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Pseudo-Arabic of Australian Arabs: The Influence of Second Language Acquistion on the First Language of Migrants

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The influence of the first language on the acquisition of subsequent languages has been the focus of language researchers (Hecht & Mulford, 1987). However, the influence of the second language on the first language in long-term exposure to the second language environment has not been given much attention, except maybe in the study of bilingualism and language shift and maintenance (Fasold, 1987).

Informal observation suggests that language interference is a two-way phenomenon among migrant communities in Australia. This paper examines the influence of English on the Arabic[1] of Australian Arabs and highlights the problems encountered in maintaining the language.

While research on second language acquisition has demonstrated similar developmental sequences for the first and second language acquisition, certain discrepancies have also been demonstrated between first and second language development. Other language hypotheses[2] suggest that first language knowledge affects the acquisition of a new linguistic system, and many of the difficulties faced and solutions attempted during second language development can be predicted by a contrastive analysis of the two systems (Hecht and Mulford, 1987).

Studies have also shown that language shift and language maintenance are the long-term, collective results of language choice: a speech community within a multilingual society may give up a language in favour of another one, or collectively decide to continue using the language it has traditionally used (Fasold,1987).

One of the most frequently cited causes for language shift is migration. Usually, language shift occurs among small, low status linguistic groups who shift to the language of a larger, high status group.

Migrants have little choice in shifting from their first language to English. Due to social, psychological, geographic and economic factors, migrants' first language is influenced by English and exhibits linguistic deviations from the norm. None the less, the influence of the second language on the first language is not as salient as the influence of the first language on the second language.

Furthermore, Lieberson (in Fasold, 1987) suggests that language shift comes about through intergenerational switching from one language to another. A substantial proportion of individuals in a society rarely completely give up the use of one language and replace it with another one within their own life time. Accordingly, it seems that in the migrant situation, complete language shift takes place over four generations of migrants: the first generation of migrants exhibits deviance from the norm in the first language use and the fourth generation fully assimilates and completes the shift.

Speaker Categories

The present study[3] has identified three main categories of migrants within the speech continuum of the same migrant family that are affected by the gradual shift towards the host country language.

- First generation migrants
- Second generation migrants
- Third generation migrants

First generation migrants characteristically:

- have a limited or no command of host country language
- have poor education
- are isolated from host community
- have good to fair command of their native language, particularly the spoken dialects
- come mainly from rural areas in the native country

Second generation migrants characteristically:

- have a limited command of their native language
- have good command of host country language
- are fairly educated (year 10 to year 12 on average)

Third generation migrants characteristically:

- have a very limited knowledge of language of origin
- have a good command of host country language
- are well educated

Since the third generation of migrants are almost linguistically assimilated into English, this paper focuses on the Arabic (spoken and written) of first and second generation migrants only.

During the process of assimilation, all three speaker categories are consciously or subconsciously influenced by the language, culture and thought patterns of the host country, and invariably suffer from relative loss of native language. In extreme cases, this influence produces a pseudo-Arabic.

The opportunity that Arab migrants have to maintain their native language is diminished by the overwhelming exposure to the host country's language and culture, although Arabic-speaking communities tend to maintain a degree of ethnic grouping[4] and have access to Arabic newspapers and limited Arabic radio broadcasts. It is also an observable phenomenon that modern Arabs in general have a tendency to give up their first language for another language or a low variety of Arabic more readily than say the French. This proclivity is an accelerating factor in the process of language shift among Arab migrants.

This paper will examine the influence of English on the language of migrants of Arab descent in Australia. It will also show how, in some instances such influence produces pseudo-Arabic — a variety of Arabic that is not colloquial or standard, but rather a hybrid language that only Australian Arabs understand and use.

The present paper will focus on both the high and low varieties of Arabic, that is the formal and the informal. It will also examine the influence of these varieties on the production of Arabic only in as much as such is a direct result of communication strategies that are in turn affected by English interference.

Negative Transfer[5]

The influence of host language (in this case English) occurs as a negative transfer or interference that leads to an error or inappropriate usage of Arabic. Negative transfer occurs as:

- Lexical transfer
- Morphological transfer
- Syntactic transfer
- Phonological transfer
- Prosodic transfer
- Code- switching interference
- Sequencing deviance
- Interjectory interference

Lexical Transfer

Lexical transfer is a wide-spread phenomenon in Arabic in the Arab world. It affects Arabic on three levels of lexical assimilation, that is phonemic (unassimilated, partially assimilated, and wholly assimilated loans), morphemic (no morphemic substitution, partial morphemic substitution, and total morphemic substitution), and loanshift or calque (Haugen, 1956, Darwish, 1988). However, lexical transfer into Arabic in Australia occurs mainly on the phonemic and morphemic levels and is generally restricted to wholly assimilated loans and total morphemic substitution of verb forms. Examples of wholly assimilated phonemic and morphemic loans are the following verb forms.[6]

charged	=>	*sharraj(a)*
serviced	=>	*sarvas(a)*
insured	=>	*anshar(a)*
polished	=>	*bawlash(a)*
paged	=>	*bayyaj(a)*
saved	=>	*sayyaf(a)*
signed	=>	*sayyan(a)*

Note that the /v/ phoneme in 'service' is retained in the Arabic verb form although this phoneme is not found in standard Arabic while the /p/ phoneme is substituted by the /b/ phoneme.[7] *It is interesting however to observe that the same /v/ phoneme changes to the /f/ phoneme when it occurs at the end of the word.*

Third generation speakers tend to employ unassimilated loans.

Loanshift occurs in both the high and low variety of Arabic and is noticeable in radio broadcasts, community publications, Arabic newspapers as well as in common discourse. Examples are:

migrant resource centre	=>	*markaz qudurät al-muhajirïn*
telephone interpreters service	=>	*khidmat at-tarjama al-hätifiyya*
industrial relations	=>	*?alaqät ṣinä?iyyah*
create jobs	=>	*yakhluqu waẓä'if*
bridging the gap	=>	*tajsïr al-fajwah*

The frequency with which the individual migrant uses Arabic and English can influence the transfer. Long-term migrants have temporary difficulty in re-adjusting their lexis when they are using their pre-emigration language.

Social circumstances and quality of education seem to determine the quality of transfer. Many migrants learn a low variety of English that can be termed *Milkbar*[8] English, which is

characteristically blue collar, vernacular and accentuated. In some cases, the heavy accent is transferred to Arabic. (See the section entitled 'Prosodic Transfer', below.)

Morphological Transfer

The study of word formation in the Arabic of Australian Arabs shows that certain morphological changes occur in the morphemic patterns of Arabic words or words borrowed from English. The definitive-forming *al* (or the colloquial version *il*) is affixed to the borrowed English word, which either retains or loses its original phonology as in the following examples.

al-communication

ash-shobbät => *the shops*

In some cases, the English grammatical morpheme /s/ showing the plural form is suffixed to Arabic words or borrowed words.

... la inno iza biddak tifṭirid inno l-jaridi raḥt?ïsh ?ala si?ra illi huwwi dular aw tmenïn sents hayda ma bisewi ayya shi ...

[... because if you want to assume that the newspaper will survive on its price which is one dollar or eighty *cents*, this won't do ...]

The underlined words correspond to one another. Notice that the grammatical morpheme /s/ is used in the borrowed word *sent* (cent).

... abli ma iduktür aw is-sayyidah ti'dar tiḥissi bi ayyi taghyïr, ya?ni sa?ät biyiba' al-ḥagm one walla ... waḥid walla tnayn millimetres ...

[... before the doctor or the lady can feel any change, that is when the size is one or, one or two millimetres ...]

Although the /s/ morpheme in both examples is suffixed to loan words (cent, millimetre), it shows that in some cases, Australian Arabic tends to form the plural by using this morpheme. In this case, one might view the block borrowing of words in their plural form as a feature of code switching, but since loan words in Arabic are usually pluralized by using the Arabic grammatical morphemes, for example, *sent* (cent) = *sentät* (cents), this cannot be so. Whether or not the English morpheme is suffixed to original Arabic words remains to be investigated.

Another morphological deviance occurs in the gender of the second-person singular. The English second-person singular is gender-insensitive while the Arabic second-person singular is gender-sensitive and number-sensitive. For example,

You went to school yesterday.

does not indicate the gender or the number (singular, dual, plural) of the person spoken to. In contrast, the Arabic second-person singular does indicate the gender and the number of the person spoken to.

Masculine:

anta thahabta ila al-madrasati al-bäriḥa [standard Arabic]

inte rihit ?al maderse imberih. [colloquial Lebanese]

Feminine

anti thahbti ila al-madrasati al-bäriḥa. [standard Arabic]

inti riḥti ?al maderse imberiḥ [colloquial Lebanese]

Sometimes, the neutrality of the English second-person is transferred to Australian Arabic. In the following example, the person spoken to is female, yet the masculine form is used.

mitil ma iltillak

As I told you (masculine)

instead of

mitil ma iltillik

As I told you (feminine)

Moreover, certain changes occur in the morphological patterns of verbs denoting continuous action. The article *?am bi* is used in colloquial Arabic to form the gerundial verb form as in the following examples:

al-walad	*?am bi-yakul*	*at-tufaḥa. (it-tifaḥa)*
Def +N	gerund art+V	Def+N
The boy	is eating	the apple.
kän	*?am biyshrab*	*al-mayy.*
Vpst+Prn	gerund+Vart+V	Def+N
He was	drinking	the water.

[He was drinking water.]

In Australian Arabic, the article *?am bi* is used morphologically with the gerundial form of the English verb to form the present continuous tense in Arabic. The English verb is pronounced almost unchanged.

al-mu'tamar ?am bi concentrating ?ala al-jaliyät al-aborijiniyyeh

[The conference is concentrating on aboriginal communities.]

In the same fashion, the article *bi* is sometimes used to form the present tense/ infinitive verb form.

al-mu'tamar bi attack al-?arab

[The conference attacks the Arabs.]

It has also been observed that Australian Arabic uses English modifiers in the same way suggesting a morphological-syntactic transfer from English into Arabic.

> *... mawgüd material technically kwayyisa masalan lamma ana kunti director of program purchasing känit al-gäliyah al-?arabiyya btshtiki tül el-wa't.*
>
> [... There is material technically all right. For example, when I was director of program purchasing, the Arab community complained all the time.]

The use of the adverb *'technically'*, unchanged and as a pre-modifier, mirrors English morphology and syntax.

This tendency of using English modifiers unchanged is further illustrated by the following example where the adverb modifies the verb.

> *... al-ḥa'i'a fi ra'mi talifön ?älami dil-wa'ti fi ustralya. law ayyi sayiddah itaṣalit bi ra'm it-tilifön dah automatically bi waṣalha bi a'arab markaz faḥṣi khidmah...*
>
> [... Actually, there is a (lit. international) telephone number in Australia now. If any lady dials this number, it automatically connects her to the nearest test service centre ...]

Syntactic Transfer

Syntactic transfer occurs as word order divergences from monoglot norms and as a transfer of structural attributes of elements in L1 to elements in L2 that do not share the same properties. (Beardsmore, 1986).

Syntactic transfer occurs in Australian Arabic as both word order and structural transfer.

The influence of English on Arabic is observed in complex sentence structures.

fi	*ḥäli*	*kharajat*	*mina*	*al-al?äb*	*al-olimpiyya*
prep	N	Vpst +pr	Prep	Def+N	Def+N
In	case	got out +it	of	the games	the Olympic

[In case it quit the Olympic games.]

This syntactic structure deviates from the norm in standard Arabic, which requires an infinitive noun form (pro-verbs[9]) after the prepositional phrase *in case.*

fi	*ḥali*	*khurüjiha*	*mina*	*al-al?äb*	*al-olimpiyya.*
Prep	phrse	Inf N +ref prn	prep	def+N	def+N
In	case	departure +its	from	the games	the Olympic

[In case (of) its departure from the Olympic games.]

[In case it quit the Olympic games.]

Furthermore, sentences with relative pronouns are affected by English syntactic patterns. The following example is from an SBS Arabic program news broadcast.

... ?indama qämat ṭa'iratän amerikiyatän min naw? ef fifteen ...

... when did two planes American of type F15.

... bi'isqäṭi aṭ-ṭä'iratayn i?itaqadat annahumä ṭä'irät ?iräqiyyah.

... shoot down the two planes *it* believed they (dual) were Iraqi planes.

[... when two US F15 fighter planes shot down the two planes *which* they thought that they were Iraqi planes.]

This sentence is fraught with syntactic problems brought about by negative interference from English:

1. The words *ṭä'irät ?iräqiyyah* is in the plural although they refer back to a dual (two Iraqi planes).
2. The Arabic relative pronoun before the clause *'i?taqadat annahumä tä'irät ?iräqiyyah'* is missing.

While English can drop the relative pronoun before the clause *'they thought that they were Iraqi planes'* instead of *'... which they thought they were Iraqi planes'*, Arabic requires a relative pronoun because the noun *at-ta'iratayn* is definitive, that is, comprises the definite article. Therefore, the second half of the sentence should be as follows:

... bi'isqäṭi aṭ-ṭa'iratayn al-latayn i?taqadat annahuma (aṭ-ṭa'iratän al-amerikiyatän) ṭä'iratän ?iräqiyyatän.

[... shoot down the two planes which they (the two US planes) thought that they were two Iraqi planes.]

While this structure might sound clumsy in English, Arabic syntactic structures require this construction.[10] The relative pronoun is usually dropped when the noun to which the relative pronoun refers is indefinitive, that is, it is not preceded by a definite article. For example:

... bi'isqäṭi ṭä'iratayn i?taqadat annahumä ṭä'iratän ?iräqiyyatän.

[... shoot down two planes they thought that they were two Iraqi planes.]

Whether this syntactic distortion is caused by hasty literal translation or by acquired English syntactic patterns, the fact remains that negative syntactic transfer does occur from English to Arabic.

Another area of syntactic transfer pertains to English compound adjectives such as 2-day course , 52-week leave, 1-hour lunch and so on. In some observed cases, Australian Arabs tend to mirror this construction in Arabic. For example:

... nastaṭi? ana wa zawji al'än an nataqäsama lighäyat ithnayn wa khamsïn usbü?an ijäza bidün rätib ba?da mawlid aṭ-ṭifl.

[... My husband and I can now share up to 52 weeks leave without pay after the baby is born.]

The underlined words in both sentences correspond to one another, where:

ithnayn wa khamsïn = *fifty-two*

usbü?an = *week*

ijäza = *leave*

The norm in standard and colloquial Arabic is to place the modifier after the modified and not before it. Furthermore, Arabic modifiers are not stacked except in rare instances where the style is formal or literary. Thus, the sentence should read as follows:

... nastaṭi? ana wa zawji al'än an nataqäsama ijäza lighäyat ithnayn wa khamsïn usbü?an bidün ratib ba?da mawlid aṭ-ṭifl.

[... My husband and I can now share a *leave up to 52 weeks* (up to 52 weeks of leave) with no pay after the baby is born.]

The construction *'ithnayn wa khamsïn usbü?an ijazatan'* is acceptable in standard Arabic were the word *'ijaza'* is inflected to indicate what is termed *badal bayän* or explicative substitute or appositive. Without the inflection the construction sounds odd. Within the context of the cited example, this construction (with or without the inflection) belongs to a different register and is clearly a case of negative transfer of the English construction.

An extreme case of syntactic transfer from English into Arabic is detected in the treatment of relative clauses by second generation migrants. In normative Arabic, a pronominal reflex marking the position of the relativized NP is employed. English has no such pronominal reflexes (or anaphoric pronouns),[11] but if it did, the following forms would be examples:[12]

Subj: the boy that *he* came.

Dir. obj. the boy that John hit *him*.

Indir. obj. the boy that I sent a letter to *him*.

Obj. prep. the boy that I sat near *him*.

At an advanced stage of negative transfer, the pronominal reflexes are dropped from Arabic sentences as in the following examples.

al-walad illi shifit (uh)

[The boy that I saw (him).]

al-sayyarah illi ḍarabt (ha).

[The car that I hit (it).]

It must be said however, that pronominal reflexes are sometimes dropped in standard Arabic, but this is restricted to highly literary forms of writing and is unusual in colloquial Arabic. The following examples illustrate the point:[13]

tharnï wa man khalaqtu waḥïdan.

[Leave me with whom I created alone.]

instead of

tharni wa man khalutuhu waḥïdan..

[Leave me with whom I created *him* alone.]

faqḍi mä anta qäḍin

[Then decide what you want to decide.]

instead of:

faqḍi mä anta qäḍïhi.

[Then decide what you want to decide *it.*]

haṯhihi lughatun nuqaddisu wa nuḥibbu

[This is a language we revere and love.]

Instead of

haṯhihi lughatun nuqaddisuhä wa nuḥibbuhä

[This is a language we revere *it* and love *it.*]

Similarly, the treatment of prepositions in Australian Arabic is influenced by English syntactic patterns. For example, the English structure,

I need a place to live.

normally calls for the insertion of the preposition (in) after the verb live in the Arab mind.

I need a place to live *in.*

Translated into Arabic, the example reads as follows:

aḥtäju ila makänin a?ïshu fïh.

[lit. I need *for* a place I live *in it.*]

I need a place *in which* to live.

I need a place to live.

In contrast, Australian Arabic seems to exhibit prepositional patterns similar to English.

... wa mu?ẓam ha'ulä' mina an-näshiṭïn mina al-janäḥ al-yamïnï käna mina al-muqarrar an yaqümü bimasïratin khärija al-ḥaram al-ibrähïmï al-laṯhï qäma musṭawtinun yahüdi biqatli tis?a wa ?ishrïna musliman känü yu'adüna aṣ-ṣalät fï fibräyir al-mäḍï ...

[... and most of these are right wing activists who were supposed to march outside the (tomb of the Patriarchs) *al-ḥaram al-ibrahimi mosque (in) which* a Jewish settler killed 29 Muslims who were *praying (in it) last* February.]

The omitted prepositions (and pronoun) are in parentheses.

Another form of syntactic transfer is splitting the modified and the modifier, especially in standard Arabic. Unlike English adjectives, Arabic adjectives are normatively post-modifiers. They follow the noun they modify and are not split up from it. For example:

as-sayyärahat-ul-hamrä'u

Def + noun + Adj

The car the red

[The red car.]

In certain Arabic structures that are influenced by English, the modified and modifier are split as in the following example.

... al-ḥuküma al-ubnäniyyah turidu an tabda'a muḥädathätin ma?a isrä'il mushäbihatan litilka al-lati ajrathä ma?a al-urdun. ..

[... the Lebanese government wants to hold *talks* with Israel *similar* to the ones it held with Jordan ...]

In English it is acceptable to insert the prepositional phrase *with Israel* between *talks* and *similar*. However, in Arabic the insertion deviates from the norm.

Splitting the modifier from the modified is caused partly by the Arabic speaker's obvious lack of understanding of the function of English post-modifiers and partly by negative interference.

Furthermore, negative transfer of English pre-modifier adjectival syntax has also been noticed in Australian Arabic.

... al-ḥa'i'a, il-iḥṣä'iyyät fi usträlya bitbayyin sit ... waḥda sit min kulli arb?ata?shar sit bituṣäb bilmaraḍ dah khiläl fatrit al-ḥaya bi ta?itha ...

[... Actually, the statistics in Australia show that woman ... *one woman* in every fourteen women contracts this disease during her life time ...]

In this example, *waḥda sit* (one woman) should have been *sit wahda* (woman one), that is noun+adj instead of adj+noun.

Phonological Transfer

While phonological fossilisation or lack of plasticity occurs in second language acquisition (Tarone, 1987, Major, 1987, Beebe, 1987), phonological transfer from English into Arabic has been noted. Although language acquisition theories posit a critical age of $11^{\pm}$ for the development of language ability (Clyne, 1972, Klein, 1986), phonological transfer seems to

take place from English into the Arabic of migrants regardless of age although the transfer is quicker in younger migrants and more prominent in long-term migrants.

Trudgill and Hannah (1985)[14] cite five distinctive features of Australian English:

1. Australian English front vowels tend to be closer than RP (received pronuciation)(that is the body of the tongue is closer to the palate).
2. Some diphthongs are narrower in Australian English than in RP (that is the difference between the open first element and closed second element is greater in Australian English than in RP).
3. There is a tendency for the diphthong to be 'slower', that is with a longer first element than in RP, and even for diphthongs to become monophthongized, as in /ai/
4. The /a:/ vowel is a very front [a:], in comparison to most other varieties of English.
5. Word-final /ə/ is often very open, for example, ever [eva]
6. Australian English is non-rhotic and has linking and intrusive /r/. Australian English /r/ is often more strongly retroflexed than in English English.
7. Australian English often has an /l/ that is darker than in RP.

In contrast, Arabic (especially the high variety) has the following distinctive features:

1. All Arabic characters are pronounced.
2. Arabic is rhotic, where the /r/ phoneme is alveolar.
3. Word-final /r/ is voiced.
4. Arabic does not have a linking or intrusive /r/. Instead, it utilizes assimilation and vowel insertion (epenthetic vowel) between words.

Sound substitution and phonological transfer have been detected in the following areas[15]:

Devoicing

Australian English is generally non-rhotic (*r-less*). In uncultivated Australian, the retroflexed /r/ phoneme /ɹ/ is pronounced in certain contexts as /w/ at the beginning and in the middle of a word,[16] and as a *schwa* at the end of it. For example:

reed	=	*weed*
crazy	=	*kwazi*
car	=	*ka*

In contrast, Arabic is rhotic (r-ful) and usually equisyllabic. However, as evidence of devoicing, Australian Arabic exhibits English phonological characteristics. For example:

he wants	*yurïd*	=	*yuyïd*
Wednesday	*al-arbi?a*	=	*al-aybi?a*

Devoicing also affects the /*d*/ phoneme and the heavy[17] /*ṭ*/ phoneme as in the following examples:

confirmed	*akkadat*	=	*akkatat*
the baby	*aṭ-ṭifl*	=	*at-tifl* (light or plain /t/)
the state	*ad-dawlah*	=	*at-tawlah*

Deletion

Deletion of certain phonemes has been detected in Australian Arabic. For example:

Standard Arabic:

lil-mazïd min al-ma?lümäti yumkunul it-tiṣäl ?ala ar-raqam...

[for further *information* you can contact number...]

Australian Arabic:

lil-mazïd min al-ma'lüma yumkunul it-tiṣäl ?ala ar-raqam...

The word *ma?lümät* (information) becomes *ma?lüma* thus losing the final consonant and shortening the preceding vowel.

In some instances, certain phonemes are deleted in Australian Arabic. The /r/ phoneme for example takes the form of a light /r/ that is hardly heard and sometimes dropped altogether.

Sound substitution

Sound substitution has been detected in third generation migrants. For example, the word (three) is pronounced *thalätha* in standard Arabic and *tleteh* in Lebanese dialect. Third generation migrants have been heard saying *kleteh* thus substituting the /k/ phoneme for the light /t/ phoneme.

As a result of the phonological influence of English, the Arabic of migrant Australians becomes non-rhotic. Certain glottal sounds are distorted. The following phonemes are affected:

/*ḥ*/ becomes almost identical to the English glottal /*h*/. Example, *yahdar* instead of *yaḥdar* (to attend or be present).

/?/ is omitted and the vowel conditioning it is pronounced in a manner almost identical to English vowels. Example: *yalam* instead of *ya?lam* (to know). In third generation migrants, the /?/ is transplanted with a /'/ in some contexts. Example: *ba'rif* instead of *ba?rif* (colloquial: I know).

Prosodic Transfer

While prosodic transfer is more prevalent in migrants speaking English, the effects of contact with English on the Arabic sounds such as the relative loudness and duration of syllables and the change of pitch are also detectable.

The differences in stress and intonation patterns between Australian English and Arabic can account for the effects of contact on the suprasegmental level.

Intonation

Word stress in English occurs as single stress, root stress and double stress. Single stress, which is of particular interest here because of its direct influence on Australian Arabic intonation, may be initial (as in restlessness, sinful), terminal (as in prevent, entice), or internal (as in continue, enlarging) (Krummel, 1993)

Strictly speaking, Arabic does not employ syllabic stresses as English does. Arabic syllables are equi-stressed. Intonation is produced by elongation and pitch rise instead of stress. Wickens (1980) identifies three types of syllable in Arabic:

- Short-open, a consonant followed by a short vowel, as in *ka-ta-ba* (he wrote)
- Short-closed, a consonant followed by a short vowel followed by an unvowelled consonant, as in *kun-tum* (you were)
- Long, a consonant followed by a long vowel or diphthong, as in *na-day-na* (we called)

However, Australian Arabic[18] exhibits word stress similar to English word stress in all three forms: initial, terminal and internal:

Initial stress

it moved	*ḥarrakat*	=	***ḥa**-rakat*
especially	*khäṣṣatan*	=	***khä**-ṣṣatan*
and Perry added	*wa aḍäfa Perry*	=	*wa **aḍäfa** Perry*

Terminal stress

presented	*qaddamat*	=	=	*qad-**damat***
was given	*u'ṭiyat*	=	=	*u'ṭi-**yat***

Internal stress

he warned	*ḥaththara*	=	=	*ḥa**ththa**ra*
it stated	*ṣarraḥat*	=	=	*ṣa**rra**hat*

Moreover, Australian English declarative sentences, especially in the younger generation, are characterized by a high-rising pitch while standard Arabic declarative sentences tend to have a high pitch at the start of sentence dropping at the end. For example:

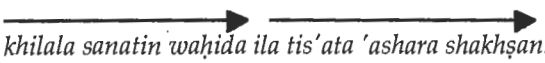
I went to school, and met my friend Jennie.

thahabtu ila al-madrasah, wa iltaqaytu bisadiqati jennie.

Australian Arabic however, exhibits intonation characteristics of the former. For example:

wa bil ḥadith al-akhir yartafi' 'adadu ar-ra'aya al-faransiyyin

al-lathina laqaw maṣra'ahum fil jaza'ir 'ala aydi mutaṭarifin



khilala sanatin waḥida ila tis'ata 'ashara shakhṣan.

[... with the latest incident, the number of French subjects killed by extremists in Algeria in one year rises to 19 persons ...]

As I mentioned earlier, many migrants learn a *Milkbar* variety of English which has a broad and heavy accent. In some cases, this accent is transferred to Arabic.

Prosodic transfer is also evident in word grouping. Australian Arabic seems to group words in a manner similar to Australian English. However, further research in this area is required.

Code-switching Interference

According to Beardsmore (1986), bilingual speakers may choose to use the whole repertoire of linguistic elements at their disposal, while the monoglot might interpret the inclusion of linguistic elements extraneous to one of the languages as manifestations of interference. However, code-switching that occurs unconsciously is definitely a manifestation of interference.

Clyne (1972) distinguishes two types of switching: externally conditioned switching due to extra-linguistic factors and internally conditioned switching in anticipation or in consequence of a trigger-word. In this paper, I distinguish four types of code switching in terms if frequency.

1. Single word switching

2. Intermittent switching
3. Alternate switching
4. Interspersed switching

In the case of Arabic migrants, code-switching varies from the inclusion of one or two words, to a stretch of discourse, to the interspersed insertion of phrases. For example:

al-mahrajän raḥ yaḍüm activities and meetings.

[the festival will include activities and meetings.]

Ya?ni niḥana fawr intihä' al-barnämig will be racing to the place.

[It means that as soon as the program ends we will be racing to the place.]

Code-switching also occurs intermittently within the same sentence, especially in juxstapositional ideas. For example:

Travelling lal-knowledge is good, la-ṣiḥa is bad.

[Travelling for knowledge is good, for health is bad]

Another variety of code-switching that has been observed in Australian Arabic is alternate code switching where the shift from Arabic to English and back to Arabic occurs very frequently within one stretch of discourse:

anä bitmana ino ykün fi kansiling lil-family abli ya?ni ykün kansiling abli ma ykun fi maḥäkim we i?tidä? ?ala shän iḥna fil-kultshur ta?itna aw al-?ädät wa al-ḥaḍärät taba?nä ini mumkim al-mashäkil tiṯḥ al fi niṭaq al-?ä'ili ... w'abli al-mawḍü? ma yiba' ad-dumestik vayolens aw ykün beyn al-ä?ila mashäkil tiṯḥal biṭ-ṭaria' diḥ ?ashän ma tüṣal lil-maḥäkim masalan.

[I hope that there will be counselling for the family before ... that is counselling before there will be courts and assault because in our culture or our customs and civilization problems are solved within the family ... before the matter becomes domestic violence or when there are problems in the family [these] will be solved in this way. ... This is better than reaching the courts, for example.]

In this example, the English words intrude the stretch of discourse more frequently and the English words seem to represent key concepts.

Furthermore, severe cases of alternate code switching have also been detected. The severity and frequency of switching between Arabic and English warrants another category of code switching, which may be called interspersed code switching:

iḥna wara innu nkattar in-nas illi bishüfu kulli birnämig ?ala shän zayyi maḥaket, ?andina wägib igtimä?i, ?andinä mission. ma ni'darshi na?milha iza bas tül el-wa't preaching to the converted. al-muhim awi binnisbalna innu lamma nḥut documentary yeshüfha badal el-alfayn mït alf, bas mish ?ayzinhum ?ala shän yishtirü haga mu?ayyana zayyi ... mush muhimïn

binsbalna ?ala shän ir-ribḥ. muhimïn binnisbalna la'in at the end of the day. ?andina a very important social message and social duty to perform ...

il-ḥäga illi ?ayza arakkiz ?aleha illi hiyya our traditional strength ... il-quality. Ihna bin addim barämig miḥtäga tafkïr, barämig bit'assar ?ala afkär al-mutafarrigïn wil-attitudes bita?ithum. al-muhim innul-wäḥid yifḍal yegïb al-barämig dih. whiyya mush ṣählah el-wäḥid yil'ana wmush ṣählah el-wäḥid yeshtirïha ?ala mizaniyytna es-ṣughayyara. bassi di muhimma awi. byit-haya'li inu kulli mugtama? lazim yekün ?andu shäshit televizyön zayy as bi as. le'innu el-wäḥid yuḥuṭ bassi ḥagät mumkin tiba' zayyi background television. tiftaḥi et-televizyön wba?din tibtidi tḥaḍarï el-akl walla tkallimi el-awläd... bidha tarkïz. bidha el-wäḥid yshaghghal mukhkhu we yrakkiz ?ala afkarü w?adätu, reconsider, reflect ... fi khulaṣa. ḥatta lawil-birnämig khalla el-wähid angry aw depressed aw..as long as innu el-bernämig bikhalli el-wähid yefakkar we-reconsider e-shu?ür wel-attitude, nawaḥi el-mashäkil el-igtima?iyyah wal-qaḍaya el-muhimma ?ala el-?älam el-dawli, ?aṣ-ṣa?ïd ed-dawli ?aṣ-ṣa?ïd el-usträli ...

[We are behind (we support) that we increase (the number of) the people who watch every program because as I said we have a social duty we have a mission. We cannot perform if we all the time (we are) preaching to the converted. It is very important for us that when we show a documentary a hundred thousand (viewers) instead of two thousand see it. But we don't need them to buy a specific thing ... like ... They are not important to us for profit. They are important to us because at the end of the day we have a very important social message and social duty to perform ...]

[the thing I want to focus on which is *our traditional strength*, (the) *quality*. We present programs that need thinking, programs that influence the thoughts of viewers and their *attitudes*. It is important that one continue to bring these programs, which are not easy to find, and which are not easy to buy on our small budget. But these are very important. I believe every society should have a television screen such as the SBS because if one shows only things that could be as *background television*. You switch on the television then begin to prepare the food or talk to the children ... They need concentration, they need one to use his brain and focus on his thoughts and customs (traditions) and *reconsider, reflect* ... [to come out with] a summary. Even though the program makes one *angry* or *depressed* or *as long as* the program makes one think and *reconsider* the feeling(s) and *attitude* and aspects of ... social problems and important issues in the international world ... at the international level and Australian level.]

In this example, the frequency of switching between Arabic and English increases towards the end of the utterance thus reducing Arabic to conjunctions and prepositions. The positioning and morphological presentation of English fillers mirror English syntactic and morphological norms.

In this type of interspersed code switching, the pronunciation of English words is retained and in many cases, one senses a degree of affectation and a conscious decision to switch frequently into English as a display of linguistic prowess which usually gives both the

speaker and the listener a false sense of prestige. According to Clyne (1972), the linguistic and sociolinguistic aspects of language contact are so closely interwoven that neither can be discussed fully without recourse to the other. Understanding the extralinguistic factors determining a speaker's choice or decision to switch to English enables us to understand the linguistic phenomenon of code switching at this level.

Sequencing Deviance

Conversational analysis of sequencing of utterances has demonstrated that sequencing rules which govern conversations may be different for different languages or different varieties of the same language (Richards *et al*, 1985).

Native speakers instinctively know when and how to take turns in a conversation. They do this by a set of cues that include verbal and non-verbal gestures. When sequencing rules are deviated from, the conversation is momentarily jolted or communication is distorted.

The present study shows that English speaking Australians and Arab migrants have different sequencing rules. In prolonged exposure to Australian English, some migrants manifest Australian sequencing rules in Arabic that might not be effective in Arabic conversation, or at best extraneous to Arabic.

The Arabic variety spoken by Australian Arabs exhibits deviance from the norm in sequencing of utterances. In some cases, there seems to be an overlap between Australian English and Australian Arabic sequencing rules.

Speaker One: ittaṣalt bi ra'ïs ṣaḥift il-ahräm we ittafa'ti ma?äh ?ala shän yiba?tlina ta'rïr isbü?ï ...

[I called the chief editor of *Al-Ahram* newspaper and we agreed that he send us a weekly report ...]

Speaker Two: *mabrük!* [congratulations!]

('*Mabruk*' literally means blessed and does not fit in this sequence. A word such as *mumtäz, ?aẓïm,* or *tahänïna,* or even *bravo* seems more appropriate.)

Speaker One: [giving a customer a box of pastries]:

... sab?a we?shrïn dulär...

[twenty-seven dollars]

Speaker Two: [handing over a 50-dollar bill] *itfaḍḍal.* [here it is!]

Speaker One: *shukran...* [hands back the change] *ma? as-salemeh.*

[thank you] [goodbye]

Speaker Two: *shukran* [as he leaves the shop] *ma'? as-salemeh.*

[thank you] [goodbye]

The phrase *ma? as-salemeh* literally means *[go] with peace* (similar to the old English expression: 'God speed'). Speaker two erroneously repeats this phrase, thus exhibiting sequencing deviance.

Interjections

While certain interjections and exclamatory words are transferred from the first language to the second language (such as *aye* or *akh* vs *ouch*), English interjections seem to be used in Australian Arabic. In this case interjections might be an observable evidence of code-switching. However, since interjections are usually uttered in isolation of preceding or subsequent discourse, code-switching has little to do with their transfer from English into Arabic.

English interjections of the taboo category such as swearing are also noticeable in Australian Arabic.

Conclusion

Negative transfer from English into Arabic seems to produce a new variety of Arabic that diverges from the norms of Arabic spoken in the Arab world. Because of the extent of negative transfer, this low variety is becoming almost incomprehensible to Arabic speakers outside Australia. In some respect, it is likened to the Maltese language which because of the geographic isolation and the extent of divergence and negative transfer mainly from Italian has become incomprehensible to Arabic speakers although it is originally Arabic. Australian Arabic seems to be heading in the same direction. Such pseudo-Arabic will have serious implications for language maintenance programs and strategies in Australia.

The variety of Arabic discussed in this paper is an interim stage within the process of language shift from Arabic to English. While language shift seems to be inevitable and a natural outcome of prolonged exposure and integration, it is equally ineluctable that the interim variety of Arabic will continue to exist, so long as the influx of migrants continues.

The presence of such a variety of Arabic hinders the process of language maintenance. Whether the intention of maintaining languages is to maintain the mutlicultural society or bolster international trade through language diversity, it seems that the creation of a pseudo-language is alien to both the culture and the language and has ramifications that will have an impact on both intentions.

The present paper highlights certain aspects of the phenomenon of pseudo-Arabic. A thorough investigation is recommended.

Notes

1. Due to typological limitations, the following symbols are used to represent the long vowels in transcribing Arabic examples: ä = as in hat, ï = as in meet, ü = as in boot, a̲ = as in hate, and ö = as in boat.
2. Such as the Transfer Position Hypothesis.
3. The present study draws on a database of 400 hours of recorded interviews, broadcasts, and community transactions. The data was gathered during 1993 and 1994.

4. On the whole, the Arabs tend not to form enclaves or ghettoes as other ethnic communities do. Yet they tend to live in areas of ethnic concentration. For example, in Victoria, the Arab communities are found mainly in the northern suburbs of Melbourne.
5. The present paper uses Beardsmore's model of Negative Transfer as the basis of analysis.
6. It is customary in Arabic linguistics to represent these forms in standard verb patterns, e.g. *sharraja* instead of *sharraj* since the forms are also used in formal speech.
7. Contrary to the common belief that Arabic does not have a /p/ phoneme, an analysis of pronunciation patterns shows that the /b/ phoneme is replaced with a voiceless /p/ phoneme in suprasegmental assimilation (as in */hatha ḥapsun/* = this is a prison, Nasr, 1980). Some linguists might argue that this is an allophone conditioned by the voiceless /s/. In fact, it is a complete phonemic substitution of /p/ for /b/.
8. While *Milkbar* English might at first blush sound impressive in terms of pronunciation and acquired intonation and glibness, its ability to handle complex topics and abstract concepts is limited.
9. In this paper the term 'pro-verb' refers to a noun that functions as a verb.
10. Even colloquial Arabic requires a relative pronoun *(illi)* in similar sentence structures.
11. A translation of the term *aḍ-damīr al-ʔā'id* which Arabic grammarians use to refer to pronominal reflexes (after Eckman, 1987) or resumptive pronouns.
12. Examples from Eckman, 1987.
13. In this type of construction, the omission of the pronominal reflex belongs to stylistics. It is not conditioned by a syntactic or grammatical modifier.
14. *International English*, 17-18.
15. Further investigation of phonological transfer from English into Arabic is required.
16. This is caused by excessive lip movement resulting in an infantile sound.(See Eisenson and Boase, 1975, and Roache, 1983). However, this is by no means a common, standard, or consistent feature of Australian English, and some linguists do not accept that the /r/ phoneme is pronounced as /w/ in certain contexts, claiming that the hearer perceives the alveolar /r/ as a /w/. To many lay native speakers of English, especially non-Australians, the /r/ phoneme sounds like a /w/, and many of them find it difficult to produce the normative /r/ phoneme. The famous (or infamous) racist slur *two wongs won't make a white* must, after all, derive from Australian speakers' perception of the sound. Furthermore, the majority of migrants acquire the pronunciation habits of such people. They do not learn normative or received pronunciation. In addition, migrants learn English from other migrants who in the process transmit their own versions of English. This phenomenon itself is worthy of investigation. At any rate, whether the /r/ phoneme is perceived correctly or incorrectly, the fact remains that migrants who supposedly hear the /r/ phoneme as a /w/ will most likely learn it as a /w/ and transfer this assumed distortion to their first language.
17. Also called *dark*. Russian linguist Roman Jakobson uses *plain* and *emphatic* to refer to *light* and *heavy* (dark) versions of the same phoneme.
18. This stress should not be confused with the natural lilt characteristic of the Egyptian dialect.

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