why their daughters also lack competence in the language. Instead of that, they use Saudi local Arabic for its simplicity and practicality in the daily life.

4.2.2.3 Common Saudi youth language

Table 4.4.

Frequencies and percentages for gender differences in using common Saudi youth language

| The question asked | | (Where and how often do you hear common Saudi youth language?) | | | | | | | | |
|-----------------------------|------------------|--|---------|------|------|------------|--------|-----------|-------|------------|
| Language Type | Situation | Gender | f/p | Mean | SD | Not at all | Rarely | Sometimes | Often | Very Often |
| Common Saudi youth language | Community center | Male | Freq. | 3.67 | 1.45 | 2 | 1 | 3 | 3 | 6 |
| | | | Percent | | | 13.3 | 6.7 | 20.0 | 20.0 | 40.0 |
| | | Female | Freq. | 4.20 | 0.56 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 10 | 4 |
| | | | Percent | | | 0 | 0 | 6.7 | 66.7 | 26.7 |
| | Shops | Male | Freq. | 3.27 | 1.39 | 2 | 2 | 5 | 2 | 4 |
| | | | Percent | | | 13.3 | 13.3 | 33.3 | 13.3 | 26.7 |



| | | | | | | | | | |
|-----------------|--------|---------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|
| | Female | Freq. | 4.00 | 0.93 | 0 | 1 | 3 | 6 | 5 |
| | | Percent | | | 0 | 6.7 | 20.0 | 40.0 | 33.3 |
| Friends' homes | Male | Freq. | 3.60 | 1.40 | 2 | 1 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| | | Percent | | | 13.3 | 6.7 | 20.0 | 26.7 | 33.3 |
| | Female | Freq. | 4.40 | 0.63 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 7 | 7 |
| | | Percent | | | 0 | 0 | 6.7 | 46.7 | 46.7 |
| School | Male | Freq. | 3.27 | 1.16 | 1 | 2 | 7 | 2 | 3 |
| | | Percent | | | 6.7 | 13.3 | 46.7 | 13.3 | 20.0 |
| | Female | Freq. | 3.80 | 1.08 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 9 | 3 |
| | | Percent | | | 6.7 | 6.7 | 6.7 | 60.0 | 20.0 |
| Sporting events | Male | Freq. | 3.47 | 1.06 | 0 | 3 | 5 | 4 | 3 |
| | | Percent | | | 0.0 | 20.0 | 33.3 | 26.7 | 20.0 |
| | Female | Freq. | 3.73 | 1.10 | 0 | 3 | 2 | 6 | 4 |
| | | Percent | | | 0 | 20.0 | 13.3 | 40.0 | 26.7 |
| Mosque | Male | Freq. | 2.87 | 1.55 | 5 | 0 | 5 | 2 | 3 |
| | | Percent | | | 33.3 | 0.0 | 33.3 | 13.3 | 20.0 |
| | Female | Freq. | 3.47 | 1.51 | 3 | 1 | 1 | 6 | 4 |
| | | Percent | | | 20.0 | 6.7 | 6.7 | 40.0 | 26.7 |

Figure 4.3

“Often” and “very often” answers by male and female students for hearing common Saudi youth language at different place

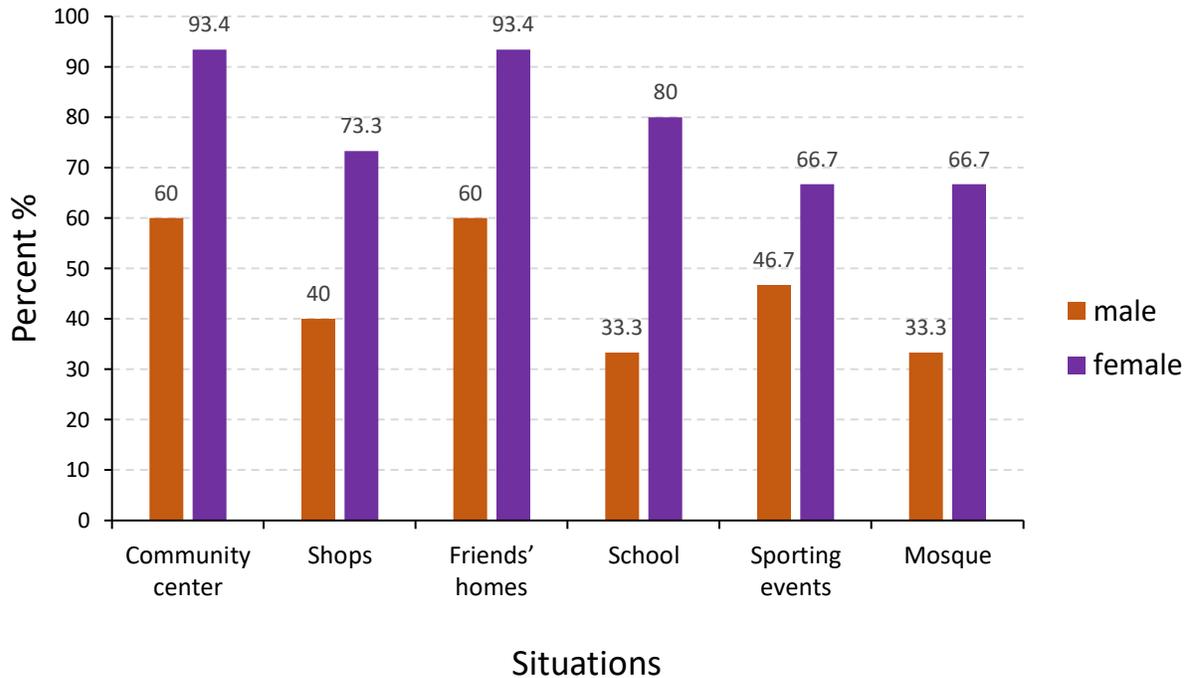


Table 4.4 shows the frequencies and percentages for common Saudi youth language heard by male and female students. In addition, Table 4.4 shows the mean and SD for all situations. The mean for male students ranged between 2.87 and 3.67, with the SD from 1.06 to 1.55, while the mean for female students ranged between 3.47 and 4.20, with the SD from 0.56 to 1.51. In this case, the highest mean indicates many respondents answered by “often” or “very often” for hearing common Saudi youth language based on different situations presented in Table 4.4. While, the lowest values of mean show the number of “not at all” or “rarely” answers. The SD reflects how closely the data is clustered around the mean. Data that are concentrated around the mean have a low SD, while data that are spread away from the mean have a high SD. The significance of these values is discussed with relevance to all three language varieties in Section 4.4.1 (Figure 4.5 and 4.6). Furthermore, the percentages of “often” and “very often” answers by male and female students for hearing common Saudi youth language at different places are shown in Figure 4.3. It should be noted that the female students showed higher percentages of using Saudi youth language in all cases in answering by “often” or “very often”. In the community center, 93.4% of female students have often and very often heard Saudi youth language, versus 60% of male students. In shops, 73.3% of female students have often and very often heard Saudi youth language, while 40% of male students. In terms of hearing Saudi youth language at a friends’ home, 93.4% of female students have often and very often heard it, compared to 60% of male students. At school, only 33.3% of male students have often and very often heard Saudi youth language, compared to approximately 80% of female students. At sporting events, 66.7% of female students have often and very often heard Saudi youth language, versus 46.7% of male students. Regarding the place of mosque, the difference between the genders was remarkable: 66.7% of female students, compared to 33.3% of male students. A possible explanation for the increase of using Saudi youth language among females in most places may be related to the change of social rules in Saudi Arabia. The Saudi society has been recently making rapid progress in terms of increase of social and fun activities for girls, which has enabled a mixing between the genders in most places such as restaurants, banks, music festivals, and professional conferences. This was not the case a decade ago in terms of the conservative society for Saudi girls.



4.2.3 Attitude towards Arabic varieties from three different domains

To obtain accurate findings, the attitudes towards Arabic varieties were examined based on three different aspects, which include knowledge, speaking, and sentiment, as described by Almahmoud (2012). The following sub-sections show results related to these three domains.

4.2.3.1 Attitude towards knowledge of Arabic varieties

Table 4.5.

Frequencies and percentages for attitude towards knowledge of Arabic varieties

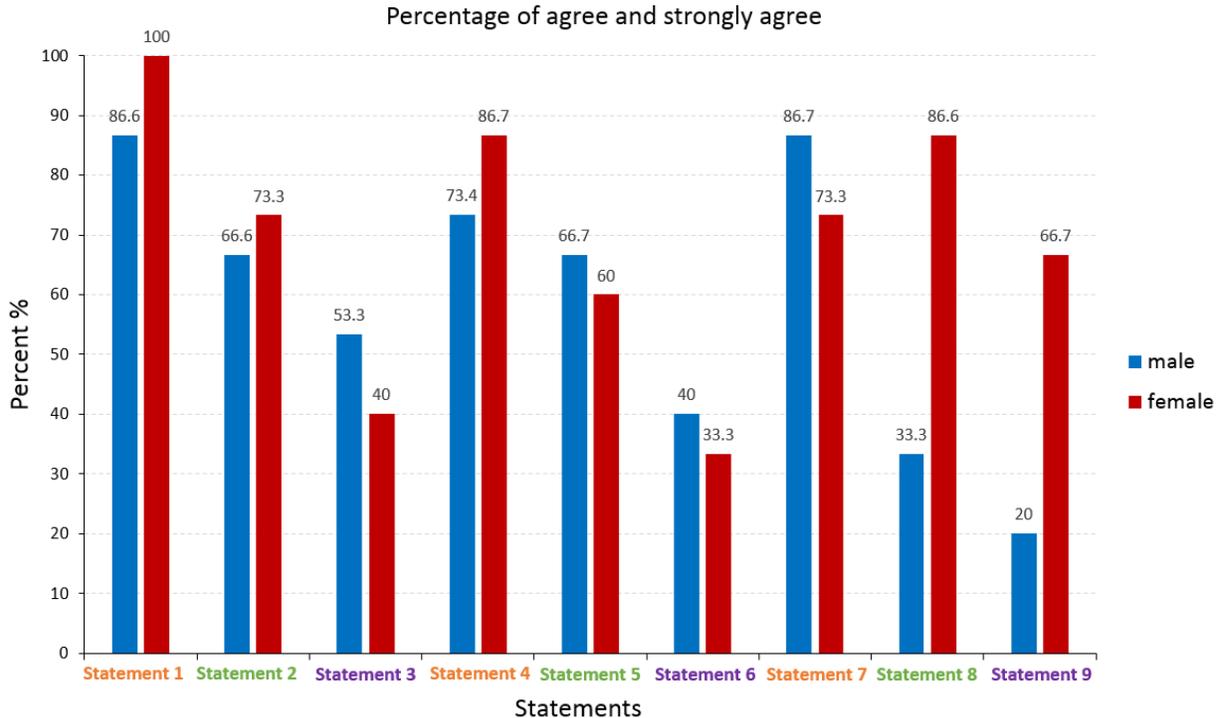
| Statement | Gender | f/p | Mean | SD | Strongly Disagree | Disagree | Unsure | Agree | Strongly Agree |
|---|--------|---------|------|------|-------------------|----------|--------|-------|----------------|
| It is important to me that I know Classical Arabic | | | | | | | | | |
| 1 | Male | Freq. | 4.33 | 0.90 | 0 | 1 | 1 | 5 | 8 |
| | | Percent | | | 0.0 | 6.7 | 6.7 | 33.3 | 53.3 |
| | Female | Freq. | 4.53 | 0.52 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 7 | 8 |
| | | Percent | | | 0 | 0 | 0 | 46.7 | 53.3 |
| It is important to me that I know Standard Saudi (local) Arabic | | | | | | | | | |
| 2 | Male | Freq. | 3.60 | 0.99 | 0 | 3 | 2 | 8 | 2 |
| | | Percent | | | 0.0 | 20.0 | 13.3 | 53.3 | 13.3 |
| | Female | Freq. | 4.07 | 0.80 | 0 | 0 | 4 | 6 | 5 |
| | | Percent | | | 0 | 0 | 26.7 | 40.0 | 33.3 |
| It is important to me that I know common Saudi youth language | | | | | | | | | |
| 3 | Male | Freq. | 3.13 | 1.13 | 2 | 2 | 3 | 8 | 0 |
| | | Percent | | | 13.3 | 13.3 | 20.0 | 53.3 | 0.0 |
| | Female | Freq. | 3.40 | 1.06 | 0 | 3 | 6 | 3 | 3 |
| | | Percent | | | 0 | 20.0 | 40.0 | 20.0 | 20.0 |
| If I have children, it is important to me that my children learn Classical Arabic | | | | | | | | | |
| 4 | Male | Freq. | 4.13 | 0.99 | 1 | 0 | 3 | 4 | 7 |
| | | Percent | | | 6.7 | 0.0 | 20.0 | 26.7 | 46.7 |
| | Female | Freq. | 4.33 | 1.05 | 0 | 2 | 0 | 4 | 9 |
| | | Percent | | | 0 | 13.3 | 0 | 26.7 | 60.0 |
| If I have children, it is important to me that my children learn Standard Saudi Arabic | | | | | | | | | |
| 5 | Male | Freq. | 3.67 | 1.11 | 1 | 1 | 3 | 7 | 3 |
| | | Percent | | | 6.7 | 6.7 | 20.0 | 46.7 | 20.0 |
| | Female | Freq. | 3.60 | 1.24 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 5 | 4 |
| | | Percent | | | 6.7 | 13.3 | 20.0 | 33.3 | 26.7 |
| If I have children, it is important to me that my children learn common Saudi youth language | | | | | | | | | |



| | | | | | | | | | |
|---|--------|---------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|
| 6 | Male | Freq. | 2.93 | 1.33 | 4 | 0 | 5 | 5 | 1 |
| | | Percent | | | 26.7 | 0.0 | 33.3 | 33.3 | 6.7 |
| | Female | Freq. | 3.20 | 1.21 | 1 | 3 | 6 | 2 | 3 |
| | | Percent | | | 6.7 | 20.0 | 40.0 | 13.3 | 20.0 |
| It is important to me to teach Classical Arabic at school | | | | | | | | | |
| 7 | Male | Freq. | 4.47 | 0.92 | 0 | 1 | 1 | 3 | 10 |
| | | Percent | | | 0.0 | 6.7 | 6.7 | 20.0 | 66.7 |
| | Female | Freq. | 4.27 | 0.88 | 0 | 0 | 4 | 3 | 8 |
| | | Percent | | | 0 | 0.0 | 26.7 | 20.0 | 53.3 |
| It is important to me to teach Standard Saudi Arabic at school | | | | | | | | | |
| 8 | Male | Freq. | 3.20 | 1.08 | 1 | 2 | 7 | 3 | 2 |
| | | Percent | | | 6.7 | 13.3 | 46.7 | 20.0 | 13.3 |
| | Female | Freq. | 4.20 | 0.68 | 0 | 0 | 2 | 8 | 5 |
| | | Percent | | | 0 | 0.0 | 13.3 | 53.3 | 33.3 |
| It is important to me to teach common Saudi youth language at school | | | | | | | | | |
| 9 | Male | Freq. | 2.60 | 1.24 | 4 | 2 | 6 | 2 | 1 |
| | | Percent | | | 26.7 | 13.3 | 40.0 | 13.3 | 6.7 |
| | Female | Freq. | 3.73 | 0.96 | 0 | 2 | 3 | 7 | 3 |
| | | Percent | | | 0 | 13.3 | 20.0 | 46.7 | 20.0 |

Figure 4.4

Percentages of “agree” and “strongly agree” answers by male and female students for all nine statements



Some of the questionnaire items focus on the perceptions of the importance of varieties of the Arabic language in Saudi Arabia. Frequencies and percentages calculated for male and female students' attitude towards knowledge of Arabic varieties are listed in Table 4.5. The percentages of "agree" and "strongly agree" answers by male and female students for all nine statements related to attitude towards knowledge of Arabic varieties are shown in Figure 4.4. For Classical Arabic, the majority of male participants demonstrated their important attitude to know Classical Arabic (86.6%), while all female participants indicated that it is important to know Classical Arabic (100%). As the difference in percentage is small, it is reasonable to believe that all young adolescents value Classical Arabic strongly. This may be related to the importance that they attach to the Quran or to religion as a whole. Although the results of Section 4.2.2 report that common Saudi youth language was mostly observed by female adolescents, but value Classical Arabic more highly.

Other questionnaire responses regarding the importance of learning the three Arabic varieties by children show that a large majority of female and male respondents say that, if they have children, they would like them to learn Classical Arabic (73% male; 87% female). This indicates that the two genders offer an instrumental value to learning Classical Arabic. Later, the results of interviews will show that this is because of it being the language of the Quran. Regarding the importance of teaching all three language varieties at school, there was a difference between male and female participants. A large percentage of male respondents agreed on the importance of teaching Classical Arabic (86%), while a substantial majority of female respondents agreed on the importance of teaching Standard Saudi Arabic (86%). This could be linked to females' conservative environment in which they grew up over the last decade. The females' awareness of the importance of Saudi dialects is because of the limited interactions with other persons within this conservative society. In contrast, males have more free spaces to interact with other persons, which affects their selection of language varieties. Table 4.5 also shows the mean and the SD for all situations. The mean for male students ranged between 2.60 and 4.33, with the SD from 0.90 to 1.33, while the mean for female students ranged between 3.20 and 4.53, with the SD from 0.52 to 1.24. In this case, the highest mean indicates that many respondents strongly agree or agree with the above-mentioned statements in Table 4.5. The lowest values, on the other hand, show the

number of strongly disagree or disagree responses. The SD reflects how closely the data is clustered around the mean. Data that are concentrated around the mean have a low SD, while data that are spread away from the mean have a high SD.

4.2.3.2 Attitude towards speaking in Arabic varieties

Table 4.6.

Frequencies and percentages for attitude towards speaking three Arabic varieties

| The question asked | | (How well do you speak Classical Arabic) | | | |
|--------------------|---------|---|----------|-------------|-----------|
| Gender | f/p | Not at all | A little | Fairly well | Very well |
| Male | Freq. | 3 | 6 | 3 | 3 |
| | percent | 20.0 | 40.0 | 20.0 | 20.0 |
| Female | Freq. | 3 | 8 | 3 | 1 |
| | percent | 20.0 | 53.3 | 20.0 | 6.7 |
| The question asked | | (How well do you speak Standard Saudi Arabic) | | | |
| Male | Freq. | 3 | 6 | 3 | 3 |
| | percent | 20.0 | 40.0 | 20.0 | 20.0 |
| Female | Freq. | 0 | 2 | 7 | 6 |
| | percent | 0 | 13.3 | 46.7 | 40.0 |
| The question asked | | (How well do you speak common Saudi youth language) | | | |
| Male | Freq. | 1 | 2 | 4 | 8 |
| | percent | 6.7 | 13.3 | 26.7 | 53.3 |
| Female | Freq. | 0 | 2 | 2 | 11 |
| | percent | 0 | 13.3 | 13.3 | 73.3 |

In order to investigate the linguistic behavior of male and female students, participants were asked how well they speak each Arabic variety. Table 4.6 shows the frequencies and percentages for attitude towards speaking the three Arabic varieties. As can be seen, 40% of male students claim that they speak Classical Arabic fairly and very well, versus 27% of female students. On the other hand, 87% of female students state that they speak fairly and very well the Standard Saudi Arabic, compared to 40% of male students. Moreover, 86% of female students claim that they speak common Saudi youth language fairly and very well, while 80% of male students speak the same language variety. The results indicate that the proportions are fairly close by both genders in using common Saudi youth language. On the other hand, the proportions are different when it comes to

the use of the other two varieties by both genders. The difference in percentages indicates that male and female students vary in this regard.

4.2.3.3 Sentimental attitude towards Arabic varieties

Table 4.7.

Frequencies and percentages for sentimental attitudes towards Arabic varieties

| Gender | f/p | Proud | Ashamed | No particular feeling |
|--|---------|-------|---------|-----------------------|
| When I speak Classical Arabic, I feel... | | | | |
| Male | Freq. | 11 | 0 | 4 |
| | percent | 73.3 | 0 | 26.6 |
| Female | Freq. | 9 | 3 | 3 |
| | percent | 60 | 20 | 20 |
| When I speak Standard Saudi Arabic, I feel... | | | | |
| Male | Freq. | 5 | 1 | 9 |
| | Percent | 33.3 | 6.6 | 60 |
| Female | Freq. | 9 | 0 | 6 |
| | Percent | 60 | 0 | 40 |
| When I speak common Saudi youth language, I feel... | | | | |
| Male | Freq. | 2 | 7 | 6 |
| | Percent | 13.3 | 46.6 | 40 |
| Female | Freq. | 2 | 3 | 10 |
| | Percent | 13.3 | 20 | 66.6 |

To examine the exact feelings regarding Arabic varieties, the participants were asked about their feelings when they speak the three varieties. The frequencies and percentages of their answers are shown in Table 4.7. The responses indicate a strong sentimental value for Classical Arabic among the majority of male and female respondents, who report feeling proud when they speak Classical Arabic with a slightly higher percentage among male students (73% male; 60% female). Regarding the feelings towards the Standard Saudi Arabic, the results show that female students have a strong sentimental attachment towards Standard Saudi Arabic more than male students (33% male; 60%

female). For common Saudi youth language, the proportions of feeling proud were the same for both genders (13% male; 13% female).

Regarding the feeling of shame towards the three varieties, the results show that Classical Arabic was evaluated negatively by three female students, but by no males. The attitudes towards Classical Arabic was perhaps supported by male students due to its position as the high variety, while the female students recognised it as a complex language as described in 4.2.4. On the opposite, in the analysis of attitudes towards Standard Saudi Arabic, it was found that no females felt ashamed, although one male did. Perhaps Standard Saudi Arabic was evaluated positively by female students due to its practical communication value as described in 4.2.4. Regarding common Saudi youth language, the results show that seven male students have a feeling of shame as opposed to three female students. This result demonstrates that although the proportions of feeling proud were the same for both genders when speaking common Saudi youth language, there is a tendency for female adolescents to speak common Saudi youth language more often than male adolescents. This can be seen by comparing the answers of “feeling ashamed” by both genders towards the common Saudi youth language. This may be attributed to the young and feminine nature, as the girl prefers to use modern terms in order to feel that they belong to a trendy social group.

4.2.4 Language preferences and gender

The last section of the questionnaire includes open-ended questions, which aim to extract detailed responses from participants. Therefore, the researcher asked the participants two open-ended questions. The first question was, "*which language variety do you **like** the most, Classical Arabic, Standard Saudi Arabic, or common Saudi youth language? Why?*" On the other hand, it was worth asking which Arabic variety participants disliked. Thus, the second open-ended question was "*which language variety do you **dislike** the most, Classical Arabic, Standard Saudi Arabic or common Saudi youth language? Why?*" As mentioned earlier, the respondents consisted of 30 students, equally divided into 15 male and 15 female. The male students were named MS1, MS2, etc., while the female students were named FS1, FS2, etc.

Participants' responses to the first question were transcribed and coded under the following three themes: (1) religious value, (2) practical communication value, and (3) language beauty value. Religious value corresponds to using Classical Arabic as it is the language of the Holy Quran. The practical communication value relates to one of the Arabic varieties (Classical Arabic, Standard Saudi (local) Arabic, or common Saudi youth language) as an easier language variety of communication. The language beauty value relates to the perception that one of the three Arabic varieties are an aurally and linguistically appealing language variety. Consequently, the analysis focused on attitudes towards Arabic varieties based on the above three themes and on documenting issues raised by male and female adolescents that are relevant to language use. Table 4.10 demonstrates the difference in language preference between the participants of both genders.

Table 4.8.
Language preferences among male and female participants

| Variety | Theme | Male participants | | Female participants | |
|-----------------------------|-------------------------------|-------------------|---------|---------------------|---------|
| | | Frequency | percent | Frequency | Percent |
| Classical Arabic | Religious value | 5 | 33.3% | -- | -- |
| | Practical communication value | -- | -- | -- | -- |
| | Language beauty value | 1 | 6.6% | 6 | 40% |
| Standard Saudi Arabic | Religious value | -- | -- | -- | -- |
| | Practical communication value | 4 | 26.6% | 6 | 40% |
| | Language beauty value | -- | -- | 1 | 6.6% |
| Common Saudi youth language | Religious value | -- | -- | -- | -- |
| | Practical communication value | 5 | 33.3 % | 2 | 13.3% |
| | Language beauty value | -- | -- | -- | -- |

The results from Table 4.8 indicate that the majority of male students (40%) have a positive attitude towards Classical Arabic for its religious value and its beauty, as MS1 indicated, "*I like Classical Arabic because it is the language of the Quran*", and MS4 expressed that, "*Classical Arabic is the true Arabic, the language of the Holy Quran*". In contrast, 40% of female students pointed out different reasons for the preference of Classical Arabic. The reasons lie in language beauty value,

for example, FS2 said that, "*Classical Arabic is a beautiful language*". Further, FS6 stated that, "*Classical Arabic has a beautiful vocabulary*". Regarding Standard Saudi Arabic, 40% of the female respondents voted in favour of the Standard Saudi Arabic for practical communication reasons, as FS1 reported, "*I like to use Standard Saudi Arabic because it is prevalent in my environment and easy to pronounce*". Also, FS5 stated, "*I like to use Standard Saudi Arabic because I frequently use it*". However, 6.6% of female students preferred Standard Saudi Arabic due to its beauty. On the contrary, only 26.6% of male students expressed their preference for Standard Saudi Arabic for its practical communication value, as MS3 argued that, "*Standard Saudi Arabic is easy to pronounce*". Comparing the two genders with regards to the common Saudi youth language, the percentages showed that 33.3% of male students expressed their attitudes towards the common Saudi youth language for its practical communication. For example, MS7 stated that "*the style speech of youth language is uncomplicated*". On the other hand, only 13.3% of females share the same view as FS4 indicated that "*I like to use youth language because it has abbreviations that facilitate the pronunciation and communication*".

The researcher coded the responses to the second question into three themes: (1) complex, (2) moral dimension, and (3) lexical gap. Complex means that one of the three Arabic varieties is complex because it contains vocabulary that is difficult to comprehend and pronounce. The moral dimension theme refers to the common Saudi youth language which can contain vulgar expressions. Lexical gap is manifested in the lexical level, which means that one of the three Arabic varieties could be less expressive and is not able to convey the exact meaning. Table 4.9 elucidates the differences in linguistic preference between the male and female participants.

Table 4.9.
Differences in linguistic preferences among male and female participants

| Variety | Theme | Male participants | | Female participants | |
|-----------------------------|-----------------|-------------------|---------|---------------------|---------|
| | | Frequency | percent | Frequency | Percent |
| Classical Arabic | Complex | 2 | 13.3% | 5 | 33.3% |
| | Moral dimension | -- | -- | -- | -- |
| | Lexical gap | -- | -- | -- | -- |
| Standard Saudi Arabic | Complex | 4 | 26.6% | -- | -- |
| | Moral dimension | -- | -- | -- | -- |
| | Lexical gap | -- | -- | 2 | 13.3% |
| Common Saudi youth language | Complex | -- | -- | -- | -- |
| | Moral dimension | -- | -- | 8 | 53.3% |
| | Lexical gap | 9 | 60% | -- | -- |

As can be seen in Table 4.9, both genders have a predominantly negative attitude towards the common Saudi youth language, although for different reasons. More than half of male respondents (60%) dislike the common Saudi youth language for lexical gap reasons. For example, MS6 indicated that *"youth language lacks to give the exact meaning of my expression"*, and MS12 stated that *"not all people understand the vocabulary of youth language"*. In contrast, 53.3% of female respondents disliked the common Saudi youth language for a moral dimension. Thus, FS3 stated that *"youth language is morally inappropriate"* and FS8 indicated that *"using youth language makes us lose our identity"*. Interestingly, despite the negative attitudes expressed by most male and female students towards the common Saudi youth language, some adolescents like to use it, as indicated in Table 4.8.

Comparing male and female respondents' attitudes towards Classical Arabic, the findings show a decrease in the women's desire to use Classical Arabic because of its complexity (33.3% female students; 13.3% male students). Similar opinions were given by male and female participants, as MS5 stated that *"Classical Arabic is hard and complicated"* and FS6 marked that *"Classical Arabic has many grammars that could be hard to use"*. For the Standard Saudi Arabic, the results show that male students have a negative attitude towards the Standard Saudi Arabic more than female students (26.6% of men; 13.3% of women) with different views. For example, MS7 stated that

"the Standard Saudi Arabic is inflexible and some people don't understand some of its vocabulary", whereas FS6 stated that "it is inexpressive and does not reach the deep meaning".

4.2.5 Validity and reliability

4.2.5.1 Validity of the scale

Validity tests assess whether the scale's expressions provide appropriate measurements for the intended use of instruments. The degree to which two sets of data are related is measured by correlation. The Pearson Correlation is the most frequent statistician's measure of correlation. This correlation seeks to create a line of best fit through the data of two variables, and the Pearson correlation coefficient, r , shows how far apart all of these data points are from this line of best fit. The greater the correlation between two variables, the closer the Pearson correlation coefficient, r , is to +1 or -1, depending on whether the association is positive or negative. The value of r determines the strength of this association. The correlation is strong when r value is between 0.5 to 1.0 or -0.5 to -1.0, while it is medium when r value is between 0.3 to 0.5 or -0.3 to -0.5. The correlation is weak when r value is between 0.1 to 0.3 or -0.1 to -0.3. The item-test correlation is calculated between one item and the total score using SPSS. Pearson correlation between items and total score for Classical language (Section B, Part 1 in the questionnaire), were between 0.504 and 0.776, and all of them are significant values at alpha ($\alpha \leq 0.01$) as shown in Table 4.10. For Standard Arabic language (Section B, Part 2 in the questionnaire), Pearson correlation between items and total score were between 0.663 and 0.840, and all of them are significant at $\alpha \leq 0.01$. In addition, Pearson correlation between items for common Arabic language (Section B, Part 3 in the questionnaire) were between 0.624 and 0.860, with the same significance level and alpha value (See Table 4.10). Table 4.11 shows Pearson correlation between items and total score for all nine statements about the attitude towards knowledge of Arabic varieties. It ranged between 0.444 and 0.700 and all of them are significant at $\alpha \leq 0.01$ & 0.05.

Table 4.10.

Pearson correlation coefficient for gender differences in language use depending on situation

| Dimension | Item correlation | Dimension | Item correlation | Dimension | Item correlation |
|--|------------------|-----------------------|------------------|-----------------------------|------------------|
| Classical Arabic | 0.776** | Standard Saudi Arabic | 0.826** | Common Saudi youth language | 0.777** |
| | 0.601** | | 0.796** | | 0.860** |
| | 0.648** | | 0.840** | | 0.624** |
| | 0.504** | | 0.792** | | 0.696** |
| | 0.787** | | 0.759** | | 0.806** |
| | 0.566** | | 0.662** | | 0.769** |
| ** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed) | | | | | |

Table 4.11.

Pearson correlation coefficient for attitude towards knowledge of Arabic varieties

| Dimension | Item correlation |
|--|------------------|
| Attitude towards knowledge of Arabic varieties | 0.445* |
| | 0.700** |
| | 0.637** |
| | 0.577** |
| | 0.632** |
| | 0.608** |
| | 0.444* |
| | 0.655** |
| | 0.665** |
| ** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed) | |
| * Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed) | |

4.2.5.2 Reliability of the scale

According to George and Mallery (2003), reliability of the scale refers to the consistency of a measure. If we attain the same result repeatedly, the measure is considered reliable. The calculation

of the Cronbach's alpha coefficient is the most common approach used in research to test internal consistency. If this coefficient is ≥ 0.9 the internal consistency of the scale is high, $0.7 \leq \alpha < 0.9$ the scale has internal consistency, $0.6 \leq \alpha < 0.7$ the internal consistency of the scale is acceptable, $0.5 \leq \alpha < 0.6$ the internal consistency of the scale is weak, and $\alpha \leq 0.5$ the scale has no internal consistency. The reliability analysis (Cronbach's alpha) done by SPSS shows consistency results ranged between 0.72 and 0.87 (See Table 4.12), which implies that the scale has internal consistency.

Table 4.12.
Cronbach's alpha reliability coefficient

| Scale | No. of items | Cronbach's alpha |
|--|--------------|------------------|
| Classical Arabic | 6 | 0.72 |
| Standard Saudi Arabic | 6 | 0.87 |
| Common Saudi youth language | 6 | 0.85 |
| Attitude towards knowledge of Arabic varieties | 9 | 0.76 |

4.3 Qualitative data analysis results

Interviews were also conducted to seek deeper and more revealing data from participants. Therefore, this section offers an analysis of the data collected by semi-structured interviews which consisted of twelve students equally divided into six male and six females. (M1, M2... M6) refer to the male participants and (F1, F2... F6) refer to the female participants. The interview questions are classified into four parts based on their relation to the research questions as follows:

Part 1: The relationship between gender and language

1. Do you think that there is a difference between your language use and that of your brother/ sister?
2. Do you speak like other boys/ girls?

Part 2: The level of gender differences in using Arabic varieties

3. When you use Standard Saudi (local) Arabic, what are the differences between the way you speak and other girls/ boys, if any?
4. Do you think that boys and girls in secondary schools speak the same way?

Part 3: Students' attitude towards Arabic varieties

5. What language do you like speaking? Why?
6. What language you do not like speaking? Why?
7. Which language do you use when you speak with your friends? Why?
8. When you hear someone talking in Classical Arabic, what is your impression about this person?
9. When you hear someone talking in Saudi local Arabic, what is your impression about this person?
10. When you hear someone talking in Saudi youth language, what is your impression about this person?

Part 4: Factors influencing language use

11. Is there any factor which determines your language variety? If yes, how?
12. In Saudi society, the education is gender-segregated, do you think that it contributes to the differences in language use of male and female students?

The researcher used a descriptive analysis based on coding technique to determine the main themes and ideas pertaining to the research questions. After a detailed inspection, the researcher classified the participants' responses to the 12 questions into four themes which were analysed thoroughly, comparing the responses of the two genders in the following sections.

4.3.1 The relationship between gender and language

By examining the interviewees' responses to questions of part one, the researcher found that both genders in the two groups agreed that there is a difference in the way of speaking among males and females. The following is an excerpt of their responses to the aforementioned questions: M1 reported that *“there is certainly a difference between the expressions I use when talking to my brother than when I'm talking with my sister”* and M4 stated that *“the difference is in the style”*. Additionally, F1 mentioned, *“I don't have sisters, but I notice that I use some expressions with my friends and they do not use it because I am influenced by my brothers”* and F6 noted that *“the terms used by our families with the male are different from those used with the female because our genders are different”*. This suggests that gender plays a role in terms of language use. Moreover, these examples confirm that the respondents are aware that their language behaviour is determined by gender, as specified above by F6 *“because our genders are different”*.

4.3.2 The level of gender differences in using Arabic varieties

By analysing the interviewees' responses to the second part of the interview questions, the researcher discovered that there are no significant differences between male and female in using Saudi local Arabic, instead, observing that the differences lie solely in the choice of idioms. This became clear when the researcher asked, *“when you use Saudi local Arabic, what are the differences between the way you speak and other girls/boys, if any?”* The participants provided several answers to these questions, such as M1 who said *“there is no big difference because basically it is the same language, but the choice of words will be different”* and M3 indicated that *“some idiomatic expressions are more often used by female than male and vice versa”*, supporting what F1 declared, *“there is a difference in the style because females use expressions different from male speakers”*. Further, F5 voiced, *“because the gender is different, there are naturally different expressions. It is not a significant difference; it is only the difference of style”*. This is an indication that there are no significant differences between male and female speakers in using Saudi local Arabic as a result of its customary use in Saudi society, which leads to differences between genders in using the other two varieties – Classical Arabic and Saudi youth language.

The responses to other questions – “*do you think that boys and girls in secondary schools speak the same way?*” – confirm this result as M1 said “*The way in speaking Saudi local Arabic may be very similar, the difference could be in the choice of words*”. F2’s statement of “*there is a difference but a simple one in the choice of vocabulary*” additionally assists this argument.

4.3.3 Students’ attitudes towards Arabic varieties

To investigate the attitude towards Arabic varieties, the researcher asked, “*What language do you like/ dislike speaking? Why?*” – which was featured in the questionnaire and the interview as well to reveal more detailed answers and determine whether there was a marked difference in language use between the genders and their perceptions towards language variation.

By taking the majority of the answers, five out of six male interviewees reported that they like speaking Saudi local Arabic, and all the female interviewees indicated the same preference. For example, M4 said, “*I like to speak Saudi local Arabic because we frequently use it and it has been passed on from one generation to the next*” and M5 mentioned “*I like to speak Saudi local Arabic because it is easy and widely understandable*”. Additionally, F2 said, “*I use Saudi local Arabic because it is easy and known by all*” and F4 indicated that “*I like Saudi local Arabic because most people use it*”. This is not surprising due to its extensive use in Saudi society for its simplicity and practicality in the daily life compared to the other two varieties.

In responses to the other question – “*What language do you not like speaking? Why?*” – three males reported that they don’t like speaking Classical Arabic, with M4 stating, “*Classical Arabic is the least commonly spoken by me because I’m not used to it*”, and M5 reported, “*I don’t like to use Classical Arabic because it contains some difficult words which aren’t easily understandable*”. The other three males reported that they don’t like Saudi youth language. For example, M1 said, “*I don’t like Saudi youth language because it isn’t listed in the Arabic language curriculum*”. Adding to this, M2 said, “*I don’t like to speak Saudi youth language because it contains some expressions that could be embarrassing when talking to older people, because they wouldn’t understand it, so I prefer to speak a language that is understandable by both young and old people*”. On the contrary, all the female participants responded that they do not like Classical

Arabic. F3 declared, “*I do not like speaking Classical Arabic because I don’t understand it*”. Out of the six, one also indicated that she doesn’t like to use Saudi youth language. These different views between males and females suggest that male students use Classical Arabic more than females. In contrast, female students use Saudi youth language more.

By analysing the participants’ answers to the questions of the next part – *Why* – which asks them to provide the reasons for choosing the language variety they opt for, the researcher found interesting information regarding the students’ attitudes towards the three Arabic varieties. Therefore, the following sub-sections provide details of the attitudes that male and female speakers exhibit towards Classical Arabic, Saudi local Arabic, and Saudi youth language. Further, the tables below provide a comparative summary of male and female students’ attitudes as reported in the interviews.

4.3.3.1 Attitude towards using Classical Arabic

The participants reported various attitudes towards Classical Arabic, of which the most frequently cited are – (1) Classical Arabic is used for formal communication; (2) Classical Arabic is difficult in terms of grammar and speaking; (3) using Classical Arabic may expose the adolescents to bullying. Table 4.13 summarises the frequently reported attitudes and compares the results from both genders.

Table 4.13.
Students’ attitude towards Classical Arabic

| Attitude | Male | Female |
|---|------|--------|
| Classical Arabic is formal | 1 | 2 |
| Classical Arabic is difficult | 2 | 3 |
| Classical Arabic may expose the adolescents to bullying | 3 | 1 |

As depicted in Table 4.13, the majority of male interviewees – three out of six – indicated that using Classical Arabic may expose the adolescents to bullying. For example, M2 said, “*In our*

group, no one speaks in Classical Arabic, and if I use it, people may regard me as a pretender”. Additionally, M3 reported, “I think that in our age group, using Classical Arabic may expose one to bullying”. In contrast, three out of six female participants reported different attitudes towards Classical Arabic. They described it as a “serious language” with strict grammatical rules and diacritics, rendering it difficult to use in daily life. The following quotes represent this view of female participants: F1 – “I do not like Classical language as I feel I am serious”; F2 – “I do not like Classical Arabic because it is difficult and contains strange idioms which I don’t understand”. It is difficult to explain the reason for the attitude of the female speakers. It may be explained by their lack of mastery of Classical Arabic.

4.3.3.2 Attitude towards using Saudi local Arabic

Regarding the attitudes towards Saudi local Arabic, all the respondents indicated that it is ordinary and easily comprehensible by all ages. This is clear in their answers in describing Saudi local Arabic as a habit and a language understandable by both young and old people. For instance, M3 expressed, “I like Saudi local Arabic because it is the language used by all members of society, young and old” and M5 stated, “I like to speak Saudi local Arabic because it is easy and widely understandable”. Moreover, F2 reported that “I use Saudi local Arabic because it is easy and known by all” and F3 disclosed, “I like to speak Saudi local Arabic because it is comfortable, and people of all ages can understand it”. This high positive attitude towards Saudi local Arabic by all 12 respondents suggests two factors influencing language use: first, the impact of the dominant language in society and second, the impact of age. Both of these factors are described in more detail in Section 4.3.4.

4.3.3.3 Attitude towards using Saudi youth language

Male and female participants provided different attitudes regarding the use of Saudi youth language: (1) Saudi youth language is informal; (2) Saudi youth language is a secret variety of communication; (3) Saudi youth language is cool, stylish, and trendy. Table 4.14 below presents a comparative summary of male and female students’ attitudes regarding using Saudi youth language as discussed in the interviews.

Table 4.14.*Students' attitude towards Saudi youth language*

| Attitude | Male | Female |
|---|------|--------|
| Saudi youth language is informal | 1 | 0 |
| Saudi youth language is cool, stylish, and trendy | 1 | 4 |
| Saudi youth language is a secret variety of communication | 4 | 2 |

The findings illustrated that the majority of male participants described Saudi youth language as a secret variety of communication among male peers. For example, M1 said, “*Saudi youth language has an advantage that you could use it as a secret code that no one understands. In fact, each student group has their own special idioms*”. M5 furthered this statement, reporting that “*I use Saudi youth language if I want to tell a secret to my friend*”. However, a majority of the female participants described Saudi youth language as trendy and stylish. For example, F2 said, “*I use Saudi youth language because some of its expressions are modern, so I use it to cope up with fashion trends but within the moral limits*” and F5 said, “*I use Saudi youth language because it is cool, and I like to look cool. Actually, young girls want to look cool and stylish*”.

Moreover, there is an overwhelming agreement among all male and female participants on using Saudi youth language with their peers of the same gender to assist in expressing their solidarity to their friends' linguistic variety. They also agreed that they don't use Saudi youth language with elderly people because it contains vocabulary that they don't understand. This becomes apparent when the researcher asked “*Which language do you use when you speak with your friends? Why?*” and the interviewees provided answers as follows: M2 revealed, “*I use Saudi youth language with my friends only because it does not seem acceptable to use it with adult people*” and F6 divulged, “*I use Saudi youth language, I will use it with my friends and in a polite manner. I won't use it with elderly people because they do not accept it as they are not familiar with it*”. These results indicate that Saudi youth language is a form of expression of solidarity among the youth.

4.3.3.4 Impressions towards Arabic varieties

In the other interview questions, which asked about first impressions towards the three Arabic varieties, all male interviewees expressed positive attitudes towards Classical Arabic, elaborating that when they hear someone talking in Classical Arabic, their impression of the person is immediately good, as being a speaker of Classical Arabic indicates his/her rich knowledge of the language which designates that s/he is an educated and eloquent person. For example, M1 said, “*I will certainly respect him because he is educated person and knows how important Classical Arabic is*”. Comparatively, one female interviewee exhibited a negative attitude towards Classical Arabic as she mentioned that in a negative way during the interview “*I will be surprised when I hear someone talking in Classical Arabic*”.

Regarding Saudi local Arabic, interviewees of both genders agreed in that they do not have negative attitudes towards Saudi local Arabic, and they attested that it is normal to hear someone talking in Saudi local Arabic. For instance, M3 indicated that “*It is normal and won't even attract any attention*” and F1 noted, “*I have no certain impression. It is normal*”. On the other hand, regarding Saudi youth language, the majority of male and female interviewees reported that it is usual to hear Saudi youth language among peers. For example, M2 said “*If the expressions used are inappropriate, my impression will be that the speaker lacks social awareness*”. In addition, F3 reported that “*It's normal if the expression is proper*”. However, two females expressed their positive impression to the speaker of Saudi youth language as they described him as a civilized and socialised person. For example, F2 said that “*my impression about the speaker of Saudi youth language is that he is open-minded and a socialised person*”. One of the problems of this type of statement is the meaning that the participant attributes to the term ‘socialised’.

By exploring the attitudes mentioned above of male and female participants towards language variation and use, the researcher found that there are specific factors impacting language use. Therefore, the following section details how language is altered between the two genders and the factors affecting this change.

4.3.4 Factors influencing language use

The fourth part of the interview questions aimed to explore the factors influencing language use by male as opposed to female adolescents. In examining the participants' answers to the question “*Is there any factor which determines your language variety? If yes, how?*”, the researcher found that the results obtained on their use of Classical Arabic, Saudi local Arabic, and Saudi youth language are related to the attitudes towards the three varieties reported in the previous section. Accordingly, the researcher classified the factors affecting language use based on three issues: (1) they depend on the age of the interlocutor; (2) they depend on the situation; (3) they depend on the language proficiency. These factors are explained in more detail in the following sections.

4.3.4.1 Depends on the age of interlocutor

One of the most common responses by male and female participants is that the use of each variety – Classical Arabic, Saudi local Arabic, and Saudi youth language – depends highly on the age of the other interlocutor. They explained that they use Classical Arabic and Saudi local Arabic with older people and adults. However, they use Saudi youth language with their friends and relatives within their age group. This suggestion seems to be interrelated with sub-section 4.3.3.3, exemplified by the following quotes: M3 said, “*using the language depends on the age group. I wouldn't use Classical Arabic with young people*” whereas F1 indicated, “*it depends on the age of person with whom I speak. If I speak to an elderly person, I use local Arabic, and if to a person of my age, I use youth language*”.

4.3.4.2 Depends on the situation

The majority of the participants highlighted that the use of each language variety is dependent on the situation and topic involved in the interaction. For example, Classical Arabic is used in formal settings and religious contexts, Saudi local Arabic in daily interactions, and Saudi youth language in informal settings, especially in gatherings with friends. M6 further explains this, “*Each language variety is suitable for certain people and situations*” and F3 adds, “*It depends on the situation, for instance, I use local Arabic with my family. However, I use Classical Arabic at school and youth language with my friends*”.

4.3.4.3 Depends on the language proficiency

As reported earlier, Classical Arabic requires knowledge and proficiency due to its grammatical rules. Therefore, some adolescents have difficulty in speaking Classical Arabic, using it only in certain situations and with particular people which leads to their frequent use of the other two varieties – Saudi local Arabic and Saudi youth language. For instance, M5 revealed, “*Classical Arabic contains some difficult words which aren’t easily understandable*”. Additionally, F6 said, “*Classical Arabic is used in a certain time and in the presence of educated ones*”. This further suggests the impact of the educational level of the adolescents as well as their interlocutors on language use.

4.3.4.4 Gender segregation

To explore the role of gender segregation as an influence on language use of males as opposed to females, the researcher asked the question – “*Do you think gender segregation in education contributes to the differences in language use of male and female students?*” The responses reveal that gender segregation in schools indeed contributes to the gender language difference to a certain degree due to the presence of gender mixing in other places. To this question, M3 stated, “*May be before but not now because there are alternatives such as social media, it brought society together*”. Additionally, F2 declared, “*It can contribute to 20% because there is gender mixing in other places*”. This suggests that the change of Saudi culture, which allows the mixing between genders in some places, affects the convergence of the language used between the two genders. Thus, the semi-structured interviews provided valuable insights into the gender differences in language use and the attitudes between the two genders towards Arabic varieties.

4.4 Discussion of findings

This section presents an integrated discussion of the quantitative and qualitative findings, which are discussed under the following headings. These represent the objectives of the research:

- The relationship between gender and language use
- The relationship between gender and language attitude
- Influential factors on students' attitude towards Arabic language varieties

4.4.1 *The relationship between gender and language use*

To address the link between gender and language use, the Eta-squared test was used. This test is a measure of effect size that determines how strong a relationship between two variables is. The Eta-squared test calculation is done by SPSS software based on data presented in Tables 4.2, 4.3, and 4.4. The result indicates a slight association between gender and language use ($\eta^2 = 0.302$), which means that 30% of total language use is based on gender. In another meaning, gender variable has a rather low influence on language use variable. This suggests that other major factors – besides gender – may affect language use. This observation is consistent with the qualitative results. Table 4.15 indicates the correlation between gender and language use.

Table 4.15.

The correlation between gender and language use

| Correlation | | | Value |
|--|-----|-------------------------|--------|
| Nominal by Interval | Eta | Gender and language use | 0.302* |
| * Eta-squared value range from zero, which means no association, to one which means perfect or strong association. | | | |

To provide deeper understanding regarding the relationship between gender and language use, Figures 4.5 and 4.6 show the current level of gender differences in the language use in the case of Classical Arabic, Saudi local Arabic and Saudi youth language based on different situations.

Figure 4.5
Mean for male participants in different situations

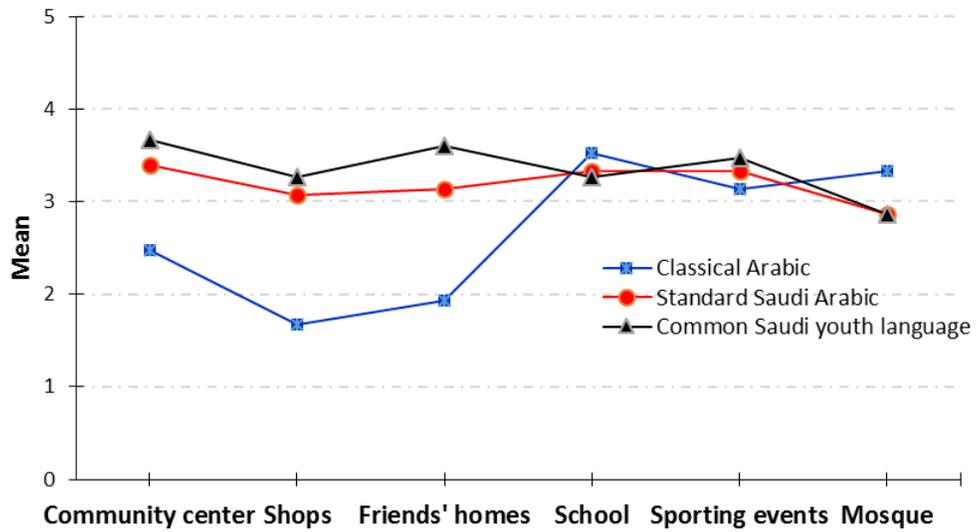
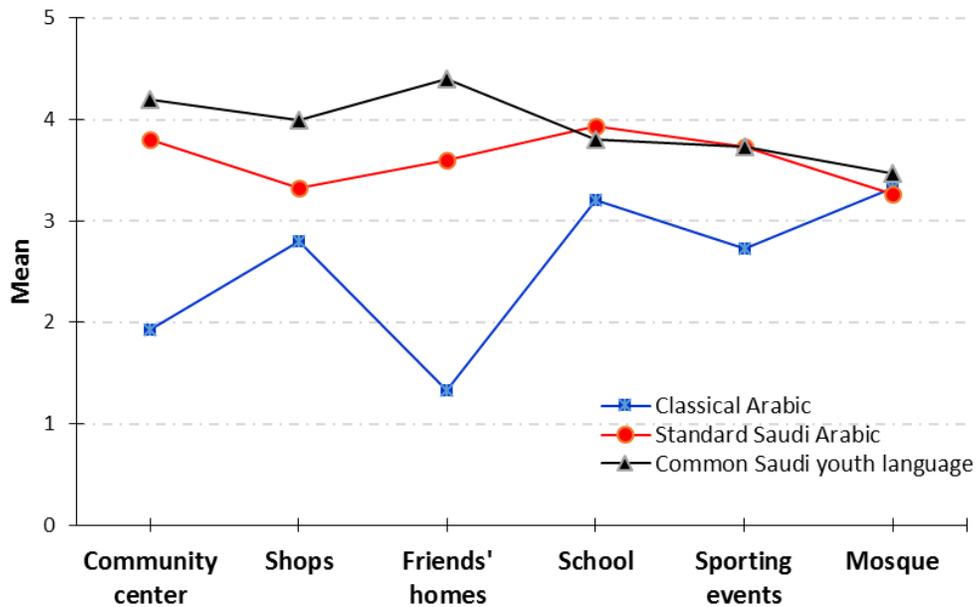


Figure 4.6
Mean for female participants in different situations



The findings indicate a convergence between male and female participants in their use of Saudi local Arabic. This result may be explained by the fact of this dialect's position as the participants' mother dialect. That is, Saudi local Arabic is considered a mother dialect for Saudi people – one acquired before Classical Arabic. According to Gass and Selinker (2008), mother dialect is the language that a person acquires from his/her birth until the age of puberty.

Generally, an inverse relationship was observed between the use of Classical Arabic and Saudi youth language. For example, an extensive use of Saudi youth language resulted in a reduction in using Classical Arabic. This inverse relationship might be explained by the fact that Classical Arabic and Saudi youth language represent two varieties of the same language; hence, extensive use of one variety results in the varying use of the other. This linguistic disparity is common in a diglossic situation. In fact, Classical Arabic and Saudi youth language are two varieties on opposite sides of the formality spectrum. In formal situation such as school, the Classical Arabic language is more often used than the youth language. On the contrary, in informal situation, for example, friends' homes, the youth language is more used than the Classical Arabic.

As can be seen in Figure 1, the indicator of male observation of Classical Arabic is higher than that of female use in most situations. This result is expected, since many male participants' fathers have professional working environments, which reflects on their sons. In reality, boys attempt to resemble their fathers in terms of speech and social traits, while girls attempt to be like their mothers. This shows that the first language variety learned, and the parents' work environments play a role in the gender differences in language use.

Another vital finding of this research is that the indicator of female use of Saudi youth language is higher than that of male use in most situations. This may be attributed to the dramatic change taking place in the country in terms of women's equality at work. Saudi Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman fostered initiatives to diversify the economy of the country and change societal rules as part of the Vision 2030 plan – it is the vision of the present for future. One of the plan's aims is to increase employment opportunities for women, which is a goal that has now been achieved by providing many jobs for Saudi women as police officers, cashiers, and waitresses. In addition,

women are participating in many social activities such as driving and going to football stadiums. This was not the case a decade ago in terms of the limited work for women, which was confined to the education field. Therefore, the changeable tendency in language use among male and female is to be expected due to the increased participation women at work and social activities.

Moreover, extensive use of social media and networking plays an important role in this distinction. A related study by Aldhali (2019) shows gender differences in Saudi Arabic question formation on Twitter. The results show that there is sociolinguistic variation in forming questions between male and female students at Aljouf University. He found that female students are more flexible in using vocative phrases. This is in line with our findings, showing that there is sociolinguistic variation in language use between male and female students at public secondary schools in Saudi Arabia.

This finding is inconsistent with previous research on language and gender, which repeatedly found that females tend to use prestigious and standard forms of language. The discrepancy in findings may be due to the complexity of the relationship between language and gender which arises from the overlapping and interdependency of many social and cultural factors. In other words, language of men and women depends on society, socialization and context. In comparison with a survey method employed by most researchers in this domain, the current study used the mixed-method design that is based on questionnaires and interviews. These two approaches may contribute to better detecting the nuances in language use between the two groups.

Based on the data obtained from the questionnaire and interviews, the participants' language use was influenced by several attitudes that distinguished the use of each language variety. Subsequently, the relationship between gender and language attitude is explained in the following section.

4.4.2 The relationship between gender and language attitude

To investigate the relationship between gender and language attitude, the Eta-squared test was used. The Eta-squared test is a measure of effect size that determines how strong a relationship between two variables is. The Eta-squared test calculation is done by SPSS software based on data presented in Tables 4.5, 4.6, and 4.7. The result indicates that the correlation between gender and

language attitudes is 0.314, meaning 31% of the total language attitudes are based on gender. In another meaning, gender variable has 31% effect on language attitude variable Table 4.16 shows this correlation between gender and language attitude.

Table 4.16.
The correlation between gender and language attitude

| Correlation | | | Value |
|--|-----|-------------------------------|--------|
| Nominal by Interval | Eta | Gender and language attitudes | 0.314* |
| * Eta-squared value range from zero, which means no association, to one which means perfect or strong association. | | | |

To obtain accurate findings, the students' attitude towards Arabic varieties was also examined. The following sub-sections discuss the results related to the Classical Arabic, Saudi local Arabic and Saudi youth language, respectively.

4.4.2.1 The attitude towards Classical Arabic

The data obtained from the questionnaire revealed that both genders appreciate Classical Arabic and feel proud of it. This is a clear indicator of their positive attitudes towards Classical Arabic. As indicated by the open-ended questions, students' attitudes were positively influenced by religious and linguistic factors. The participants stated their belief in the importance of Classical Arabic as it is the language of the Holy Quran. This finding is consistent with that of Saidat (2010) who reported that religious factors were a significant influence on the positive attitude towards Classical Arabic.

Additionally, the beauty of the language was specified as one of the linguistic factors that increased the participants' positive attitude towards Classical Arabic. The participants tend to use Classical Arabic in poetry as it is the most beautiful language used in the literature. The relationship between Classical Arabic and language beauty has also been found in other studies; for example, in the

Iraqi context, Murad (2007) found that the beauty of language was one of the reasons for the widespread tendency to prefer Classical Arabic, especially among educated people. In summation, these two factors – religious and linguistic – may explain the positive attitude towards Classical Arabic. However, although the participants believed in the importance of Classical Arabic, the findings of the interviews show that their actual use of Classical Arabic was less than their use of Saudi local Arabic and Saudi youth language. This indicates that the participants' admiration of Classical Arabic and their actual language use were not always in harmony. In other words, the three aspects of attitude – knowledge, speaking and sentiment – might not coincide with each other.

Another vital finding obtained from the qualitative data is that male and female respondents have negative attitudes towards Classical Arabic for two different reasons. Most of the male participants agreed that the use of Classical Arabic among their peers may expose them to derision. A possible explanation for this might be that Classical Arabic is not used widely among the youth, while it may be used among adults. This finding was also reported by Saidat (2003) who stated that there is a belief that people who speak Classical Arabic are more prone to derision.

On the other hand, the difficulty in using Classical Arabic accurately can be seen as one of the linguistic factors behind the negative attitude towards Classical Arabic among female adolescents. As they reported in the interview, they do not prefer to use Classical Arabic due to its complexity. In fact, there is a neglect for using Classical Arabic among females. This may be due to the conservative social milieu in which women have lived over the last decade, as well as the paucity of language activities available to them. Thus, they might not have enough competence and confidence to use Classical Arabic. These religious, linguistic and social factors could possibly explain the different attitudes towards Classical Arabic between male and female adolescents.

4.4.2.2 The attitude towards Saudi local Arabic

Although male participants were neutral in their response to the questionnaire statement about their attitude towards knowledge of Saudi local Arabic (see Table 4.5), the interview responses showed their extensive actual use of it. This finding indicates a gap between the male participants'

knowledge and their language behaviour; that is, the attitude aspects of knowledge and speaking do not co-exist in this regard. However, in general, the findings indicated the extensive use of Saudi local Arabic in social interactions by both genders. The participants reported that they used Saudi local Arabic for its simplicity. This perception may be understood by the fact that they feel more competent in the use of Saudi local Arabic as they described it as their “*habitual language*”. Consequently, the linguistic simplicity was pointed out as a practical communication value driving the participants’ favourable attitude towards Saudi local Arabic.

4.4.2.3 The attitude towards Saudi youth language

The results revealed by quantitative and qualitative methods indicated that male and female adolescents’ attitudes towards Saudi youth language were divided into positive and negative attitudes. The positive attitudes towards Saudi youth language were motivated by social and linguistic factors. With regard to social factors, one of the unexpected findings of this study outlined by the male participants in the interviews was their recognition that Saudi youth language serves as a secret variety of communication among peers. In contrast, coping with modern linguistic usage was pointed out as one of the linguistic factors behind the favorable attitude towards Saudi youth language by female participants, as they described it as trendy and stylish. On the negative side, most participants agreed that it is unacceptable to use Saudi youth language with elderly people because it contains vocabulary that they don’t understand.

These results indicate that Saudi youth language is a form of expression which engenders solidarity among the youth. Specifically, adolescent males use it as a secret code to communicate with peers and to avoid criticism from older people who often don't understand this variety due to generational differences. Meanwhile, adolescent females use this variety to feel a sense of belonging within a trendy, cool and stylish social group. This signifies a preference for a speaking style that defines their young and feminine nature.

Thus, with respect to the relationship between gender and language attitude, the above findings revealed that there was a difference in the attitudes of adolescent males and females towards Saudi Arabic varieties based on social and linguistic factors. Based on quantitative and qualitative data, the inconsistent attitude among the participants shows how attitudes are a complex phenomenon

that cannot simply be separated into positive or negative attitudes without a deeper understanding of social and cultural changes. Accordingly, the following section shows how language is altered between the two genders due to specific factors.

4.4.3 Influential factors on students' attitude towards Arabic language varieties

Based on the quantitative and qualitative data, the researcher found that there are influential factors supporting the attitude towards each language variety. These include the interlocutor's age, situation, language proficiency and gender segregation. The following sub-sections discuss these factors, respectively.

4.4.3.1 The age of interlocutor

The results of this research support the idea that the interlocutor's age appears to be a significant factor for language choice. The majority of male and female participants were found to use Classical Arabic, Saudi local Arabic and Saudi youth language based on the interlocutor's age, which is consistent with the qualitative results. They explained that they use Classical Arabic and Saudi local Arabic with older people and adults and the Saudi youth language with friends and relatives within their age group. This result seems to be interrelated with that discussed in sub-section 4.4.2.3.

4.4.3.2 Situation

A common view among male and female interviewees was that the use of Arabic varieties is based on the circumstances of communication. For example, the participants seemed to have a perception that Classical Arabic should not be used in regular communication. There are specific situations for its use, such as formal settings, religious discourse and literature. On the other hand, Saudi local Arabic is the dominant variety in social interactions. It is the variety used habitually to communicate with other people in daily life. Regarding Saudi youth language, there was an agreement among the participants that they use it in informal settings, especially with their peers. These views were observed in some items of the questionnaire as well. In fact, this finding confirms how young people adhere to the language variation and communication style within their speech community.

4.4.3.3 Language proficiency

As demonstrated previously, Classical Arabic requires knowledge and proficiency due to its grammatical rules, accounting for its association with high linguistic capability. The findings of the interviews show that Classical Arabic was commonly perceived as the mark of an educated person. This is understandable due to this variety's position as a high speech variety among educated people. This finding indicates the impact of one's educational level on language use and supports the work of other studies linking educational level with language use. One of these studies was by Murad (2007) who researched the impact of education level on the attitudes towards Classical and colloquial Arabic in Iraq. The study concluded that there was a significant relationship between people's education level and their attitudes towards the two varieties of Arabic. Individuals with higher level of education favoured Classical Arabic above Iraqi Arabic.

4.4.3.4 Gender segregation

The findings indicate that gender segregation in schools contributes to the differences in language use to a small degree due to the presence of gender mixing in other places. The Saudi society has been undergoing rapid developments recently, which have enabled a mixing between the genders in most places. The issue of gender segregation is no longer the fundamental issue in Saudi society. The government ended gender segregation in many places such as restaurants, banks, music festivals and professional conferences. This makes the use of language variety more liable to change between both genders.

Another alternative explanation of the study's findings is that social media is considered a significant factor that affects language use. As mentioned earlier, M3 stated, "*May be before but not now because there are alternatives such as social media, it brought society together*". In the Saudi context, social media has played a considerable role in the different use of Arabic varieties. The impact of social media on language use can be seen from two different perspectives. First, social media contributes to the convergence of language use between genders. Second, social media assists in the spread of the Saudi youth language among adolescents, regardless of their gender. This suggests that the spread of social media in Saudi society has led to the emergence of a common language between men and women. According to Atiyah (2018), the current Arabic media has a great impact on language variation – not only via speech but also through writing.

4.5 Conclusion

The data analysis from quantitative and qualitative methods has been presented in this chapter. Tables and figures were utilized to represent the responses of the participants. The researcher has also presented the statistics in a narrative format. The findings of the questionnaires and interviews are interpreted in more detail in the discussion section. By collating quantitative and qualitative data, we have been able to show that there are slight differences between male and female adolescents in their language use of Arabic varieties. However, females exhibited more positive attitudes toward using Saudi youth language compared to males. Thereafter, the researcher discussed the students' attitude towards Arabic varieties and factors influencing language use. The findings indicate that other major factors, aside from gender, have a critical influence in language use. These factors include the interlocutor's age, situation, and language proficiency, as well as gender segregation. In addition, this study provided evidence of new attitudes towards Classical Arabic, Saudi local Arabic and Saudi youth language, which arise from many overlapping linguistic, social and contextual factors. The next chapter includes the conclusion, contributions to the literature, implications, and limitations, as well as the researcher's recommendations for future studies.

Chapter 5: Conclusion and Recommendations

5.1 Introduction

This chapter provides an overview of the study that I have conducted and summarises the main findings and conclusions that are drawn from this research. In addition, the study's limitations as well as recommendations and directions for future work are presented.

5.2 Overview of the study

There exists a complex relationship between language and gender that takes into account cultural and contextual factors. This link has been studied in a sociolinguistic context characterised by diglossia. Diglossia is characterised by the coexistence of two or more varieties of the same language throughout a speech community where one variety is the literary or prestige dialect, and the other is a common dialect spoken by most of the population. In Saudi Arabia, Classical Arabic is the prestigious language, and Saudi Arabic has an inferior status. Therefore, this research examines the extent to which diglossia impacts the relationship between language and gender.

To lay the conceptual basis for the research and indicate areas that need further examination, a review of some of the research which can help to understand the relationship between language and gender has been conducted. For the empirical part of the study, an integrated approach—based on a mixed-methods design—was chosen to obtain answers to the research questions. The researcher conducted a quantitative analysis of 30 male and female students and a qualitative analysis of 12 interviewees from two public secondary schools in Taif, Saudi Arabia. The reason for selecting a mixed-methods approach is that the combination of questionnaire and interviews in a single study adds accuracy and depth to any investigation (Stake, 1995). Table 5.1 below shows the research questions and the methods used to answer them.

Table 5.1.

Research questions and methods

| Research questions | Method used to answer the question |
|--|--|
| Is there a link between gender and language use and, consequently, language attitudes among male and female students in Saudi Arabia? | Questionnaire |
| What is the current level of gender differences in using Arabic varieties in a gender-segregated education environment? | Questionnaire + Semi-structured interviews |
| How does the relationship between language and gender impact the attitude of male and female adolescent students towards Arabic varieties? | Semi-structured interviews |

The research questions were conceived to reflect the research objectives. Hence, the first question attempts to examine whether there is a link between gender and language use as well as language attitudes among male and female adolescent students in Saudi Arabia. The second question aims to describe some of the differences, if any, in the language use between male and female adolescents. The last question of the study is directed at understanding the factors behind the attitudes of the participants towards the use of Classical Arabic, Saudi local Arabic and Saudi youth language. At the end of the analysis, the researcher presents an integrated discussion of the quantitative and qualitative findings and summarises the findings that answered the research questions in specific sections. These sections are devoted to the relationship between gender and language use, gender and language attitude and influential factors affecting students' attitude towards Arabic language varieties as mentioned in Section 4.4. The main findings of this study will be discussed in the next section and will be linked with the theoretical lenses used to understand the phenomenon under investigation.

5.3 Main findings

One of the major aims of the study is to explore the influence of gender on language use and language attitudes by examining the linguistic choices of male and female adolescents. The study's most important finding is that language use and language attitudes are strongly influenced by the interlocutor's age, situation, and language proficiency. Gender segregation is considered as a minor factor affecting language use as highlighted in Section 4.4.3. This finding is different from other results suggested by previous studies (Holmes & Meyerhoff, 2008; Trudgill, 1972) that reveal that gender greatly affects language use. In essence, these studies show the differences between men's and women's language particularly with regard to syntax, semantics, morphology, and pronunciation. However, the findings of this study demonstrate that gender is considered as a secondary factor affecting language use as the other factors mentioned above play an important role in this regard. While the current study seems to provide enough evidence for the rejection of the simple and direct link between language and gender in the very specific case of language use among adolescents in one secondary school in Saudi Arabia, what has been found is more consistent with the study by Tse and Hyland (2006). The researchers compare the use of metadiscourse resources based on male and female academics in a corpus of 84 academic book reviews in three disciplines, namely sociology, philosophy, and biology. Their study found that male and female reviewers shared more similarities than differences, and while they argue that gender is an important factor in determining specialisation variation, it does not seem to be a major factor affecting the writers' choice of metadiscourse as these choices are heavily influenced by specialisation considerations. According to them, "The ways men and women use a language are not determined by their gender but constructed, negotiated, and transformed through social practices informed by particular social settings, relations of power, and participation in disciplinary discourses" (p.15). While the main research finding is itself critical, it is at least informative from a methodological perspective. It does confirm the inadequacy of research via questionnaires to understand the relationship between language and gender. It must be underlined that qualitative observations regarding language practice were considered when the research was being conceived. However, the sanitary conditions due to the COVID-19 did not allow this part of the research to be carried out.

The second important finding of the study is that there are minor gender differences in language: female adolescents demonstrate a more positive attitude towards using Saudi youth language compared with their male counterparts. This outcome may be related to the change of societal rules taking place in the country in terms of women's progress towards equality at work. For example, women can now work as waitresses, police officers, and cashiers. Additionally, the freer social mobility of women leads to greater participation in social activities, such as visiting football stadiums, cinemas and musical theatres, which may contribute to that difference. Another possible explanation is that the extensive use of social media affects the convergence of the language used between the two genders. Accordingly, the researcher argues that the dramatic change of Saudi society can help to explain the distinctive use of Saudi youth language by female adolescents. This rapid socio-cultural change indicates that there is an opportunity for more research into what is going on in terms of language use among adolescents in Saudi Arabia, which can be directly explained by the finding of Myers and Tan (2002) that "the culture is something that is interpreted and re-interpreted, and constantly produced and reproduced in social relations" (p. 10).

Regarding language use, the study shows that both male and female adolescents overwhelmingly use Saudi local Arabic. This is expected as it is the dominant variety in social interactions, while the use of Classical Arabic is rare and limited to specific situations—formal settings, religious discourse, and literature. With regard to gender and language attitude, the findings demonstrate complex attitudes. When examining the participants' answers to the open-ended question: "*Which language variety do you like the most – Classical Arabic, Saudi local Arabic, or Saudi youth language? Why?*", the researcher found that most participants believe that Classical Arabic is important because of its religious value. M1 indicates, "*I like Classical Arabic because it is the language of the Quran*", and F3 expresses that "*Classical Arabic is a beautiful language and the language of the Holy Quran*". In contrast, the interview findings show that the attitudes towards Classical Arabic may be negative due to its impact on social attractiveness/acceptance among peers. In some cases, using Classical Arabic may expose adolescents to bullying. For instance, M2 indicates, "*In our group, no one speaks in Classical Arabic, and if I use it, people may regard me as a pretender*". Additionally, F4 expresses that "*using Classical Arabic among my friends may expose me to bullying*". This study suggests that there is a discrepancy between the participants' attitude towards learning Classical Arabic and their actual usage of the language. Learning a

language that is useful for religious activities, literature, and perhaps educational success is different from using the language. In this regard, the questionnaire responses reflect the participants' positive attitudes towards learning Classical Arabic, while their interview responses reveal negative attitudes towards using it as they prefer to use Saudi youth language among peers. This is interesting as it suggests that the two languages occupy two different spheres and that establishing a hierarchy between two languages can be risky. This shows that diglossia as a concept can be tricky because while functional differentiations can arise, languages occupy different spheres. Therefore, researchers should refrain from establishing a hierarchical relationship between languages.

In the interviews conducted, most participants acknowledge the linguistic simplicity of Saudi local Arabic. The following quotes from the interviewees represent this view: M3 – *“I like Saudi local Arabic because it is the language used by all members of society, young and old”*; M5 – *“I like to speak Saudi local Arabic because it is easy and widely understandable”*; F2 – *“I use Saudi local Arabic because it is easy and known by all”*. Meanwhile, it is the Saudi youth language that most participants prefer to use with their peers. On the one hand, most male participants recognise that the Saudi youth language serves as a secret language of communication among peers as M1 indicates, *“Saudi youth language has an advantage that you could use it as a secret code that no one understands. In fact, each student group has their own special idioms”*. In contrast, the majority of female participants cite *“coping with modern linguistic usage”* as a reason for their favourable attitude towards Saudi youth language, which they describe it as trendy and stylish. For example, F2 reports, *“I use Saudi youth language because some of its expressions are modern, so I use it to cope up with fashion trends”*. On the other hand, the majority of both male and female participants feel that using Saudi youth language with elderly people is undesirable since it involves vocabulary that they do not comprehend. This becomes apparent when the researcher asked *“Which language do you use when you speak with your friends? Why?”*, to which the interviewees provided the following answers: *“I use Saudi youth language with my friends only because it does not seem acceptable to use it with adult people.”* (M2); *“I use Saudi youth language with my friends, but I won't use it with elderly people because they do not accept it as they are not familiar with it.”* (F5). This result reflects those of de Féral (2012) who found that the youth manipulate the language for both mystery and enjoyment purposes as reported by a group of young

speakers who use youth language to appear cryptic or humorous. This can be demonstrated that the emergence of the term “youth language” and its recognition as a “language” allow its speakers to claim a certain legitimacy to their language practices. On the other hand, the category “youth” can be useful for researchers because it especially allows them to target a certain age group. From this point on, it is important to emphasise the role played by linguists in exemplifying “youth language”.

The above findings reached from both the quantitative and qualitative approaches point out a sort of incongruence between the participants’ appreciation for Saudi Arabic varieties and their actual language use. Some discrepancies are found based on the three aspects of attitude—knowledge, speaking and sentiment. For example, the participants have different kinds of appreciation for Saudi Arabic varieties. They believe that Classical Arabic is used in formal settings, religious discourse, and literature. On the other hand, Saudi local Arabic is used habitually to communicate with other people in daily life, whereas Saudi youth language is used in informal settings, especially with their peers. This might be related to the fact that even if the participants are aware of the significance of Classical Arabic, being the language of the Holy Quran, they are also aware of the simplicity of Saudi local Arabic in daily interactions and the prevalence of Saudi youth language among young people.

In view of the above findings, the attitudes portray how Saudi Arabic varieties are perceived by the male and female adolescents. Hence, the findings reveal new attitudes towards Classical Arabic, Saudi local Arabic, and Saudi youth language, which are the result of overlapping religious, linguistic, social, and contextual factors. In this regard, focusing on socio-cultural factors helps to interpret the reasons for gender differences in language use. According to ElSafty (2005), it is unwise to study the issue of gender in isolation without taking the broader social context into account. Indeed, understanding the importance of socio-cultural factors and its impact on both genders might help to comprehend how Saudi male and female adolescents use the language and identify the attitudes that may motivate them to use the language.

5.4 Limitations of the study

This study has some limitations that should be taken into consideration. The first limitation is that the school closures due to the COVID-19 pandemic did not allow the researcher to carry out qualitative observations of language use by the participants as well as their attitudes towards languages, despite its consideration when the research was being conceived. This forced the researcher to conduct interviews through video meetings via Zoom instead of classroom observation. The second limitation is that the study focuses on students who are all in secondary schools and are of the same age. Therefore, the results of this study can be applied only to secondary schools. The third limitation is that the research investigated gender differences in spoken language; hence, it is possible that the findings could be different when it comes to written language.

5.5 Contributions of the study

Gender separation in the social setting could be a significant factor in the disparities in language use between men and women. Consequently, the focus of this study is on the relationship between language and gender in Saudi Arabia, a gender-segregated society. This involves determining if the male and female students differ in their language use and attitudes towards language.

Based on this hypothesis, the researcher examined the following theoretical principles:

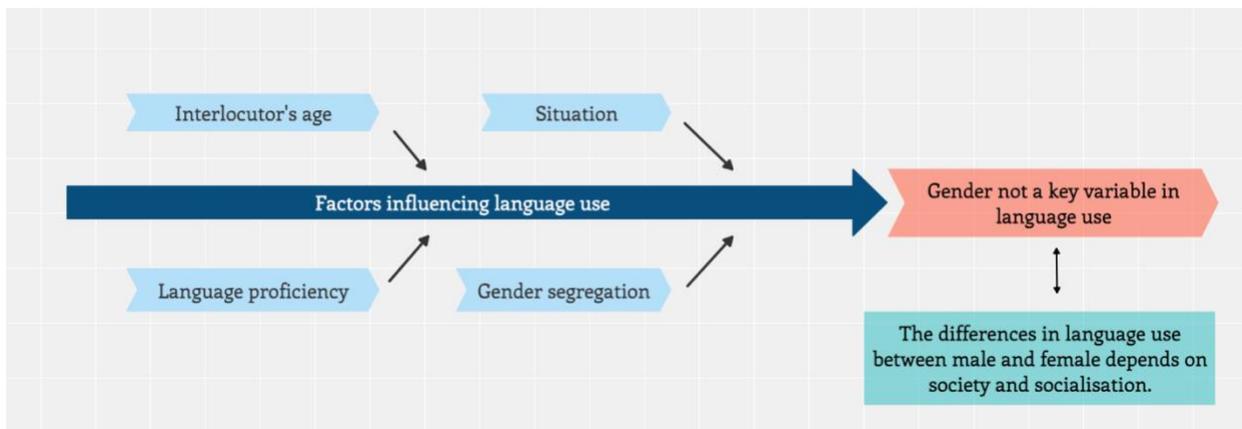
1. Female adolescents tend to use prestigious and standard forms of languages.
2. Language of male and female depends on society and socialisation.

In view of the above consideration, the findings of this study make a contribution to the research topic in this very specific context from three different perspectives. First, the study shows that a simple and direct correlation between language and gender is inadequate to explain language use even in what used to be considered as a gender-segregated society like Saudi Arabia. The Saudi society has been recently making rapid progress in terms of gender equality, which has enabled a mixing between the genders in most places such as restaurants, banks, music festivals, and professional conferences. This partial elimination of gender segregation has a potential impact on social behaviour, including language behaviour, making the use of language variety more liable to

change between both genders. Second, the undercurrent social mutations taking place in Saudi Arabia offer a better lens to explain language attitudes. Third, there is one permanent aspect of Saudi Arabia’s socio-cultural reality that is not directly linked with gender: the high esteem people have regarding their religion and the language of the religion. While gender can be a determining factor as far as attitudes towards languages are concerned, its impact can be negated either by social evolution or by other permanent factors like the importance given to religion.

Figure 5.1

Model suggested by this study for the relationship between language and gender



The representation derived from the findings, as shown in Figure 5.1, shows that language use is strongly influenced by the interlocutor’s age, situation, language proficiency, and gender segregation. Furthermore, female adolescents’ tendency to use Saudi youth language differs from what is expected of women's speech features. This shows that language tendencies are influenced by social practices. In other words, language of male and female is determined by many aspects of society including socialisation, context, dramatic change, habitual activities, and social networks. Therefore, comprehending the varied speech patterns of male and female adolescents requires a clear understanding of the social situation. As such, the findings of this study are consistent with Gu’s recommendation (2013), regarding a cautious approach when discussing the language use of young male and female speakers. Speech patterns are not only impacted by gender but also by other factors including contextual elements. Accordingly, the current research findings show that it is necessary to rethink the relationship between language and gender. In addition, the results

might contribute to the extended research on the interplay between gender and language among young speakers.

In relation to the attitude towards the Arabic language, the majority of the studies have been conducted in a non-Arabic or bilingual context. However, this study addresses attitudes towards the Arabic language and its varieties (Classical Arabic, Saudi local Arabic and Saudi youth language) in the Saudi Arabian context. Moreover, the study explores the relationship between gender and language use in a region that has received little attention from linguists and language scholars. Based on the researcher's knowledge, this study is the first of its kind to explore gender differences in the use of Saudi Arabic varieties by analysing religious, linguistic, and social factors behind the preferences of male and female adolescents in their language use. Additionally, the results have assisted in identifying the linguistic situation in the Saudi context by describing the language of male and female adolescents. Such a significant comparison was made in this study to provide a deeper understanding of the relationship between gender and language use in Saudi Arabia.

Based on the combination of questionnaires and interviews, different data enable the triangulation of the findings. The use of more than one research instrument can enhance the validity and reliability of the study as well as help to examine the phenomenon from different perspectives. Therefore, the current study attempts to examine language use and language attitudes by employing two research instruments, namely questionnaire and interview.

5.6 Recommendations for further research

As an extension of this research, the following are recommendations for future work:

- The study confirms the inadequacy of research via questionnaires to understand the relationship between language and gender. Therefore, qualitative observations regarding language practice are necessary to get a more adequate picture of language behaviour.
- Since this study is limited to male and female students at two schools in Taif city, other schools and more data for the quantitative research would be beneficial to corroborate the

samples used in this study. Therefore, further studies are needed to investigate the current level of gender differences more broadly across Saudi Arabia.

- Further research is needed to trace the change in male and female language use patterns, as well as their attitudes about language, as a result of substantial changes in women's status in Saudi Arabia.
- Since there can be differences in language use between adolescents and adults, examining the use of language by older age groups should be investigated.
- Regarding attitudes, further studies could be conducted to investigate the attitudes towards Saudi Arabic varieties by using a larger sample, which includes participants from various educational backgrounds, to understand the differences in attitudes based on different variables.
- It would be interesting to duplicate the current study in the same context after several years to observe changes in attitudes and to examine other dimensions of language attitudes in Saudi Arabia.

5.7 Conclusion

The study explores the gender differences between male and female adolescent students by looking at the language use, their attitudes towards language, and the factors influencing their language use. There are three perspectives that make the findings of this study significant. The first perspective is that the relationship between language and gender is complex, i.e., the simple and direct correlation between language and gender is insufficient to explain language use of male and female even in a gender segregated society. The second perspective is that the dramatic changes taking place in Saudi Arabia, such as the allowing of gender-mixing in most places, have an impact on social behaviour, including language behavior, making the use of language variety more liable to change among male and female adolescent students. The third perspective is the high esteem people have regarding their religion and the language of religion is a feature of Saudi Arabia's socio-cultural reality, which is to some extent unrelated to gender. This implies that people in Saudi Arabia respect the language of religion regardless of their gender. In other words, while gender can be a determining factor as far as attitudes towards languages are concerned, its impact

can be negated either by social evolution or by other permanent factors such as the importance given to religion. Moreover, the findings of the study provide evidence of gender-preferential linguistic choices in language use, which is influenced by significant factors including the interlocutor's age, situation, language proficiency, and gender segregation. Another vital finding of this research is the risk of forming a hierarchical relationship between languages because languages occupy different spheres, establishing a hierarchical relationship between them can be risky. Diglossia can sometimes be of little help to understand the complex relationship between languages. From a methodological perspective, the study demonstrates the limitations of quantitative-based research in determining the relationship between language and gender. To obtain a complete picture of language behaviour, qualitative observations of language practice are required. However, this study provides enough evidence to reject the direct link between language and gender.

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APPENDIX A

(Questionnaire Questions)



<https://cutt.ly/6FxrS60>

APPENDIX B

(Interview sample- Male student)

Do you think that there is a difference between your language use and that of your sister?

— Generally, there is no difference except in the style of speaking and sentence structure.

Do you speak like other girls?

— No, there is a different in the style of speaking.

When you use Saudi local Arabic, what are the differences between the way you speak and other girls, if any?

— There is no big difference because basically it is the same language variety, but the way of speaking will be different and there are some idiomatic expressions used more by females than males and vice versa.

Do you think that boys and girls in secondary schools speak the same way?

— They speak the same way when using Saudi local Arabic or youth language, but Classical Arabic is rarely used by secondary students. Youth language is the dominant language variety among secondary students.

What language do you like speaking? Why?

— I like Saudi local language because it is the language variety that used by most members of society, young and old.

What language you do not like speaking? Why?

— Although I'm a teenager, I don't like to speak Saudi youth language because it contains some inappropriate expressions that could be embarrassing when talking to older people because they don't understand it, so I prefer to speak language that is understandable by both young and old.

Which language do you use when you speak with your friends? Why?

— I speak Saudi local language because it's clear and easily understood by all. Also, I use youth language because it contains some abbreviations, which make it easy to use it with my friend.

When you hear someone talking in Classical Arabic, what is your impression about this person?

— My impression will be that he is educated and has uniquely personality.

When you hear someone talking in Saudi local Arabic, what is your impression about this person?

— No particular impression because speaking in Saudi local language is normal and common.

When you hear someone talking in Saudi youth language, what is your impression about this person?

—If the expressions used are appropriate, my impression will be normal. However, if the expressions used are inappropriate, my impression will be that the speaker lacks social awareness.

Is there any factor which determines your language variety? If yes, how?

— Yes, it depends on the circumstances of communication or the situation.

In Saudi society, the education is gender-segregated, do you think that it contributes to the differences in language use of male and female students?

— May be before but not now because there are alternatives such as social media, it brought society together.

(Interview sample- Female student)

Do you think that there is a difference between your language use and that of your brother?

— Yeah! there is a difference in the way of speaking: accent and expression choice.

Do you speak like other boys?

— No, the style is different.

When you use Saudi local Arabic, what are the differences between the way you speak and other boys, if any?

— There is no great difference because it is a familiar variety used by all. Maybe the way of speaking or style of dialog is different.

Do you think that boys and girls in secondary schools speak the same way?

— No, there is a difference but a simple. On the contrary to males, females speak more nicely.

What language do you like speaking? Why?

— I speak Saudi local Arabic because it is easy and known by all. Also, I use Saudi youth language because some of its expressions are modern, so I use it to cope up with the fashion trends but within proper expressions.

What language you do not like speaking? Why?

— I do not like to speak Classical Arabic because it is difficult and contains some idioms which I cannot understand. Additionally, people could laugh at using it.

Which language do you use when you speak with your friends? Why?

— Saudi local Arabic because it is understood by all. Also, Saudi youth language because we belong to the same age.

When you hear someone talking in Classical Arabic, what is your impression about this person?

— Eloquent, educated, serious.

When you hear someone talking in Saudi local Arabic, what is your impression about this person?

— I have no certain impression, it is normal.

When you hear someone talking in Saudi youth language, what is your impression about this person?

— Civilized and socialized person.

Is there any factor which determines your language variety? If yes, how?

— It depends on the age of the person with whom I speak. If I speak to an elderly person, I use Saudi local Arabic or Classical Arabic and if I speak to a person in the same of my age, I use Saudi youth language.

In Saudi society, the education is gender-segregated, do you think that it contributes to the differences in language use of male and female students?

— It can contribute to 20% because there is gender mixing in other places.



APPENDIX C

(Research Ethics Committee Approval)



Faculty of Humanities
Fakulteit Geesteswetenskappe
Lefapha la Bomotho



17 September 2020

Dear Ms FMS Alzahrani

| | |
|--------------------------|--|
| Project Title: | The differences in language use and attitude towards language between men and women in Saudi Arabia. |
| Researcher: | Ms FMS Alzahrani |
| Supervisor(s): | Dr JPK Kritzing Prof R Tirvasen |
| Department: | Ancient and Modern Languages a |
| Reference number: | 17260974 (HUM041/0619) |
| Degree: | Masters |

I have pleasure in informing you that the above application was approved by the Research Ethics Committee on 17 September 2020. Data collection may therefore commence.

Please note that this approval is based on the assumption that the research will be carried out along the lines laid out in the proposal. Should the actual research depart significantly from the proposed research, it will be necessary to apply for a new research approval and ethical clearance.

We wish you success with the project.

Sincerely,

Prof Innocent Pikirayi
Deputy Dean: Postgraduate Studies and Research Ethics
Faculty of Humanities
UNIVERSITY OF PRETORIA
e-mail: PGHumanities@up.ac.za

Fakulteit Geesteswetenskappe
Lefapha la Bomotho

Research Ethics Committee Members: Prof I Pikirayi (Deputy Dean); Prof KL Hamis; Mr A. Bizo; Dr A. M. de Beer; Dr A. dos Santos; Ms K. G. G. Andriani; Dr P. Dube; Dr T. Johnson; Prof D. Mase; Mr A. Mkhomo; Dr I. Nkomo; Dr C. Buthe; Prof D. Geyuro; Prof M. Sani; Prof E. Tshabalala; Prof V. Tshabe; Ms B. Tshabe; Ms D. M. Khathe



APPENDIX D

(Letter of Informed Consent)



Letter of Informed Consent

I, Fatimah Alzahrani (student no U17260974), am Master student at the University of Pretoria. I am doing a dissertation entitled: "The differences in language use and attitude towards language between men and women in Saudi Arabia". For the purposes of this study, I need to complete certain field research which will take the form of open-ended questionnaire and interview as this a part of my primary research.

The aim of the study is to investigate the relationship between the attitude towards language and how it is manifested through language use between men and women in Saudi Arabia. Moreover, I intend to describe some of the differences in the language use of Saudi male and female participants.

I am writing to request you to participate in this study. Your participation is entirely voluntary which is based on informed consent. You thus have the right to decide whether or not you wish to participate in the research and you may withdraw from the study at any time. The survey results will be pooled for the dissertation and individual results of this study will remain absolutely confidential and anonymous. No costs will be incurred by either your school or the individual participants. All collected information will be stored safely for fifteen years in compliance with the policy of the University Faculty of Humanities.

I would also like your permission to use this information for possible further research in the future.

Yours sincerely

I, _____ (the undersigned) agree to participate in the Master research project of Ms. _____ (student number _____) at the University of Pretoria.

I have read her letter of introduction and agree that my information may be acknowledged according to the prescribed footnote reference system.

| | |
|--------------------------|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> | I give permission for my name to be used in this research. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | I wish to remain anonymous in this research. |

Yours sincerely
Signed _____
Date _____