

Changes in the Balawiy Bedouin Arabic Dialect of Saudi Arabia, 1985–2015

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Declaration of Originality

This work contains no material which has been accepted for the award of any other degree or diploma in any university or other tertiary institution and, to the best of my knowledge and belief, contains no material previously published or written by another person, except where due reference has been made in the text.

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Abstract

In this research, I investigate how the Balawiy Bedouin Arabic dialect spoken in northwestern Saudi Arabia has demonstrated language change during the past 30 years. With two groups of native Balawiy Bedouin speakers—one of participants aged at least 55 years and the other of participants aged no more than 25 years. Individual semistructured interviews were selected for the method of the research. Findings of interviews reveal language changes in the dialect's phonological, morphological, lexical, and semantic aspects, though syntax remains conservative between both generations of speakers. Above all, most changes occurred with lexical items, many of which have been borrowed from other Arabic varieties. Findings thus suggest that Balawiy Bedouin is not only changeable, but moreover influenced by other varieties of Arabic present in the environments of current Balawiy speakers such as Modern Standard Arabic. Ultimately, these findings should be of interest of linguists, Saudi grammarians, and all Balawiy Bedouin speakers.

Chapter 1: Introduction

Like any functional system, language—a system of communication—ceaselessly and spontaneously adapts in order to both recognise and reflect real-world changes. Although sweeping, large-scale change can prompt such shifts in language, the process often occurs far more gradually and even across generations of speakers, as my family’s history exemplifies. Though I am of Bedouin heritage and a native speaker of the North Western Saudi Arabia (NWSA) dialect, my Bedawi (Arabic adjective of *Bedouin*)-speaking father was born in the northern Saudi Arabian desert, where he experienced a more traditional Bedouin life of raising sheep and breeding camels. As an adolescent, my father and his family moved to the city of Tabuk in northwestern Saudi Arabia, where my father’s brothers had secured good positions in the military and where his parents estimated that their sons could receive better educations. Thus, along with most of their relatives, they left what few desert-dwelling family members remained and settled into their lives as urban Arabs. While at school from ages 12 to 18, my father consistently interacted with non-Bedawi-speaking urbanites and consequently altered his Bedouin speech in order to communicate with his teachers and friends. Although my father continues to speak the Bedawi Arabic dialect with his family, his language has been affected by sedentary dialects due to his close contact with diverse urban peoples and marriage to a woman born and raised in the city. From another angle, the speech of the older, desert-born Bedouin generation in my family to some extent differs from that of the second generation, though both clearly speak Bedawi. For instance, both groups use different words to indicate the same meaning; the older generation says, for example, /ʕugb/ (عقب) meaning ‘after’, whereas the younger generation says /baʕad/ (بعد). Therefore, two completely different words carry the same meaning. However, members

of both generations can understand each other quite well, yet simply choose to speak different words. However, this disparity is only one of many differences that can affect the phonological, morphological, syntactic, and semantic aspects of language.

As the brief family history above broadly shows, to understand any language we must be aware of influential changes affecting it. Current dialects do not exist *sui generis*, but derive from series of changes that determine their emergence and shape their survival. As Owens (2006, p. 8) states, ‘Modern dialects have an indispensable role in an account of Arabic language history’, which Behnstedt and Woidich (2013, p. 305) support by positing that current Arabic dialects, their expansion, and their relevance to Classical Arabic (CA) are vital aspects of research on Arabic historical linguistics. Guided by these perspectives, in this study I examine how the use of a special dialect in Saudi Arabia has changed across generations.

Aim of the Study

By analysing changes in spoken data, this research aims to investigate how the Balawiy Bedouin Arabic dialect spoken in north western Saudi Arabia has changed during the past 30 years. The following question is asked in this research: How has the use of Balawiy changed across generations?

The study has been conducted with two groups of differently aged participants living in Tabuk in northern Saudi Arabia: in one group, five Arabic speakers aged at least 55 years and, in the other, 5 Arabic speakers aged less than 26 years. Data were collected via semistructured interviews and analysed to understand and interpret changes that have occurred in the Arabic language during the past three decades.

Background

Language change over time—also called *historical linguistics* (McMahon 2001, p. 6748)—remains a widely discussed topic among a range of linguists, including Aitchison (1981), Bauer (2014), Hale (2007), Jones and Singh (2005), McMahon (1994), and Trask (1994). In the opening line of his book, Trask (1994, p. 1) writes, ‘Every language that people use changes constantly’, adding that a language’s speakers are primarily responsible for such change for better or for worse. In other words, a language’s speakers affect all developments in that language (Jones & Singh 2005, p. 29).

Arabic is one of the most commonly used languages in the world, with roughly 422 million Arabic speakers in the Arab world alone (Bokova, 2012). As a Semitic language, particularly of the South Semitic language group, Arabic bears sound changes and morphological correspondence in its derived verbal and internal plurals forms (Versteegh 2009, p. 170). Different Arabic dialects are spoken in approximately 60 countries and usually classified by their geographical region: the Levant, Mesopotamia, the Arabian Peninsula, and Egypt (Behnstedt & Woidich 2013, p. 317). Put differently, Arabic dialects are spoken from ‘an unbroken expanse from western Iran to Mauritania and Morocco and from Oman to northeastern Nigeria, albeit with vast uninhabited or scarcely inhabited areas and deserts in between’ (Behnstedt & Woidich 2013, p. 300).

Though all kinds of Arabic are generally related in their primary linguistic features, the language’s diverse dialects form drastically different variations. Saudi Arabia alone exhibits a wide range of dialects, some spoken by Bedouins, as Lewis, Simons and Fennig (2014) have outlined, in ‘Central Najdi (‘Ajmaan, Al-Qasiim, ‘Awaazim, Biishah, Haayil, Hofuf, Mutair, Najraan, Rashaayda, Riyadh, Rwala, Sudair,

'Utaiba, Wild 'Ali), North Najdi (Bani Khaalid, Dafir, Shammari), [and] South Anjdi (Aal Murrah, Najran)'. However, Saudi Arabia's current array of dialects does not resemble that of a century ago, and today's Arabic exhibits obvious differences between Bedouin and other sedentary vernaculars, as well as between those two vernacular types and CA, the language of the Qur'an used since the 6th century CE (Haywood & Nahmad 1965, p. 2). At the same time, CA is similar in some respects to Modern Standard Arabic (MSA), the formal Arabic language used in most of today's educational institutions and media. Within this mix, sedentary dialects represent the spoken dialects of urbanites that have features unlike the dialects of nomadic Bedouin Arabs.

Bedouin Dialects (Bedawi)

Corresponding to various Arab nations, Bedouin dialects (Bedawi) originated among Bedouins, a nomadic group that once settled in the desert, though most today live in cities and villages. In their unique way of speaking, Bedouin speakers' pronunciation resembles the pronunciation of CA and often involves using proverbs to communicate meaning, a combination that renders the Bedawi dialect similar to CA.

Following Palva's (1991) and Ingham's (1982) classification of Arabian Peninsula dialects, Versteegh (1997, p. 148) has stated that all Bedouin dialects in the Arabian Peninsula are currently classified as new types of Arabic. In this classification system, the name of each group nevertheless depends upon its geographical area, but it is still quite broad:

1. Northeastern Arabia, including Najd (e.g., Aniza, Sammar, and Syro–Mesopotamian Bedouin dialects);
2. Southwestern Arabia, including Yemen and Bahrain;

3. Western Arabia, including the Hejaz and Tihama Bedouin dialects); and
4. Northwest Arabia, including the Negev Desert, the Sinai Peninsula, southern Jordan, and northwestern Saudi Arabia (cited in Versteegh 1997, p. 148).

As such, Bedouin people—proud of being Bedouin and believing that various Bedouin tribes constitute the original people, culture, and race of the Arabian Peninsula (Versteegh 1997, p. 334)—may find the categorisation unsatisfactory. After all, since language not only describes geographical areas but also represents identity, describing a group as Bedouin recognises both its history as a nomadic people and its thoroughly Arabic identity.

Nevertheless, the above classification can be useful in illuminating current Arabic dialects and discovering more about them. It can help one understand the language better in two ways. First, classifying the several Bedouin dialects according to their region allows linguists to more easily distinguish them. Second, though they may continue to speak Bedawi, Bedouin people who have settled in cities are arguably no longer Bedouin owing to the dramatic shift in lifestyle. As the group's major demographic subset, city-dwelling Bedouins are no longer nomads in search of life-sustaining resources, but urban residents in search of new lives and better education for their children. In fact, linguists such as Behnstedt and Woidich (2013, p. 319) aver that there are no remaining Bedouins at all.

However, Bedouin dialects, even if now deriving from an urbanised, non-nomadic population, continue to be spoken by Bedouin people who have passed them on to subsequent generations. Though today's Bedouin Arabic speakers educated in schools may change their dialects to some extent, their uneducated but nevertheless city-dwelling

parents continue to speak Bedawi. Accordingly, Miller (2007, p. 6) maintains that whether a dialect is Bedouin will not indicate that its speakers live the nomadic Bedouin way of life, but certain features related to Bedouin dialects instead. Thus, in urban areas, we can categorize some varieties as Bedouin, rural or even mixed. Recently. More recently, Behnstedt and Woidich (2013, p. 319) have highlighted the same point: ‘Bedouin today is more of a convenient label for a bundle of features and tells us nothing about the present-day life of the speakers’. In Saudi Arabian cities, we can thus categorise some varieties of speaker as Bedouin, rural, or even mixed.

Clearly, changes to Bedouin dialects have occurred among this second generation of urbanites, whose close, sustained contact with other diverse urban residents has increasingly exposed its members to a range of Arabic dialects. As a result, the second generation’s use of Arabic has adapted for various reasons—for example, the assumption that their dialects need to change to be understood by others and even that such changes better reflect urban style (Stewart 1990, p. xi).

Balawiy as a Neglected Dialect

Among researchers of Bedouin dialectal varieties (e.g., Bedawi) in northern Saudi Arabia, Ingham (1986) has examined the traditions of the Al-Dhafir people and their northern Arabian Bedouin dialect, Palva (1991) has studied the north west Arabian (NWA) dialect group, and Prochazka (1988) has discussed features of the Bedouin dialect among others in Saudi Arabia. However, another Bedouin dialect is spoken in northwestern Saudi Arabia, specifically in Tabuk, that differs from the Syro–Mesopotamian, Eastern Egyptian, North Levantine, South Levantine, Negev, and Sinai–Bedawi Arabic dialects, as well as from the Bedawi spoken in the surrounding areas in

Saudi Arabia, including Al-Dhafir, Bani-Atiye, Hwetat, Šammari, and Anazi. Rarely mentioned in literature, this dialect—known as *Balawiy* in MSA and *Bluwe* in collegial contexts among its speakers—takes its name from the family of the people who speak it, members of which I interviewed to generate data. In his study of the grammar of Bedouin dialects in central and southern Sinai, De Jong (2011, p. 3) characterises Balawiy as a Bedouin dialect spoken in the northern Arabian Peninsula, which he supports with Bailey’s map (Figure 1) of the distribution of Bedouin in Sinai and surrounding areas. Some Bili—the tribal name of people who speak Balawiy—still live in Sinai today.

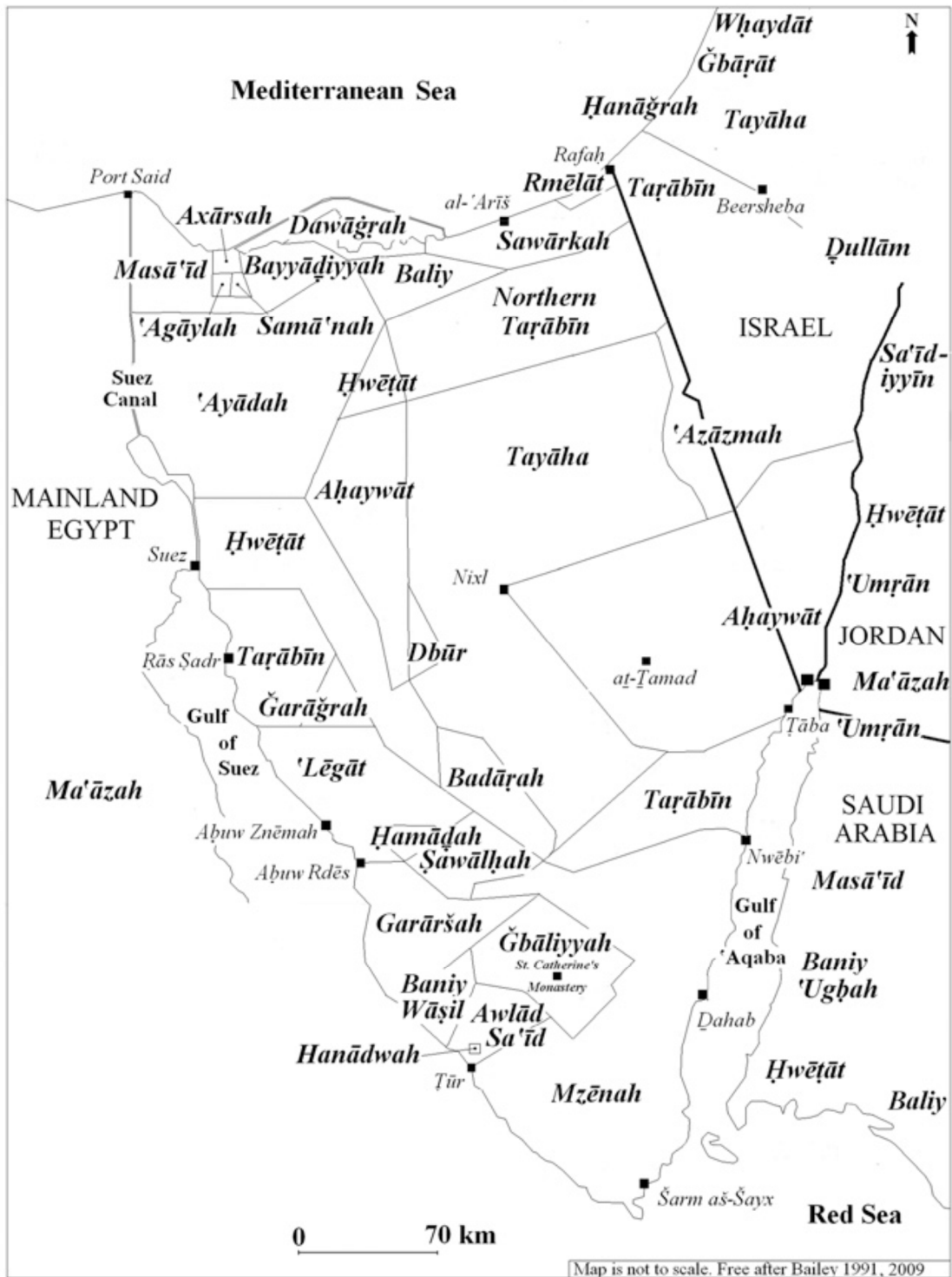


Figure 1: Distribution of Bedouin tribes, including Balawiy (Baliy), in Sinai (Bailey, cited de Jong 2011, p. 4)

Though Ingham (1982) and Palva (1991) have sought to classify Arabic dialects, they have not distinguished Balawiy as clearly as De Jong (1991) has. In ‘Is There a North West Arabian Dialect Group?’ Palva (1991, p. 155) claims that NWA dialect is spoken in Harrat al-Riha. Harrat al-Riha is part of the Bili homeland in northwestern Saudi Arabia. He argues that NWA dialects have outstanding features that distinguish them from those in northern Arabia. In this context and from a linguistic perspective, the term *neglected dialect* is a useful one. Though Balawiy has a long history and many speakers, its language resources remain few. Nevertheless, in fields such as genealogy, history, and literature, numerous Arabic sources discuss the Bili people and their contributions to the Arabian Peninsula (e.g., Ibn Hazm 1983, p. 211). In fact, a clear indication of the lack of attention to Balawiy as a dialect is that, though the Bili people have existed for more than 1,436 years according to the Hijri Islamic calendar—that is, since Islamic revelator Mohammad emigrated from Mecca to Medina (Ibn Hazm 1983, p. 211)—no formal statistics show the number of current Balawiy speakers. In response, the present paper seeks to pioneer the study of this neglected dialectical variety.

The Lifestyle of Balawiy Speakers

As mentioned earlier, Balawiy is the Bedouin dialectical variety of the Bili (also *Balī* or *Baliy*) people, most of whom reside in Tabuk and its provinces. Each tribe owns tribal land /*dīrah*/ (Dickson 2015, p. 45), and though the Bili homeland is in Al-Harrah, some Bili live in Jordan and Sinai (De Jong 2011, p. 3). Similar to other Bedouin peoples, the traditional activities of the Bili include raising sheep, breeding camels, and performing agricultural work (Versteegh 1997, p. 332). More similarly still, though these activities were once widely practiced by older Bili generations born and raised in the

desert, these now elderly people reside mostly in urban areas alongside younger generations. Though some members of the younger generations continue to practice traditional agricultural activities either as hobbies or as trades, many others have pursued more urban activities.

Features of the Bedouin Dialect

This section conceives of Bedouin dialectical varieties on a rural–urban scale by their most common linguistic features. Since some of these varieties are spoken in urban areas, this schema does not classify them according to their speakers’ lifestyles or associated geographical areas.

Linguists such as Behnstedt and Woidich (2013, p. 319), Palva (1991, p. 155), and Versteegh (1997) have identified common features among Bedouin dialectical varieties. Some of these features also appear in urban dialects, likely due to the interaction of urban and Bedouin people in the area. For example, one central feature noticeable in Bedouin speech is the use of the voiced velar plosive /g/ in contrast to the voiceless uvular /q/ spoken by sedentary people. Though seemingly a feature that can help to clearly distinguish Bedouin dialects from others, some non-Bedouin sedentary groups also use the voiced /g/ in their speech, including in the Nile Delta, Upper Egypt, and Sudan, as a result of settling and mixing with Bedouin people (Blanc 1964, p. 28).

Given the above and other similar considerations, certain features can be conceived to represent Bedouin dialects, though not exclusively. For one, interdental consonant preservation is a marked feature of Bedouin, for in most Bedouin dialects, speakers clearly pronounce /t/ and /d/—for instance, /daraba/ (‘He hit’) in CA is pronounced /darab/ in Naǧdī Arabic (Versteegh 1997, p. 143). Unlike the dialects of

sedentary speaking groups, Bedouin preserves the feminine forms in the second- and third-person plural forms of verbs and pronouns—for example, in Naǧdī /ktiban/ is feminine for ‘They wrote’, whereas /ktibaw/ is the masculine form.

In term of morphological features, Bedouin dialects use the pronominal suffix of the third-person singular masculine /-ah/ or /-ih/, whereas sedentary dialects employ /-u/ or /-o/. Furthermore, some northern and eastern dialects in the Arabian Peninsula adopt the prefix vowel /a-/ in verbs, though /i-/ is the prefix vowel in most Arabic dialects. Bedouin dialects moreover use the feminine singular in the agreement of the inanimate plurals and /-an, -en, -in/ as optional indefinite markers or /tanwīn/ (Versteegh 1991, p. 149).

While the above outlines the general features of Bedouin dialects, the focus of the present research falls on the Balawiy dialectal variety. As any Bedouin dialect, Balawiy shares some features of other Bedouin dialects, though they vary within the Bedouin group of dialects. In his study, Palva (1991, p. 155) indicated specific characteristics in NWA dialects that can differentiate them from northern Arabian ones. NWA dialects could include Balawiy because Bili people live in the northwest of Saudi Arabia. For one, NWA dialects show neither indefinite markers /tanwīn/ nor the affricatives /k/ and /g/. Moreover, the final /n/ is absent in the imperfect second-person feminine singular and both second- and third-person masculine plural forms.

Nevertheless, although attempts to include Balawiy in the dialectal group have depended on locations addressed by Palva (1991, p. 155), some NWA features might not apply to the Balawiy dialect. For example, Balawiy speakers use /n/ in the second- and third-person masculine plural and second-person feminine singular forms, as the

following four and five chapters explain in greater detail. After describing Bedouin dialects and their features, the next part of this paper focuses on the Balawiy dialect and the changes it has undergone across recent generations of its speakers.

In general, investigations into language practices in Saudi Arabia reveal that change has occurred in the Arabic language across generations. Notably, Arabic has developed by adapting to the realities of new generations and of global developments in a process that validates Wilhelm von Humboldt's (1836) statement that '*There can never be a moment of true standstill in language*' (cited in Aitchison 1981, p. 4). Accordingly, Palva (1991, p. 151) maintains that given considerable social structural changes on the Arabian Peninsula, there is currently great demand for a comprehensive description of Arabic dialects, as well as authentic collections of texts representing the different types. In response, I conduct this research from the perspective of both linguists and native Arabic speakers.

Conclusion

In presenting a general overview of Bedouin's situation in Saudi Arabia, this chapter has discussed some features of Bedouin and one of its previously unexamined dialects, Balawiy. In continuation, the following chapter of the study presents a literature review highlighting themes such as the history of language change, its reasons, and its types. Supporting examples are derived from different varieties of Arabic to provide a general overview of the language's dialects, chiefly as a means to better understand Balawiy as one of many such dialects that shares characteristics with others.

Chapter 2: A Literature Review

The Study of Language Change

As early research addressing the phenomenon of language change demonstrates, linguists before the mid-20th century did not believe that language change was observable. In the 1930s, for example, pioneering structural linguist Bloomfield (1933, p. 347) attested that ‘the process of linguistic change has never been directly observed . . . such observation, with our present facilities, is inconceivable’. Decades later, Weinreich (1953, p. 106), a pioneering linguist in observing language change, highlighted the idea of language shift, which he defined as a change in one language to another, and identified sociolinguistic factors that motivate such change. Moreover, linguistic anthropologist Charles Hockett (1958, p. 439), despite deducing that language change had occurred given its observable consequences, continued to doubt that any observation of the sound change itself was possible. Similar scepticism of the observability of language change prevailed in the early 1970s, when Labov (1972, p. 44) cited evidence of noticeable variations and fluctuations in language that linguists had failed to recognise—in particular, the shifting /r/ sound spoken by residents of a New York community. In their case, the presence of the /r/ sound in speech was not random, but specifically used to demonstrate social status, mostly as an emulation of the speech patterns of prestigious New Yorkers. With these observations, Labov (1972, p. 45-49) revealed to the world—linguists in particular—a host of new possibilities for studying the evolution of language, thus forever broadening the concept of historical linguistics.

Language Change

Historical linguistics refers to the study of how language changes over time (McMahon, 2001, p. 6748). For any language, the discipline involves examining that

language's evolution from earlier to current stages of use and development. Evidence from research in historical linguistics generally shows that languages do not change as a whole, but instead bear minor changes at particular times—changes invariably brought about by the language's speakers. According to Zuckermann (2006, p. 57), language change may result from accommodation and negotiation between speakers of two different idiolects, to which idea he adds, 'A language is an abstract ensemble of idiolects . . . more like a species than an organism'. Also, McMahon (1994, p. 8) has posited, since people usually change the languages that they speak as a means to communicate in unprecedented, often more effective ways, they are liable to make such changes unconsciously. Accordingly, historical linguists study not only the history of languages, but also when and why linguistic changes occur, as well as how languages relate to one another by way of these changes. In the field, they often study different languages and varieties of language—for example, dialects—as a means to better understand their cognates.

Historical linguists can study language change by following two general methodologies: the *diachronic method* and *synchronic method*. Whereas the former refers to the study of diachronic language change—that is, changes that occur in a language over time—the latter examines language as it exists at a particular point in time and thus as independent from its history. Saussure (1974, p. 83), who presented the terms in his work, explained that the two methods should not overlap in studies of language, writing that 'the opposition between the two viewpoints—synchronic and diachronic—is absolute and allows no compromise'. Thus, linguists may study a language synchronically or diachronically. With respect to Saussure's perspective, however, the

study of language should conceive any language as a whole, and to accordingly gain a holistic picture of a language, linguistic researchers should integrate both diachronic and synchronic methods. From one angle, McMahon (1994, p. 10) explains that ‘synchrony and diachrony, or the present and the past, cannot in practice be as separate as Saussure’s dictum assumes, either in language or elsewhere’. From another angle, the study of language can be likened to the study of crisis; though an observer can examine the damage that a crisis purportedly caused, it is impossible to understand the reason or reasons for the crisis unless he or she also examines history—that is, what happened prior to the crisis. To extend this analogy, linguists should integrate both diachronic and synchronic methods in their research toward more clearly understanding both the causes and effects of language change.

Reasons for Language Change

During the mid-20th century, linguists debated which factors were crucial in the phenomenon of language change. On the one hand, Weinreich (1953) posited that external sociolinguistic factors play a pivotal role in language change, and along with Labov and Herzog (cited in Zuckermann 2009, p. 40), averred that social factors and linguistics are interdependent of each other in the development of language change. On the other hand, Welmers (1970, p. 4) averred that, in terms of language change, external factors are less important than internal ones. In contrast to both arguments, however, in this study I maintain that any element, whether related to the society or language itself in question, can contribute to language change or, in some cases, result from the interaction of both external and internal factors. However, even then, linguists continue to dispute discrete criteria for internal and external factors, though broad consensus maintains that

major distinctions depend on the nature of the linguistic change (Jones & Singh 2005, p. 4). In what follows, I therefore explain some reasons for such transformations in language, primarily from Jean Aitchison's (1981, p. 113) perspective on the phenomenon, which upholds two broad categories: external sociolinguistic causes and internal psychological ones.

Among proposed external sociolinguistic causes, fashionability has often been cited as a source of major trends in language change. In the late 1960s, Paul Postal (1968, p. 283) even asserted that 'there is no more reason for language to change than . . . there is for jackets to have three buttons one year and two the next'. Four years later, Postal's assessment found clear evidence in Labov's (1972) findings regarding the /r/ sound in New Yorkers' speech and its association with social prestige. In fact, Labov's (1972) results showed that specifically lower- and middle-class residents—women in particular—imitated the upper class in their speech by including /r/ in words such as *beard* and *bear*.

Albeit in an entirely different context, fashionability has also saliently factored into language change in Saudi Arabia. Indeed, to demonstrate high status and prestige, Saudis tend to change their style of speaking in certain situations, as observable in their Arabic–English *code-switching*, a phenomenon in which speakers alternate among at least two languages in their speech (Poplack 2000, p. 264). Though often used solely to affect social status, code-switching in Saudi Arabia has nevertheless constituted a major source for language changes observed in Arabic. As code-switching contexts have gradually come to replace precedent contexts, the substitution of norms has compounded language changes. As both Alsbai (2011) and Abalhassan and Alshalawi (2000) have

shown in studies of code-switching among Saudi speakers, the norm of displaying prestige and social status in turn further encourage people to rely upon Arabic–English code-switching.

Along with fashionability, another external sociolinguistic cause of language change is foreign influence. Aitchison (1981, p. 115) has identified this factor among immigrants as they learn the languages of new host societies and who, in turn, inevitably introduce features of their native languages into their adopted ones. In becoming familiar with such usage, their intimate communities are liable to spontaneously imitate those changes in language. A similar dynamic characterises how indigenous people, who in learning adopted languages imperfectly, can also bring about language change.

In Saudi Arabia, though the factor of foreign influence has characterised Arabic speech communities for centuries. 10th-century grammarians such as Ibn Jinni declared that the Arabic language was not changing and that any changes should be conceived as errors. In that sense, the adapted Arabic spoken in towns would be regarded as incorrect *laĥn* which refers to grammatical solecism (Soliman, 2008, p. 106) and the Bedouin form as native and thus purer. By the same token, any error in Bedouin speech would be conceived to have resulted from the speaker’s contact with sedentary, town-dwelling speakers of Arabic (Versteegh 1997, p. 339). Later, in the 14th century, Ibn Haldun (cited in Versteegh 1997, p. 102) continued to describe the influence of non-native elements upon changes in Arabic as a corruption of the language: ‘When Islam came and they [Arabic speakers] left the Higaz [Hejaz] . . . their [linguistic] habits began to change as the result of the different ways of speaking what they heard from those who tried to learn

Arabic, for hearing is the source of linguistic habits. As the result of this influence, Arabic became corrupt’.

Ibn Haldun in 1356 (cited in Versteegh 1997, p. 102) went on to predict that traditional Arabic and thus the Quran would become ‘incomprehensible’, an idea that Versteegh (ibid.) has termed *fasad al-lugha*, or ‘language corruption’. As evidence that the notion of language corruption continues to prevail, Miller (2007, p. 4) has recently indicated that Arabic vernaculars that developed in cities beyond the Arabian Peninsula progressively came ‘to be considered as more corrupt than the more pure Bedouin vernaculars of the Arabian Peninsula’, largely due to Bedouins’ increased contact with non-Arabic speakers in those cities. Consequently, in Arabic-speaking cities, current dialects—or what are known as *sedentary dialects*—represent language change that Bedouins may look upon unfavourably.

However, I reject the idea that Arabic has been corrupted by foreign influence, principally because a feature of any language is changeability. As evidence of Trask’s (1994, p. 1) claim that any language changes continuously due to its use, Yadin and Zuckermann (2009, p. 8) have indicated that shifts in language are inevitable. Indeed, Arabic’s current form clearly differs to a certain extent from that of 100 years ago. However, because Arabic speakers can nevertheless mostly understand the older form, the difference between the two forms is not drastic. Also, language change characterises only certain aspects of a language, which in changing can firmly alter or expand only elements of that language. In that light, the term ‘language corruption’ is an exaggerated, characterisation of the effect of foreign influence upon language. From an opposite perspective, foreign elements can beneficially effect language change by modifying

adapted languages to better meet social needs. As a result, a new language—a new form of meaning and expression—emerges.

Another external sociolinguistic factor—namely, the need of new communicative functions—can also clearly induce language change. Since any language functions as a means of communication, people are liable to change aspects of language as a means to meet current, perhaps circumstantial, needs for meaning. For one, throughout the world's development, people have needed to expand languages to describe unprecedented technologies and social situations, as well as their effects. However, Aitchison (1981, p. 124) has argued that alterations introduced to fulfil social needs are more common than inventions of new vocabulary—for example, the replacement of 'garbage' with 'non-productive ex-consumer materials' in order to avoid offending employees (Laurie, cited in Aitchison 1981, p. 124). Though there may be a reason for changes effected to meet social needs, such reasoning is often overlooked or misunderstood. The situation of the word *radio* in Saudi Arabia exemplifies the lasting power of such changes; although Arabic grammarians have invented a well-known Arabic word for it—/miðjaʕ/ (مذياع) — Arabic speakers continue to use the borrowed word *radio* instead.

Psychological factors can also prompt language change (Aitchison 1981, p. 129; Jones & Singh 2005, p. 5), mostly related to the nature of language itself. Phonology bears the greatest effects of psychologically based changes, unless those changes are conceived to constitute ordinary change, as Neogrammarians have maintained (McMahon 1994, p. 14). Simply put, the origin of these phonological modifications is that people, seeking to make articulation easier, tend to simplify the languages they use, which can induce sustained changes. By extension, another viewpoint (Aitchison 1981, p. 166)

holds that the natural use of vocal organs can encourage a sequence of *consonant–vowel–consonant–vowel*. In that sense, if two consonants are adjacent and thus hinder the natural flow of speech, then people are more likely to assimilate the second consonant. As such, assimilation can involve modifications in a language’s phonology as a type of language change.

However, not only external sociolinguistic factors, but also internal ones are observable in language change in Arabic. Abu Mathkour (2015, p. 4) has provided a clear example of sound change via anticipatory assimilation in Classical Arabic, *anticipatory assimilation* meaning ‘assimilation in which a following sound has an effect on a preceding one’ (Dictionary com, 2015). In the phrase /hammazinn maʃaʔin/ (هماز مشاء), the /n/ sound when pronounced is identical with the /m/ sound, meaning that the word is pronounced /hammazim maʃaʔin/. Since this example appears in the Qur’an and nearly all Arabic speakers who read it articulate the phrase as such, the change has become known as *idgham*, or the assimilation of one letter with another (Nasser & Brill Academic Publishers 2013, p. 121).

Types of Change

The concept of language change does not suggest that an entire language changes, but only some of its elements. More specifically, language change can be studied as it appears in aspects of phonology, morphology, syntax, semantics and lexicology, all of which I describe in what follows.

Phonological Change

Phonology is a component of any language system and refers to the study of its sound system; this includes the study of any changes that commonly affect it. In many cases, however, detecting phonological change can be difficult. As Bauer (2014, p. 12) has explained, ‘Without proper phonetic training, you may not be able to pin down what the differences are, though you will be able to hear that they do not all sound the same’. For instance, speakers might alternate between pronouncing a sound as voiced and as unvoiced, as in Spanish, whose speakers pronounce the unvoiced sound /p/ as voiced /b/ when /p/ appears between two vowels (Campbell 2004, p. 17). However, sound change can affect not only single sounds, but also vowels, consonants, diphthongs, and clusters. Though sound changes can moreover affect stress and intonation, such changes are not usually documented in writing and are difficult to study (McMahon 1994, p. 14).

As a major topic in historical linguistics, sound change has received sustained attention in linguistics literature—for example, in chapters by Campbell (2004), Hale (2007), and McMahon (1994). Campbell (2004, p. 16) underscores the importance of understanding the essential role of sound change in ‘the comparative methods and hence also in linguistic reconstruction, in internal reconstruction, in detecting loanwords, and in determining whether languages are related to one another’. In these and other studies, sound change is categorised as either conditioned or unconditioned and as either regular or irregular. For Campbell (2004, p. 17), regular sound change is change that regularly occurs in situations similar to those in which the same change has already occurred. In this process, whenever circumstances occur that resemble those that induced a sound change, the same sound change will also occur. For example, the abovementioned

pronunciation of the Spanish /p/, whenever sandwiched by two vowels, regularly changes to /b/. By contrast, irregular sound change—meaning irregular change, not the irregularity of the sound—occurs unpredictably and arbitrarily.

As part of another way to classify sound change, conditioned sound change refers to change that can occur only in a specific environment (Campbell 2004, p. 17).

Conditional sound change can occur in both partial and complete assimilation (assimilation early defined see page 29), as well as in dissimilation and epenthesis (McMahon 1994, p. 15). In Arabic, an example of partial assimilation occurs when the sound /n/ is followed by /b/, in which /n/ accommodates the bilabiality of /b/ and becomes /m/, as in /inbaʕaθ/ pronounced /imbaʕaθ/ (Abu Mathkour 2015, p. 4). By contrast, unconditioned sound change refers to change in a specific sound that occurs in all situations. Such changes are also described as sound shifts, in which a considerable number of changes affect different sounds.

The Neogrammarian Theory of Regularity

A notable theory of the history of sound change is the Neogrammarian theory of regularity, or *Neogrammarian hypothesis*, which holds that rules govern all sound change (Verner 1978, p. 36). According to this hypothesis, sound change is regular without exception, meaning that even sporadic, conditioned sound change has rules that linguists should seek to discover. As Campbell (2004, p. 18) has indicated, Neogrammarians use the term *sound laws* to refer to sound changes. They situate historical linguistics among other sciences, all of which have laws (i.e., statements) that must be followed.

This theory poses some significant implications. One, the regularity principle ignores any sporadic and conditioned sound change. As McMahon (1994, p. 19) has

illustrated, Neogrammarians interpret any irregular sound change as a regular sound change altered to become irregular. Two, the theory is limited in being ungeneralisable to all language change, as McMahon (1994, p. 22) has also indicated: ‘Neogrammarians did not claim that the same sound in the same context in different languages or communities would always undergo the same change’. Additionally, Sturtevant (1947, p. 109) has illustrated that ‘phonetic laws are regular but produce irregularities’, meaning that the regularity of sound change can cause irregularity in morphology and spontaneously build complexity in the system.

Morphological Change

Morphology denotes the study of a language’s word forms (Matthews 1991, p. 3) and, as a component of any language, can be amenable to language change.

Morphological change often interferes both synchronically and diachronically with phonology and syntax, which complicates distinguishing whether the change occurs specifically in morphology or in other components. For instance, in Modern English, /s/ is added to many nouns to indicate the plural form, though the rule does not apply to all nouns—for example, the plural of *foot* is *feet*. While such a trend can be conceived as a morphological change, historically it is a phonological change, as McMahon (1994, p. 69) has illustrated, clarifying that in ‘*fōt–fōti*, the final vowel showed plural number, but the sound change of i-mutation subsequently fronted /o:/ whenever /i/ appeared in the next syllable, giving *fōt–føti*. The vowel in the plural form unrounded in OE (old English) to give *fēt*, and the suffix dropped, leaving *fōt–fēt*, which ultimately became *foot–feet*’.

Anderson (2015, pp. 264– 85) has countered that morphological change can occur independently and without interfering with other linguistic components. Borrowing and other changes that affect lexical elements can be described as morphological change simply because they affect lexical content; for example, in Middle English, the suffix *-ment* in words such as *achievement* is borrowed from Old French and Anglo–Norman French. Morphological change can also result from the effects of changes in a language’s phonological and syntactic aspects, as shown in the following paragraphs. According to Anderson (2015, p. 283), unique to morphological change is its absolute effect upon a language’s entire morphology—that is, ‘it consists simply of the playing out of the general mechanisms of linguistic change within this particular component of the grammar, not in the working of distinctive processes specific to this domain’.

Morphology has been conceived in terms of both analogy and natural morphology. Until the late 20th century, morphological change continued to be regarded as analogy, for the concept of morphological change itself had experienced no significant development. At the time, Arlotto (1972, p. 130) defined *analogy* as ‘a process whereby one form of a language becomes more like another with which it is somehow associated’, though the concept has more recently been defined simply as ‘structural similarity’ (Itkonen 2005, p. 1). Accordingly, amid new theories concerning morphological aspects of grammar, linguistic research shifted toward examining analogy as a facet of language involved with morphological change (Anderson 1992, p. 365).

McMahon (1994, pp. 71–72) has described two regular, systematic subdivisions of analogy: analogical extension and analogical levelling. On the one hand, analogical extension generalises a morpheme to new forms; for example, in Modern English, /s/ has

been generalised to mark the plural and possessive forms, while in Old English the inflectional system was different and far more complex. The Old English word for today's book was /bōc/ for singular and /bēc/ for plural, which with analogical regularity eventually became *books* (McMahon 1994, p. 73). Analogical extension often characterises the speech of children, as when they generalise the use of /s/ to indicate every noun's plural—to use a previous example, foot–foots. As in this and other examples, via frequent and common use, language resists the regularity hypothesis (McMahon 1994, p. 73).

On the other hand, analogical levelling is the subdivision of analogy that requires paradigms. A paradigm consists of a group of inflectional forms derived from the same root morpheme and in which change can occur. In this subdivision, the connection between analogy and sound change appears due to a tendency to apply different sound forms within a paradigm. As in the above example, the change of the two forms of the morpheme foot—that is, foot (singular) and feet (plural)—can occur in the paradigm itself, though two different sounds are ultimately used: /ʊ/ and /i/ (McMahon 1994, p. 73). Analogy can alternatively be sporadic and irregular, as evidenced in folk etymology, back-formation, and blending, all of which Campbell (2004, pp. 114–118) has described. For one, folk etymology reconstructs a part of a word to make it understandable in terms of the language, as in the shift of the French *cariole* 'covered carriage' to the English *carry all*. By contrast, back-formation creates a new lexeme form from an existing word—in English, for instance, the noun *editor* from the verb *edit*. Lastly, *blending* refers to the process of combining two words in order to produce a new one, whose meaning relates to the meanings of words from which it is invented. For example, *brunch* is a

blended word from *breakfast* and *lunch* (Campbell 2004, p. 119). Anderson (2015, p. 279) has recently ascribed such changes to insufficient learning, arguing that these three types of change arise despite rules of language. According to this logic, as younger generations have simplified grammar due to their failure to incorporate complex rules, simplification has not motivated such change, but a general inability to integrate morphological complexities into everyday grammar.

Along with analogy, natural morphology is another framework for conceiving morphological change that linguists support, including Dressler (1985) in ‘On the Predictiveness of Natural Morphology’ and Bauer (2003) in his introduction to morphology. Though related to the markedness theory, natural morphology more closely refers to morphology in natural linguistics, the primary focus of which is naturalness. From one angle, naturalness and markedness in language appear in inverse proportions; in other words, the more natural any morphological phenomenon, the less it is marked, and vice versa (Galeas 2001, p. 9). For Galeas (2001, p. 9), natural morphology hypothesises that a language’s structure is natural—that is, it can be acquired at early stages of learning, defies all language development and changes, is rarely affected by language disorders, and is easily decoded. By extension, McMahon (1994, p. 99) identifies three aims in Natural Morphology: to explain why certain morphological changes do not occur in languages, to understand the existence of unnatural phenomena and to seek solutions for conflicts posed among criteria of naturalness, and to hypothesise directions of future morphological change.

Transmission Theory

While reading Anderson (2015), I became intrigued by the idea of the transmission of linguistic structure from one generation to the next and its relation to language change, albeit only the morphological sort. Anderson (2015, p. 266) has posited that ‘even if a new generation had exactly the same experience to go on as the preceding one, change would still be possible so long as there were some aspects of grammar that were under-determined by the data’. In this thinking, since new generations can freely make different choices toward changing languages by their use of them, intergenerational differences in language can be observed and the changes explored. For example, Anderson (2015, p. 266) has shown that since the structure of *helico-pter* ‘spiral-wing’ has not occurred to learners, *helico-pter* has been reanalysed as ‘heli-copter’, referring to another means of aviation: the gyrocopter.

As mentioned above in the discussion of foreign influence (p. 26) as an external sociolinguistic cause of language change, change by transmission is generally caused by non-native speakers. By contrast, Anderson’s (2015) case refers to transmission involving native speakers who learn language spontaneously and without effort, which constitutes a perspective on transmission theory that can better clarify how the Balawiy Bedouin dialect has changed between two generations of native speakers. For instance, what is known as *false transmission* among native speakers can explain some language change between these generational groups. Supporting Anderson’s (1973) idea, Kroch (2007, p. 701) has indicated that native adult speakers can easily make such a failure, adding that ‘if the conditions of linguistic transmission are altered, for example, by contact with another speech community, then change may well occur’. False transmission can occur in

the early years of first-language acquisition, about which Anderson (1973) has indicated that children who learn a native language may notice differences between their speech and that of other speakers despite similar variety and input. This difference can result in false transmission and, though clearly representing mistakes, children may fail to correct such incorrectly transmitted aspects of language if the difference is slight (Anderson, cited in Kroch 2007, p. 702).

Syntactic Change

Moving from words to sentences, language change also affects *syntax*, which concerns the study of the grammatical rules and patterns that speakers use to form sentences. As all components of language, syntax has over time been exposed to language change, albeit exclusively at the level of structure. According to Kroch (2007, p. 700), syntactic change varies from language to language and across each language's history can differ. For example, from the mid-centuries to today, Japanese syntax has barely registered any substantial changes, whereas English shows several different levels of such change: at the level of clauses, in which the order has shifted from a verb–subject to subject–verb order, and at the level of verbal phrases, whose order has changed from object–verb to verb–object.

McMahon (1994, pp. 107–137) has offered a more comprehensive view on the history of syntactic change and theories used to explain the phenomenon. Prior to the 1960s, studies of syntactic change were overshadowed by research on other components of linguistics, including sound change and analogy, largely because Neogrammarians focused above all on phonological similarities among and within languages. Though these linguists attempted to reconstruct the syntactic patterns of Proto-Indo-European

languages, they primarily described what they observed without offering any explanations. In the 1960s, however, the cornerstone of the theory of syntactic change—that is, generative syntax—was developed (McMahon 1994, p. 108). With this concept, the theory of syntactic change considers a language's system of rules, called grammar, which is used to generate words and thereby construct grammatical sentences far from having semantic meaning (Chomsky 1957, p. 106). Since syntax is regular and predictable, any linguistic case that does not follow syntax is considered to be idiosyncratic and dubbed lexicon (Chomsky 1965, p. 87). However, this mid-20th-century theory did not become mainstream, mostly given its sole attention to syntax and subsequent neglect of other components of language.

Kroch (2007, p. 700) has stated that language change can also be conceived as 'a failure in the transmission of linguistic features'. In that sense, syntactic change encompasses a part of language change caused by some features' failure to receive correct transmission according to consensual rules. About syntactic change, Kroch (2007, p. 700) has claimed that 'the feature that learners fail to acquire is learnable in principle, having been part of the grammar of the language in the immediate past'. This trend runs counter to the notion that people learn from their mistakes. With failed syntactic transmission during language acquisition, speakers both maintain and propagate mistakes, which come to be described as changes made to simplify language acquisition.

Lightfoot's (1991) contribution to the study of syntactic change is in the transparency principle, which concerns how children acquire data input and how language change occurs due to the failed transmission of such data. In describing any language system as chaotic, Lightfoot (1991) linked languages to continuously increasing

social populations, thereby suggesting a construction of language expansion in which novel structures are produced randomly and unpredictably. These random constructions in terms of morphological change in turn cause changes in the input data, which affects children's acquisition of the data by setting parameters different from those of the older generation. In proposing this theory, Lightfoot (1991) therefore challenged the idea of endogenous language change. In attending only to grammatical changes based on corresponding changes in data used to set new grammatical parameters, Lightfoot's (1991) approach ignores grammatical changes that can result from other components of language, including phonology and morphology.

McMahon (1994, p. 137) has criticised Lightfoot's (1991) transparency principle, calling it 'undefinable' insofar as the reasons why an element of language cannot be learned by children remain unclear—that is, whether this stems from the unavailability of grammar or from children's innate incapacity. A decade later, Kroch (2007, p. 704) also cast doubt on Lightfoot's theory as 'a fragile assumption' that neither considers failed transmission in learning nor refers to frequent, stable drift usage over a sustained period.

Semantic and Lexical Change

Semantics concerns meaning. Saeed (2003, p. 1) has defined this component of language as 'the study of meaning communicated through language . . . the study of the meanings of words and sentences'. Similar to other aspects of language, word meanings change over time. Semantic change perhaps exerts more significant effects on language, for word meaning can be flexibly reinterpreted within its language (Nevalainen 1999, p. 434). According to Trask (1994, p. 41), one familiar example of such semantic change

has occurred in the meaning of the word *gay*, as a rhyme written in 1948 on the occasion of the birth of Britain's Prince Charles can illustrate:

*The child that is born on the Sabbath day
Is fair and wise, and good and gay.*

In interpreting *gay* in the rhyme, readers since 1950s could understand the poem to mean that the child is homosexual, though *gay* here instead intends to mean *lively* or *cheerful*, according to the word's traditional meaning at the time. However, according to Oxford dictionaries (2015), the meaning of *gay* was officially published as a term for *homosexual* in 1960s.

Next to other kinds of changes, changes in lexical inventory and in word meanings—that is, semantic changes—are liable to receive wider use among native speakers (McMahon 1994, p. 174). To clarify the diversity of semantic changes, Luján (2010), Pyles (cited in Stehling 2014, pp. 25–34), and Trask (1994) have identified their different types—namely, generalisation, specialisation, loss and gain of meaning, projection and amelioration, euphemism, metaphor, borrowing, loss of intensity, and formal influence—most of which are discussed in the following subsections.

1. Generalisation and Specialisation

Referring to generalisation and specialisation, Trask (1994, p. 41) indicates that the most common semantic changes either broaden or narrow meaning—that is, either generalise or specify the meaning of the lexeme. For example, *caballo* in Spanish means 'horse', and the derived word *caballero* means 'horseman'. However, *caballero* is perhaps most often seen on the doors of men's restrooms. As an explanation, since in the past the practice of riding horses was reserved mostly to people of high social status,

caballero came to mean ‘man of quality’. At present, the Spanish *caballero* is thus a polite equivalent of the English *gentleman*. In terms of generalisation and specialisation, the meaning of the word has thus changed by being broadened .

2. Euphemism

Stehling (2014, p. 28) has posited that changes in word meaning are usually prompted by social development or particular linguistic contexts. At the level of linguistic context, avoiding the use of taboo words, for example, and replacing them with more socially acceptable words is known as *euphemism*, or as Barber (1997, p. 251) has described it, the ‘transfer of meaning’. In short, euphemism substitutes an existing word that people would rather not hear or say with a new, more palatable one—for instance, the English phrasal verb *pass on* instead of *die*.

3. Metaphor

Metaphor refers to ‘the figurative use of a word’ (Stehling 2014, p. 32) and relies on similarities ‘between the vehicle and the tenor of the metaphor’, as Luján (2010, p. 289) has added. With metaphor, both words must have at least one shared characteristic. For example, the word *mouse* can be a metaphor of the computer device, both of which exhibit a similar shape. Lakoff and Johnson (cited in Luján 2010, p. 290) have shown that metaphor occurs commonly in language and is essential in understanding our lives, suggesting that metaphor also plays a crucial role in semantic change. Furthermore, the same metaphor can occur in two different languages; for example, the English *star*, or ‘a bright celestial body’, can be a metaphor for a famous performer, just as the Arabic /*najm*/ can mean both ‘star’ and ‘a famous performer’. Indeed, it seems Arabic calqued this metaphor from English. The same is true of *mouse*, which in Arabic can additionally

embody both its literal meaning and refer to the computer hardware. As such, the phenomenon of metaphor can be interpreted to refer to common metaphors used in a particular language and how that same metaphor can carry meaning in different languages.

4. Metonymy

Another mechanism of semantic change is *metonymy*, which for Newmark (1988, p. 125) occurs when ‘the name of an object is transferred to take the place of something else with which it is associated’. Unlike metaphor, which is based on similarities, metonymy is based on contiguity in time, type, or material, among other things. For example, in English, *glass* refers to the object made as well as the material used (Luján 2010, p. 291).

5. Amelioration and Pejoration

In some cases, semantic change occurs in the implications of word meaning. If such change is positive, it is known as *amelioration*, and if negative, *pejoration*. For instance, the positive connotation of *addicted* ‘learned, skilful’ in Early Modern English has changed to purport a negative connotation by suggesting obsession or biological need (Stehling 2014, p. 31), hence pejoration. In some cases, pejoration results from euphemism used to avoid taboo words. As McMahon (1994, p. 179) has pointed out, ‘Speakers may use an alternative which in time acquires the meaning of the original and itself falls out of use’. Thus, in English, *disinformation* has replaced *lying* in some political contexts, in which it has recently been used to mean ‘being economical with the truth’.

6. Loss of Intensity

Stehling (2014, p. 34) has also highlighted loss of intensity as a cause of semantic change. In general, loss of intensity occurs via exaggeration. To illustrate, the adjective *beastly* ‘brutish, bestial’ has, with exaggeration, come to be used to refer to actions and people that are unpleasant or offensive.

7. Semantic Shift (In a narrow sense)

Campbell (2004, p. 265) has additionally shed light on a more recent form of semantic change, known as *semantic shift*, that has yet to gain noticeable traction in linguistic literature. In general, semantic shift results from language contact. For example, though rarely mentioned in the literature, *kje:x* in K’iche’ (Mayan), meaning ‘deer’, changed following Mayan contact with Europeans and their horses; *kje:x* became *horse* and, for distinction’s sake, *deer* became *k’iče’ kje:x* ‘forest horse’ (Campbell 2004, p. 265).

8. Other Types of Lexical Change

Though I have introduced mostly recognized types of semantic change in the above subsections, other types such as borrowing and neologism are not restricted to semantic change. Fromkin, Rodman, and Hyams (2014, p. 351) have stated that one primary channel of language change is ‘the addition of new words’, which can occur in coining, blending, and borrowing words, as well as in neologism, usually to describe developments in technology, social situations, and their effects. Haugen (1950, p. 212) defines *borrowing* as ‘the attempted reproduction in one language of patterns previously found in another’. Borrowing is the process by which new words or morphemes from other languages are added to a language. When borrowed words, also called *loan words*,

are added to a language, their pronunciation is often changed to suit the phonological patterns of the recipient language (Fromkin, Rodman & Hyams 2014, p. 356).

By contrast, neologism simply refers to a new word, regardless of the technique of its invention. Campbell (2004, pp. 272–79) has described many of these techniques and provided abundant examples, including the invention of words from personal names—for example, volt named after Italian physician Alessandro Volta. Neologism can also derive from placenames, as in canary, which takes its name from the Canary Islands. McMahon (1994, p. 193) has added that though neologisms counter traditional attitudes, speakers tend to accept new words when they are introduced by renowned figures or in prestigious contexts. To survive, society needs to continue using these new terms.

Conclusion

In all, the above literature review has highlighted various major aspects of language change and its study, both in the past and at present. The chapter has discussed the study of language change and its internal and external causes at the international level and in Arabic in particular. It has both introduced the notion that language change can occur in different aspects of language and described such changes as sound, morphological, syntactic, semantic, or lexical changes, if not a combination of those types. It has also addressed the theory of transmission and its relevance to the current study, the method of which I describe in the following chapter.

Chapter 3: Method

This chapter details the present study's method in two sections: data collection and data analysis. The section on data collection describes how I conducted the research—that is, how I collected the study's data and the tools that I used—the section addressing data analysis focuses on the linguistic features related to language change discussed in the literature review, and which I examined in the data. With acknowledgment to Jones and Singh (2005, p. 54), who argued that 'to concentrate exclusively on one type of change in this context would be to lose sight of the whole picture', data analysis necessarily involved the investigation of multiple linguistic features, which I classify according to the five types of language change discussed in the previous chapter: phonological, morphological, syntactical, semantic, and lexical change. By using the same classification, I categorise the data and at once identify whether change occurred and, if so, in which domain of language.

1. Data Collection

I selected data collected during individual interviews with 10 participants, all native speakers of the Bedouin Arabic dialect of Balawiy.

1.2. Semistructured Interviews

Given the study's small sample of only 10 participants, data was generated by individual, semistructured interviews. Although interviews require spending individual time with each participant, the method can be useful for not only generating information, but also quickly generating follow-up information from participants to clarify how data should be understood. To be able to guide interviews yet also to allow participants to elaborate, I used semistructured interviews. For example, when participants stopped answering questions or elaborating upon their answers, whether they were finished or

simply did not know what to say, with the semistructured format I could decide whether to proceed to the next question or to generate more information about the same topic by highlighting aspects neglected by the participants.

I conducted all interviews in an informal setting over coffee. Since their informality encouraged participants to talk more freely and at length, the semistructured interviews were able to generate more authentic and precise data for analysis.

1.3. Participant Groups by Generation and Education

This 10 participants were all native speakers of the Bedouin Arabic dialect of Balawi, divided into two groups depending on their age. With five participants in each group, the sample followed Feagin's (2002, p. 29) suggestion that having five participants in each cell, or group, is adequate for sociolinguistic analysis. One group—namely, the young generation group (YG Group)—consisted of five girls aged less than 26 years, the old generation group (OG Group) consisted of two men and three women aged at least 55 years. With an age gap of 30 years between the groups, it was easier to identify slight differences, in keeping with the idea that language change occurs during a process of minute stages before becoming perceptible.

By education, four participants in the YG Group were university students, while the other was a high-school student. Though all received their education in Modern Standard Arabic (MSA), all have also been exposed to Classical Arabic (CA) in studying the Quran and have learned English as a second language. As interviews revealed, these three varieties of language clearly intersect across the speech of participants in the YG Group. By contrast, among the five participants of the OG Group, none had received higher education; in fact, only one participant—a woman—attended school at all, yet

never advanced beyond the elementary level. As such, though this basically educated participant could read and write in MSA, the other four participants in the OG Group were illiterate. As speakers of the Bedouin Balawiy Arabic dialect, they could nevertheless understand the CA that they learned while studying the Quran in mosques; plus, as mentioned in Chapter 1, CA resembles their dialectical variety. These four participants could not read or write CA, but were accustomed to memorising passages from the Quran and from literature such as poems.

1.4. Interview Topics and Questions

Interview topics accommodated what participants regardless of group could discuss in at least some detail. Accordingly, I chose the comparison of past and present life as the theme of the topics, primarily because I observed that members of the older generation tended to contrast their past and present lives. At the same time, members of the younger generation have to some extent conceived how their families lived in the past and could thus compare those people's lives to their own. Specifically, interviews encompassed the topics of food, transportation, education, culture, and when needed to generate data, technology. Each interview began with a general prompt about past and present life—namely, ‘Talk about our life now and in the past’—after which participants could speak freely. When any participant's elaboration strayed from the target topics, I asked specific questions and directed follow-up questions toward specific subtopics, as the following exemplify (subtopics in parentheses):

1. In your opinion, what are the differences in transportation between the past and present? (Types, ease of use, and development)

2. What are the educational differences between the past and present? (Availability, development, levels, and aids)
3. What are the differences in the food between the past and today? (Prices, variety, and availability)
4. Do you perceive any cultural differences between the past and present? (Weddings and dowries, hospitality, respect, and appreciation)
5. What do you think about technology? (Good or bad and why)

As shown, all questions were open ended, which helped to minimise the formality of the interview, as well as the perceived distance between participants and the interviewer, thereby making the interaction more natural (Feagin 2002, p. 29).

Furthermore, since these open-ended questions supplemented a descriptive method—meaning that they required multifunctional language in response—various language features emerged in the participants’ speech, which aligned with the study’s goal of generating rich data for analysis.

The subtopics in parentheses next to each question achieved two purposes. First, they circumscribed each topic for the participants—for instance, if they did not know in which aspects to answer the questions. Second, the subtopics allowed participants the opportunity to expand upon their answers, because those in the YG Group tended to answer questions with single-sentence replies unlike participants in the OG Group. Thus, in cases when participants provided only a summary answer, the subtopics were used in order to generate data about aspects that participants had neglected to address.

1.5. Setting

The study was conducted in the city of Tabuk in northwest Saudi Arabia, where all participants in the OG Group were born and raised according to the traditions of the desert lifestyle. Though all of these participants had lived in the desert—specifically in a land called /aburakah/—for varying lengths of time, none could remember for exactly how long. Nevertheless, four of them acknowledged having been married in the desert and raising some of their children there. In fact, one of these participants had lived in the desert for 80 years and moved to the city only during the last 7 years.

Conducted in July 2015, the interviews were audio recorded and vary in duration, depending on how much the participant expanded upon topics and subtopics. Table 1 illustrates for how long each interviewee spoke, and altogether, the interviews lasted 1 h, 26 min, and 31 secs.

Table 1. Participant names and interview durations

Participant	Interview duration (min:s)
OG: 1	8:09
OG: 2	11:07
OG: 3	10:37
OG: 4	12:20
OG: 5	10:34
YG: 1	7:16
YG: 2	6:22
YG: 3	6:10
YG: 4	8:54

YG: 5	6:22
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Although all interviews were recorded using the audio-recording function on an iPhone, given my familiarity with using the device to record and upload audio, as well as its portability and ease of use, a more sophisticated audio-recording device would have provided clearer sound for data analysis. At the same time, video recording would have perhaps allowed the visible observation of mouth movements in the case of sound change. However, data collection did not involve video recording for two reasons. One, participants might have felt uncomfortable when being video recorded, which could have in turn affected their speech. Two, as a more culture-specific requirement, norms in Saudi Arabia do not allow women to be video recorded because videos might be seen by foreign men.

1.6. Cultural Norms

Among other cultural norms in Saudi Arabia, men and women sit separately unless they are close relatives such as siblings, uncles, and cousins, in which case they may sit as a group. As a woman, I could thus interview only the women participants and asked a research assistant—a man and native speaker of the Balawiy dialect—to interview the two men participants by proxy.

2. Data Analysis

This study used qualitative data analysis to provide insights into how the Balawiy dialect has changed in recent generations. Analysis addressed five primary linguistic components of language: phonology, morphology, lexicology, syntax, and semantics.

Since the study focused on examining and highlighting changes between two generations of native speakers of a distinct dialectal variety of Arabic, it thus neglects focusing on their similarities. This does not, however, mean to suggest that similarities are insignificant. On the contrary, focusing on one aspect of language and discussing all of its features can be more fruitful and precise than looking only generally at several topics. Additionally, this study does not focus on Arabic's linguistic features as other research has, but on the changes that have occurred in two generations of Balawiy Bedouin speakers and, by extension, how language change can occur over the course of 30 years.

2.1. Phonetic and Phonological Analysis

To analyse sound change, I examined data for changes in voiced and voiceless sounds, shifts in sounds (consonants and vowels), and whether particular sounds were no longer pronounced in some words. For each change, I closely analysed the sound in its different situations of use to determine whether the change was regular.

2.2. Morphological Analysis

For morphological change analysis, I examined the form of words for morphological alternations between the OG and YG Groups, yet also took into consideration that morphological change can be combined with sound or syntax change, if not both. Accordingly, I classified changes observed in the data as either a morphological–sound change or a morphological–semantic change. I also analysed the data for analogical extension and analogical levelling (i.e., in inflectional forms) of morphemes, for borrowed words, and for irregular analogical patterns such as back-formation and contamination.

2.3. Syntactic Analysis

In terms of syntax and grammar, I examined the data at the level of structure to elucidate any changes in rules or grammatical patterns between the OG and YG Groups, chiefly by analysing the word order in sentences, subject–verb (dis)agreement, or any changes in the structure.

2.4. Semantic and Lexical Analysis

The data analysis also focused upon changes in the meaning of words and sentences, including changes that narrow or broaden meaning or replace taboo words with ones currently more culturally acceptable. Furthermore, in investigating any positive or negative changes in the implications of words or phrases, I highlighted all words whose meaning was either fully or partly changed, or else obsolete, as well as new words in the lexicon, whether borrowed or neologised.

In examining the meaning of words, it was at times difficult to determine whether the change was semantic or otherwise, for at all linguistic levels, the function of language is ‘to communicate meaning’ (Saeed 2003, p. 9), which underscores that meaning results from factors at all linguistic levels. For example, a slight change in a phoneme, a verb ending, or word order can indicate different meanings for the same word. In response, the method here involved scrutinising changes from the perspectives of semantics as well as other linguistic levels, which helped in producing a fair description of each change. In all, the method accommodated and corroborated the idea that language changes cannot be studied in isolation.

Since the present research employed interviews as its method of data collection, some challenges surfaced in conducting the study—for example, understanding the

meaning of unfamiliar words. At points during the interviews, I had to ask participants to clarify the ambiguous meaning of unfamiliar words, including /ʕala hasʕibra/ على هالصبره ('in this way'), though not others—for instance, /miħma/ل محمل ('travel baby bed'), whose meaning emerges in its context and its speakers description. Some participants in the OG Group pre-emptively illustrated the meaning of unfamiliar words, either by describing it or providing an example, for they likely assumed that I, in being of the young generation, did not know the word or its meaning.

3. Conclusion

The data collection involved individual semistructured interviews in an informal setting with participants in two groups, either of the largely uneducated older generation or well-educated younger generation, of native speakers of the Balawiy dialect. The data analysis focused on linguistic features in terms of how they might signify language change in terms of phonology, morphology, lexicology, semantics, and syntax. The findings of the interviews are presented in the following chapter.

Chapter 4: Findings

The language changes are categorised as phonetic and phonological, semantic, lexical, morphological, or syntactic changes, though some items appear in multiple categories given their different aspects of alternation—for example, as semantic–phonological change or semantic–morphological change.

1. Elements of Phonetic and Phonological Change

The generally major alternations in phonology observed in data representing native Balawiy speakers of either the old generation (OG) or young generation (YG) appear in Table 1. Though some of these examples signify semantic, morphological, or syntactic alternations, they are also referred to from other aspects in their appropriate contexts.

Table 1. Phonological changes in differences between native Balawiy speakers of the old generation and young generation

Phonological change (PC)	Old generation (OG)	Young generation (YG)	Parallel Meaning in MSA	Meaning in English
PC1. /dʒ/ versus /z/	/ħa:dʒa/	/ħa:ʒa/	حاجة	need
	/dʒimaʕa/	/zimaʕa/	جماعه	A group of people
	/ni:dʒijb/	/niʒi:b/	نَجِيب	Bring (pl)
PC2. Consonant cluster in OG and	/khawa/	/gahuwa/	قهوة	coffee

consonant change /k/ to /g/				
PC3. /ʔ/ in YG	/maʕarfa/	/ma:ʔaʕrifa/	ما أعرفه	I do not know it
	/kanik/	/kaʔanik/	كأنك	As if (sing. Feminine)
PC4. Vowel shift	/liham/	/laħam/	الحم	meat
	/liban/	/laban/	لبن	Butter milk
PC5. Voiced postalveolar fricative to voiced velar plosive	/ʒidamik/	/gidamik/	امامك	In front of you
PC6. /ij/ in OG	/bnaɪjtɪ/ (بنتي)	/bntɪ/ (بنتي)	ابنتي	My daughter
	/wlaɪjdi/ (وليدي)	/wladi/ (ولدي)	ابني	My son
PC7. vowel /o/ to vowel /i/	/hnoh/ (هنوه)	/hina:/ (هنا)	هنا	here
PC8. Sound change in borrowed words	/ra:duw/ (رادو)	/ra:djo/ (راديو)	مذياع	radio

As Table 1 highlights, the first phonological change (PC1) concerns the OG pronunciation of words with the /ʒ/ sound in combination with /d/—that is, /dʒ/—as in /ħa:dʒə/, /dʒimaʕa/, and /nidʒi:b/. By contrast, the YG pronunciation is simply /ʒ/. Since

this change appears in all OG examples of the sound, it is classified as a regular sound change.

PC2 in Table 1 signifies the OG pronunciation of /khawa/ compared to the YG pronunciation of /gahuwa/, a trend that requires attention from two angles. On the one hand, the voiced velar plosive /g/ replaces the voiceless velar plosive consonant /k/, thereby suggesting an alternation from the voiceless consonant to the voiced sound. However, given the voiced velar plosive in OG speech, as in /gu:wm/ (قوم), /g/ is not necessarily absent in OG pronunciation, while the consonantal /k/ surfaces in YG speech, as in /waʕalijkum/. In short, this change is not generalisable, but instead constitutes an irregular sound change. On the other hand, a consonant cluster emerges in OG speech between /k/ and /h/ at the beginning of words, whereas YG speech demonstrates cluster intervening with the vowel, thus rendering the two consonants non-sequential.

Another regular sound change, represented in PC3, shows the existence /ʔ/ in YG speech. For example, /maʕarifa/ and /kanik/ in OG speech become /ma:ʔaʕrifa/ and /ka:ʔanik/, respectively, in YG pronunciation. By extension, the change in the former word prompted another change resulting in the consonant cluster /ʕr/.

As PC4 reveals, not only was a consonant shift observable in the data, but a vowel shift also emerged: from /i/ in OG speech, as in /liham/ and /liban/, to /a/ in YG speech, as in /laḥam/ and /laban/, respectively.

In PC5, the voiced postalveolar fricative became a voiced velar plosive—for instance, /ʒidamak/ in OG speech to /gidamak/ in YG speech—signifying a change between /ʒ/ in OG pronunciation to /g/ in that of the YG. Though not in that example, /ʒ/ does occur in YG speech in others, including /alʒmal/. Furthermore, /g/ at the beginning

of that example is noticeable in OG speech, as in /gu:wm/, thereby suggesting that the sound change is irregular.

Noticeably, a shift also occurred from consonant /dʒ/ to consonant /ʒ/ and from /ʒ/ to /g/ by way of these phonemes' domino-effect relationship. To explain, a *domino-effect* refers to a 'situation in which something, usually something bad, happens, causing other similar events to happen', (Cambridge Dictionaries Online, 2015). In that sense, whenever /dʒ/ appears in OG speech, it is replaced with /ʒ/, and if /ʒ/ pronounced by OG speakers, then shifts to /g/ in YG speech.

As revealed in PC6, the data also included words such as /bnaijti/ and /wlaijdi/ with the sound /ij/ infixed when pronounced by OG speakers. Regardless, /i/ substituted as a suffix at the end of the word refers to a singular possessive pronoun. Indeed, the infixation demonstrates both semantic and phonology change as will describe in semantic change (Section 2). Generally speaking, /ij/ surfaces in two positions: First, when OG speakers refer to their actual daughter or son, they usually call them with either /bnaijti/ 'my daughter' or /wlaijdi/ 'my son'. In this case, a change classified as phonology since YG do not have /ij/ in their version . Second, OG speakers may use /bnaijti/ 'my daughter' or /wlaijdi/ 'my son' in an extended meaning to refer to a young person who is in their daughter/son's age, young person, or anthropomorphised entity. In that way, the change is semantic (Section 2).

In PC7, a change appears between the vowel /o / in OG speech to vowel /i/ in YG speech—for instance, /hnoh/ (هنوه) ' here' for OG speakers becomes /hina:/ (هنا) 'here' for YG ones. Though this sound change surfaced only once in the data, it seems to be an irregular one.

Lastly, as PC8 illustrates, even borrowed words —here, /ra:duw/ and /ra:djo/ ‘radio’—demonstrate phonological change, though two interpretations of such change are possible. For one, it could represent an internationalism, which Zuckermann (2003, p. 187) has identified as ‘a lexical item which appears—in various phonetic adaptations—in many languages, and often conceived of as international’. Another interpretation is that the word has been borrowed from its original language—that is, French, according to *Dictionary com* (2015). In any case, the two versions in both groups indicated phonological change. For example, YG speakers pronounce it in keeping with the written English for they can read and understand English. In OG speech, /ra:duw/ has become the YG /ra:djo/, the /uw/ changed to /jo/. This change makes the YG version closely match the second syllable of the English pronunciation for word *radio*.

2. Elements of Lexical and Semantic Change

The data analysis also revealed a range of changes in words and their meanings, and Table 2 highlights the words that have experienced lexical change. Some words, however, have no equivalent from one generation to the next and are thus marked *No record* if the data do not record any replacement or *Not used* if the words signify obsolete or not-yet-invented technology.

Table 2. Lexical and semantic changes in differences between native Balawiy speakers of the old generation (OG) and young generation (OG)

Old generation	Young generation	English meaning
/alħalal/ (الحلال)	/alyanam/ (الغنم), /alʒmal/	‘the sheep’, ‘the camels’

	(الجمال)	respectively
/bna:χij/ (بناخي)	/walad-a:ʔχu:ij/ (ولد اخوي)	the son of my brother
/tasʕa:fijjg/ (تصافيق)	Not used	‘tribulations’
/ʕugb/ (عقب)	/baʕad/ (بعد)	‘after’
/ʕuguba:jjn/ (عقبين)	/baʕada:jjn/ (بعدين)	‘after’
/θoab/ (ثوب)	/fustan/ (فستان)	‘dress’
/θi:jaʔab/ (ثياب)	/fasa:ti:jjn/ (فساتين)	‘dresses’
/miħmal/ (محمل)	Not used	‘travel baby bed’
Not used	/kambi:jotar/ (كمبيوتر)	‘computer’
Not used	/brozijktar/ (بروجيكتور)	‘projector’
Not used	/tiknolo:zija/ (تكنولوجيا)	‘technology’
/muru:wa/ (مروءة)	No record	‘etiquette demonstrating morality and good manners’; ‘completed masculinity’
/ʕala hasʕibra/ (على هالصبره)	No record	‘in this way’
/bnaijti/ (بنيتي)	/bntji/ (بنتي)	‘my daughter’
/ha:asanah/ (هالسنه)	/haðij asanah/ (هذه السنه)	‘this year’
/ha:sʕibra/ (هالصبره)	No record	‘this way’

Lexical changes appear in the data more than any other category of language change. Most words used by OG speakers were replaced with entirely different words with the full or partial meaning of their predecessors by YG speakers, and most were

used more than once by different participants of the same group—for example, /alhalal/, /tasˈɑ:fijjg/, /ʕugb/, /baʕad/ and /alʒmal/. Accordingly, the occurrence of the same lexical item among the speech of different participants in the same group increases the reliability that change has indeed occurred.

In terms of semantic change, though the data do not reveal any direct changes in meaning, changes in meaning occurred in words replaced with new lexical items by YG speakers. In fact, new lexical items in YG speech bear some alternation (e.g., specification and generalisation) in meaning next to their counterparts in OG speech. For example, /bna:χij/, which two OG speakers introduced, means ‘nephew’ with a distinct emphasis on the masculinity of the signified, yet could also refer to a close relative aged similarly to a brother’s or sister’s son. However, YG speakers did not use this item in any context, but replaced it with /walad-a:ʔχu:wij/, signifying ‘son of a brother’ only. Thus, the meaning as well as the lexical item has changed by becoming more specific. At the same time, though a single word indicates the less specific meaning in OG speech, its replacement in YG speech consists of two words that cannot be separated lest the meaning changes to indicate two distinct ideas, /walad/ meaning ‘son’ and /a:ʔχu:ij/ meaning ‘brother’. From another angle, this combined word can also represent a morphological change, specifically in the paradigm between the second part of the OG and YG versions. To illustrate, /-a:χij/ and /-a:ʔχu:ij/ have the same morpheme /ʔaχij/, though the change in the paradigm /ʔ/ did not emerge in OG speech, while /u:/ appeared in YG speech. This type of morphological change, known as *analogical levelling*, shows a sound change in the addition of /u:/ in YG speech and the absence of /ʔ/ in OG speech.

Similarly, /alḥalal/ (الـحلال) 'livestock' used by OG speakers was replaced by different words in YG speech, as in /alyanam/ 'the sheep' and /alʒmal/ 'the camels'. The broader meaning of this word that appears in OG speech indicates any kind of animal that people own for their benefit, which in Arabic-speaking regions are usually camels and sheep. However, YG speakers no longer use this word, but instead refer to a particular animal with a particular word such as /alyanam/ 'the sheep' and /alʒmal/ 'the camels'.

It was also noted that, /alḥalal/ (الـحلال) has experienced semantic change. Whereas YG speakers use it to refer to anything permitted by religion—for example, /alʔakil alḥalal/ 'the halal food'—OG speakers use it to refer to any kind of livestock, usually camels and sheep. Here, the sole difference is /al/ at the beginning of /alḥalal/, which cannot be separated from the rest of the word in the OG sense, thus /al/ is not a prefixed definite marker, rather it is a main component in the word. The definite marker defines the word as /al / that cannot be separately used but prefixed to adjectives or nouns as a definite article (Ryding 2005, p. 54). However, /al/ can be dropped in YG speech to still mean 'permitted by religion', as in /aʔakil ḥalal/ because it is a definite article in YG word case.

Of course, in terms of meaning, words that appear in OG speech do not appear in YG speech and vice versa. On the one hand, words such as /a:ða:lu:w/ (الذلول) 'the camel which is usually ready to ride it' and /miḥmal/ (محمل) 'travel baby bed' no longer exist in YG speech, though contact with parents and members of the OG can allow YG speakers to know the words and their meanings. Nevertheless, YG speakers do not use these words because they signify a special context related to desert lifestyles involving camel herding and nomadism that no longer exists. However, not all words are absent from YG speech

due to lacking their respective contexts. Some such as /ʕala hasʕibra/ (على هالصبره) ‘in this way’ are not used by YG speakers, who in needing to express this meaning have perhaps begun to use another word.

On the other hand, words such as /kambi:jotar/ ‘computer’, /broʒijktar/ ‘projector’, and /tiknolo:ʒija/ ‘technology’ that appear in YG speech are unrecognisable to some OG speakers. In fact, when I asked one OG participant about /tiknuwlwu:ʒija/ ‘technology’, she immediately responded with /wif tiknuwlwu:ʒija/ ‘What is technology?’ and had to ask for clarification of its meaning. As such, some lexical items and their meanings remain exclusive to only one generational group.

The word /muru:wa/ (مروءة) used by OG speakers has a unique meaning—namely, ‘etiquette demonstrating morality and good manners’ or else ‘completed masculinity’—and is used in the masculine sense only. Though recognisable to YG speakers, they exclude it from their speech, even despite its special meaning. For another example, /tasʕa:fijjg/ (تصافيق) ‘tribulations’ appeared in the records of two OG participants, though no YG participants knew or could even guess its meaning without being provided with examples. On a side note, it is possible that this word derived from MSA /sʕfa:ʔq/ (صفايق) ‘tribulations’ and ‘accidents’ (Almaany Dictionary, 2015).

In terms of narrowed meaning, OG speakers used /θoab/ (ثوب) to refer to men and women’s formalwear in occasions, whereas YG speakers would use /fustan/ (فستان) for the same meaning. However, in YG participants’ speech, /θoab/ (ثوب) referred to the formal dress of Saudi men only, thereby demonstrating that /θoab/ has become narrowed in YG speech to refer to men’s dress only.

A semantic shift also surfaced in /miħmal/ (محمل), a word used in OG speech to mean a travel baby bed. However, since this word is noun, generally referring to 'container', OG speakers use it in a kind of specification that YG speakers would not recognise. Though younger speakers might use the meaning of the word to refer to containers, it would not be specified for 'travel baby bed', as in OG speech.

Additionally, some words replaced by YG speakers carry the same meaning of their OG counterparts. For instance, /ʕugb/ (عقب) in OG speech and /baʕad/ (بعد) in YG speech both synonymously mean 'after'.

Interestingly, an alternation between OG and YG speech occurred in the existence of /ha:/, which could represent backclipping in OG speech for /haðij/ in YG speech. Furthermore, this alternation could involve two aspects of change: lexical change, since /haðij/ is backclipped and combined with a subsequent word, and morphological change, since the prefix /ha:/ in OG speech has resulted from the combination of the clipped and subsequent word, as in /ha:asanah/ (هالسنه) 'this year' from /haðij asanah/ (هذه السنه).

Lastly, regarding the semantic change of /bnaijti/ and /właijdi/ (Section 1, p. 59), OG speakers may use these words in an extended meaning, whereas YG speakers will not. In YG speech, /bnti/ and /władi/ generally mean 'my daughter' and 'my son', respectively, though OG speakers use these words to refer to anyone of the same age as a son or daughter. However, OG may use these words without that extension to refer only to their actual son or daughter, as also presented in the data.

3. Elements of Morphological Change

Table 3 represents the morphological changes that surfaced in the data.

Table 3. Morphological changes (MC) in differences between native Balawiy speakers of the old generation and young generation

Old generation	Young generation	English meaning
MC1. /ʕugb/ (عقب)	/baʕd/ (بعد)	‘after’
MC2. /ʕugba:jjn/ (عقبين)	/baʕda:jjn/ (بعدين)	‘after’
MC3. /mitʕaʕʕin/ (متعشّن)	/mitʕaʕʕi/ (متعشي)	‘ate your dinner’
MC4. /ʕalai:f/ (عليش) (singular)	/waʕaʕʕijumu/ (عليكم) (plural)	‘upon you’ (plural)
MC5. /taʕafij/ (تعافي)	/jaʕtʕijki alʕafia/ (يعطيك) (العفو), /alʕafuw/ (العافيه)	‘God keep you well’
MC7. /ha:asanah/ (هالسنه)	/haʕij asanah/ (هذه السنه)	‘this year’
MC8. /ʔabdan/ (بداً)	/ʔabad/ (ابد)	‘always’ (Wehr & Cowan 1979, p. 1)
MC9. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • /jitʕlaʕin/ (يطلعن) • /jiʕazmin/ (يعزمن) • /jizayiritin/ (يزغرتين) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • /jitʕlaʕuw/ (يطلعوا) • /jiʕazmuw/ (يعزموا) • /jizayirituw/ (يزغرتوا) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ‘they go out’ (feminine plural) • ‘they invite’ (feminine plural) • Ululate ‘unique sound produced to indicate joy and cheer’ (feminine plural)

Regarding MC1 and MC2, /ʕugb/ and /ʕugba:jjn/ illustrate the interrelated effect of each generation on the other. In her speech, one OG participant first used /ʕugb/ (عقب) ‘after’, yet later used /ʕugba:jjn/ (عقبين) ‘after’ analogically to the YG lexical replacement for /baʕda:jjn/ (بعدين)—specifically, the second part /-a:jjn/ that is used in YG speech. Though perhaps her different use with /ʕugb/ resulted from her knowledge of the YG /baʕda:jjn/, for the result of /ʕugba:jjn/, it in any case marks the historical linguistic concept of *contamination*. It refers to the process of alternating a phrase or word as a result of mistaking it with another (Collins dictionary, 2015). It constitutes an irregular analogical change.

For MC3, /mitʕaʕʃin/ (متعشن) in OG speech includes /n/ at the end of the word, whereas the YG /mitʕaʕʃi/ (متعشي) is without that sound despite having the same meaning. In Arabic, the noon /n/ that appears at the end of a word in Arabic can be *nunation* or *tanwīn* (Lancioni & Bettini 2011, p. 27) and it functions as an indefiniteness marker and usually suffixed to the word. (Ryding 2005, p. 54).

For MC4, the OG /ʕalai:ʃ as-salām / (عليش) has become replaced with the YG /waʕalijkum/ (و عليكم), thereby exemplifying a morphological change. A change emerged in the agreement of a greeting and its response. At the beginning of my interview with one OG participant, I used the greeting with / waʕalijkum as-salām/ with the suffix *-kum*, which refers to a plural masculine object pronoun though is commonly used in greetings even to a single female person. Since this usage is mainstream, the reply should also involve the plural pronoun *-kum*, though this OG participant replied in the singular without any plural suffix. Moreover, though the participant used /ʃ/ at the end of the

word, it refers to a feminine singular pronoun. By contrast, a YG participant replied with /waʕalijkum/, thereby using the greeting in agreement with the first greeter, as illustrated by the plural pronoun /kum/.

As illustrated in MC5, a morphological alternation has occurred between /taʕafi/ in OG speech and the YG /jaʕtʕijki alʕafia/ or /alʕafuw/, all of which are synonyms ('God keep you well') with the morpheme /ʕ- f- j/.

In MC6, /ha:asanah/ (هالسنه) and /haðij asanah/ (هذه السنه) show a morphological alternation in which /haðij/ in YG speech was backclipped by OG speakers and then combined as a prefix to the subsequent word.

MC7 presents also morphological change, /n/ in OG speech suffixed at the end of adverbs, unlike in YG speech, in which the suffix disappears. As is commonly understood in Arabic the existence of /n/ at the end of the word is called *nunation* and it functions as an indefiniteness marker (Ryding 2005, p. 54).

Lastly, in MC8, The *-n* of the feminine second and third plural forms appears in OG speech, as in /jitʕlaʕin/ (يطلعن), /jiʕazmin/ (يعزمن), and /jizayiritin/ (يزغرتين), usually at the end of present-tense verbs to indicate feminine plurality in both Modern Standard Arabic and Classical Arabic. By contrast, YG speakers seem to have eliminated this rule from their speech, for they use *-uw* to refer to plural of feminine and masculine forms.

4. Elements of Syntactic Change

The data collected for this study do not show any changes in syntax.

5. Some Points in Discourse Analysis

Differences between the two groups of native Balawiy speakers also highlighted other distinct features of discourse analysis. For one, OG participants tended to elaborate in answering the interview questions, often in long sentences strung together in narrative form. YG participants, however, tended to reply to the questions with only one or two sentences, meaning that I had to request them to elaborate. As such, an alternation in redundancy emerged between the groups. At the same time, OG speakers tended to swear in the name of God, though either as a way of proving their honesty, as in /waʔah/ (I swear), or in prayer, as in /aʔah la jiðkirki:n balkijir/ ‘God do not keep you good (feminine plural)’.

6. Conclusion

Changes in all categories except syntax emerged in the data, though elements of lexical changes were dominant. In the following chapter, I discuss, interpret, and compare these findings from linguistic studies addressing similar kinds of language change.

Chapter 5: Discussion and Conclusion

In this chapter, I interpret and discuss findings reported in Chapter 4, as well as articulate their implications and compare them with results of related research. I additionally describe limitations faced while conducting this research and strategies undertaken to overcome these limitations. I end the chapter with a conclusion summarising the most important points highlighted in the study.

Implications of Phonological Changes

Within the range of alternations between OG and YG speech that emerged in the analysis of data, significant changes clearly appear in terms of phonological change. Though some identified sound changes are classified as regular, most are classified as irregular. For example, the shift from /k/ in /khawa/ in OG speech to /g/ in /gahuwa/ in YG speech—meaning ‘coffee’—is specific to those words and cannot be generalised, since the use of the voiced velar plosive and voiceless velar plosive consonants occurs in the speech of both generational groups (p. 58). This specific change can also represent a conditioned sound change, for it coincides with the phonetic circumstance at the beginning of words near their first vowel sounds (Versteegh 1997, p. 149). From this example, the use of the voiced velar plosive /g/ can be generalised to both groups, though the voiceless uvular /q/ spoken exclusively by sedentary people cannot. In fact, Palva (1991, p. 155) and Versteegh (1997, p. 143) have stressed that this unique feature of Bedouin distinguishes its speakers from sedentary speakers, who instead use the voiceless uvular /q/.

Sound changes also emerged at different levels—for instance, from consonants /dʒ/ and /ʒ/ to /ʒ/ and /g/, respectively. These phonemes have changed as part of a relationship resembling a domino effect; that is, whenever /dʒ/ appears in OG speech, it

appears as /ʒ/ in YG speech, and if /ʒ/ appears in OG speech, then it becomes /g/ in YG speech. As another example, change has occurred in vowels—specifically, from /o/ in OG speech to /i/ in YG speech—and in semivowels—from the OG /uw/ to the YG /jo/. Still another change is clear in the pronunciation of any word with an additional phoneme, as the shift from the OG /maʕarfa/ (مأعرفه) 'I do not know it' to the YG /ma:ʔaʕrifa/ (مأأعرفه) reveals. In this and other cases, the primary sound change can prompt a secondary one—namely, the consonant cluster /ʕr/. Since YG, myself included, find pronunciation /ma:ʔaʕrifa/ (مأأعرفه) without the cluster difficult to articulate, I suggest that the second change has developed for ease of articulation.

Other results concerning sound change indicate that such change has coincided with other changes, including morphological and semantic alternations, as PC6 and PC8 illustrate (p. 59). The data reveal that both groups have voiced and voiceless velar plosive consonants /k/ and /g/ in their speech. Given Palva's (1991) location-dependent classification of the Northwest Arabian (NWA) dialect group, I have categorised the Balawiy Bedouin dialect in this group (p. 19), though Palva (1991) has not addressed this issue. In fact, Palva (1991, p. 155) indicated that NWA lacks indefinite markers and both the voiced and voiceless velar plosive consonants /k/ and /g/. However, in the data for the present study, indefinite markers surface in OG but not YG speech, while both affricative consonants /k/ and /g/ appear in both generational groups.

Implications of Lexical and Semantic Changes

Lexical and semantic changes, appear in the data more than any other category of language change. These changes could be in generalization, specification as well as in

borrowing and metaphor. This result is not entirely surprising, as McMahon (1994, p. 174) has pointed out, semantic changes usually occur among native speakers.

Native Balawiy Bedouin speakers in particular show a tendency to borrow words instead of reusing old ones. By type, borrowing can occur either internally or externally. On the one hand, internal borrowing can be in adapting words from related dialects and types of the language, including Modern Standard Arabic (MSA), Classical Arabic (CA), and surrounding sedentary dialects. However, when YG speakers use the same word—for instance, /alʒmal/ (الجمال) ‘camels’, and /fustan/ (فستان) ‘dress’—then it is difficult to determine whether they have borrowed a particular word from MSA or from another dialect if they both use the same word since YG are in contact with these different varieties in their environment. On the other hand, external borrowing can be in the adaptation of words from other languages with which they are in contact such as English and French. This kind of borrowing occurred with technological terms such as /kambi:jotar/ (كمبيوتر) ‘computer’, /bro:zijkta/ (بروجيكتور) ‘projector’, and /tiknolo:zija/ (تكنولوجيا) ‘technology’. For the last two examples, both words are borrowed and used in MSA. Thus, it is hard to decide whether these words borrowed directly from English or indirectly from other varieties such as MSA.

Perhaps less surprisingly, not only do YG speakers borrow words, but OG speakers show signs of borrowing in their speech as well—remarkably, in the form of external borrowing from French. Though OG speakers are generally illiterate, the borrowed word *radio* may not necessarily represent direct borrowing. Briefly, Balawiy Bedouin speakers who have until recently lived in Sinai (Bailey cited De Jong 2011, p. 3) may have been influenced by French by way of tribe members in northern Saudi Arabia

and, in turn, converted this word. From another angle, *radio* constitutes an internationalism, identified earlier (p. 60). In that sense, it remains difficult to pinpoint from where the word has been borrowed. As illustrated earlier (p. 28), although MSA includes /miðjaʕ/ (مذياع) ‘radio’, Saudi speakers—educated or not—nevertheless use /ra:duw/ (OG) and /ra:djo/ (YG) with some phonological change. However, Both generations use a word derived from /miðjaʕ/ (مذياع), meaning ‘radio’ for broadcasting /ʔi:ðɑʕɑ/ (إذاعه).

Whereas some words in OG speech are no longer used by YG speakers—largely because their meaning is no longer relevant—YG speakers also use words that OG ones do not, mostly because the words refer to social, cultural, or technological developments that do not affect the older generation. In short, as possible in any language, the dialect of Arabic studied here has changed given a need for meanings and words to express them (Booij, 2007, p. 256). On the one hand, such change could favour the addition of new meanings—for instance, for technological terms—needed for communicative functions, which can expand and advance the Balawiy dialect. In the data, these additions more often constitute language borrowed from other varieties than they do invention. In general, borrowing supports the level of use of any language and, as Hobson (2013, p.13) has indicated, is an important means to keep a language strong.

On the other hand, change could not be welcome given the loss of prevalent words such as /tasa:fijjg/ (تصافيق) ‘tribulations’ and /muru:wa/ (مروءة) ‘etiquette demonstrating morality and good manners; completed masculinity’. Though the meanings of these and other words remain relevant today, YG speakers may have replaced OG words with new ones, some from another dialectical variety. Arguably, if

YG speakers discontinue using words from their native dialect, then they could diminish their language's heritage, which could in turn weaken the culture expressed through the language. As Hale (cited in Zuckermann, Shakuto–Neoh, & Quer 2014, p. 57) has expressed this dynamic, 'When you lose a language, you lose a culture, intellectual wealth, a work of art. It's like dropping a bomb on a museum, the Louvre'. Zuckermann, Shakuto–Neoh, and Quer (2014, p. 57) have added that any language stores the cultural aspects and beliefs of its speakers, meaning that different languages have different techniques of expressing ideas that underscore aspects important to their specific corresponding cultures. In short, language and culture are interrelated, and a language's development or decay can result in the corresponding culture's strengthening or weakening, respectively.

Altogether, in YG language practice, shifts in meaning—whether general or specific—and lexical change—that is, when words are replaced with borrowed ones—signify that YG speakers are more likely to alternate instead of coin new words. In any language, as Aitchison (1981, p. 124) has explained, such alternation is commonly used to fulfil social needs.

Implications of Morphological Changes

In relation to morphological aspects of Balawiy Bedouin, noticeable change has occurred between the two generations of speakers studied, particularly in the use of affixation of all types. Both generations have applied prefixation: in OG speakers, with backclipped words, which have become prefixed in the word clipped, and in YG speakers, with the definite marker /al/. In YG speech, infixation surfaces in the data among vowels, as in /alʕafuw/ from /taʕafij/ 'God keep you well', and suffixation

appears commonly in OG speech, namely with the addition of /n/ as a representation of *tanwīn*. This latter finding agrees with the results of Versteegh (1991, p. 149), who indicated that a feature of Bedouin is the use of /an/, /en/, and /in/ as optional indefinite markers in suffixation (i.e., *tanwīn*). By contrast, YG speakers do not use *tanwīn* whatsoever, which confirms Palva's (1991, p. 155) finding of its general absence in NWA dialects. Nevertheless, data reveal interrelated effects between the two generations, for OG speech bears the influence of YG speech via contamination, as in /ʕuguba:jjn/ (عقبين) 'after'.

Interestingly, the results highlight that OG speakers use the suffix /n/ to refer to feminine second- and third-person plural verbs, as do traditional CA and MSA. This morphological change also elucidates Versteegh's (1997, p. 143–44) comparison of characteristics of Bedouin and sedentary dialects, in which he argued that the most outstanding feature in spoken Bedouin is its preservation of /n/ as a gender distinction with plural verbs. In turn, his findings showcased the effect of sedentary dialects upon the YG group, the members of which replace /n/ of the feminine plural with /uw/.

Another morphological change is that from /ʕalai:f/ (عليش) 'upon you (singular)' to /waʕalijkum/ (عليكم) 'upon you (plural)'. Indeed, greetings have not survived from changes, for though commonly used in daily life, alternation has occurred. This finding supports Trask's (1994, p. 1) claims that language changes continuously due to use.

Implications of Syntactic Changes

Somewhat unsurprisingly, the data in the study do not include any syntactic changes, likely due to the stability of syntax against influences upon language change. On this topic, Algeo (1980, p. 264) has described grammatical alternation to be 'glacially

slow', given his study's evidence of grammatical changes among English speakers. Indeed, though the gap between YG and OG speakers in the present study highlights several other kinds of language change, it is too narrow to contain any sort of syntactic change. At the same time, Arabic in all of its dialectal varieties demonstrates flexibility in verb order, which constitutes a major barrier in the face of syntactic change.

The Influence of Other Varieties

Data representing YG speakers show that, to some extent, YG pronunciation remains close to that of MSA. For instance, YG speakers pronounce /laħam/ (لحم) 'meat', /kaʔanik/ (كَأَنَّكَ), 'as if (second person pronoun)', /laban/ (لَبَن) 'butter milk' and /waʕa'lijikum/ (وَعَلَيْكُمْ) 'upon you (plural)' in keeping with MSA phonologically and semantically. Such similarity may have resulted from YG speakers' exposure to MSA at school. In this study, all YG participants were educated and have used MSA to study all subjects except English. Thus, such interference may have occurred due to their exposure and use of MSA at school. Since YG speakers use both varieties, both change and interference may easily occur and should thus be expected. For a similar reason, the aforementioned phonological change in the borrowed word *radio* has been prompted to be pronounced by YG speakers in keeping with written English, in contrast to generally illiterate OG speakers largely not exposed to any English context.

In fact, OG speech shows the influence of CA, specifically in semantic aspects. OG speakers use /ij/ in the diminutive sense—for example, to refer to a young person or small anthropomorphised object, as in /banijti/ (بِنِيْتِي) 'my daughter' and /walaijdi/ (وَلِيْدِي) 'my son'. Likewise, in the Quran's use of CA, /ij/ is used a similarly diminutive sense, as in /ʕuzajir/ (عُزَيْر) 'a prophet name and is considered as a diminutive word for /ʕazar/'

(Alkahly, 2012). However, OG speakers also expand such usage to /bnijti/ (بنيتي) and /wlaijdi/ (وليدي) to include any person aged similarly to his/ her son or daughter (p. 59).

Despite the multitude of abovementioned changes among different Arabic varieties, such difference does not indicate the varieties' different fundamental structures. In studying the phonology of a variety of Palestinian, Abdo (cited in Holes 1987, p. 176) indicated that despite obvious differences between MSA and Arabic dialects, 'It is striking that in most cases the underlying structures for the spoken dialects . . . and Classical Arabic are by and large very similar, and almost identical'. Miller (2007, p. 5) has added that this indicates systemic unity between CA and different Arabic vernaculars. Generally speaking, changes characterising different dialects are unsurprising if those dialects bear the same fundamental structure.

In sum, though the gap between the two generations of Balawiy Bedouin speakers spans three decades, clear changes at the phonological, semantic, lexical, and morphological levels have occurred. However, such change does not indicate that the language is weak or will disappear, but simply that change is a feature of language. Indeed, language change can serve as a way to add new meaning to a dialect and thereby develop and strengthen it.

Summary of the Study and Findings

This research has focused on an Arabic dialect known as Balawiy spoken in north western Saudi Arabia and classified as a Bedouin dialect. Briefly, though Bedouin dialects have traditionally been spoken by desert nomads, most native speakers currently pursue more sedentary lives in cities and villages. However, most Bedouin dialects are classified as a new type of dialect by geographical area (Versteegh 1997, p. 148).

Therefore, Balawiy, depending on its geographical area, represents one of the North western Arabian dialects. However, such classification could be partially inaccurate, for some categories include different dialects with distinct linguistic features; for instance, the Northwest Arabian dialects group includes the dialects of Sinai, Negev, and South Jordan, along with the dialect of north western Saudi Arabia . However, Palva (1991, p. 155), before Versteegh's (1997, p. 148) classification, distinguishes the north western Arabian dialect (NWA) as a distinct group and also describes their features.

In response, and with an aim to examine how the dialect has changed during the past 30 years between two generations of speakers, I conducted this study in Tabuk, a northwestern city in Saudi Arabia, with two groups of native Balawiy speakers.

The findings indicate some inaccuracies in the abovementioned categorisation. In identifying the linguistic features of NWA dialects, Palva (1991, p. 155) indicated some features that disagree with the Balawiy dialect represented in the present study —namely, the existence of /g/ and /k/, the *-n* of the feminine second- and third-person plural forms, and *tanwīn*, otherwise known as nunation. However, the last two features in this study appear only in old participants' speech who lived in Palava's (1991) classification period.

This suggests that dialects should not be classified according to geographical area since not all NWA speakers have the same features as the case of Balawiy dialect.

The data also reveal salient changes between the two generational groups, though the gap between them is not clearly significant. Most changes emerge in lexical items, which YG speakers tend to alternate, mostly with words borrowed internally from other Arabic varieties such as Modern Standard Arabic (MSA) or externally from other languages such as English and French. The finding is unsurprising, given Hobson's (2013) explanation that such borrowing is bound to happen as part of language change.

Findings also indicate alternation between the two groups in terms of phonological, morphological, semantic and lexical aspects, though syntactic changes remained conservative in both groups. Regarding phonological change, consonant shifts included those from the voiceless velar plosive consonant /k/ to the voiced velar plosive /g/. Also, a shift from /dʒ/ to /ʒ/, and /ʒ/ to /g/, respectively, all as part of a process of language change resembling a domino effect. In addition to vowel shifts from /i/ to /a/ and from /o/ to /i/, phonemes added by YG speakers to existing words also caused phonological change. The pronunciation of borrowed words has additionally changed between the two generations. Lastly, in terms of morphological change, I observed changes in the absence of /n/ from the feminine plural, as well as *tanwīn* usually suffixed to words by OG speakers.

The research findings highlights the influence of other varieties of Arabic upon Balawiy Bedouin. Data analysis has revealed that OG speech is influenced more by Classical Arabic (CA), whereas YG speech is influenced more by MSA. This result was largely expected since OG speakers are generally illiterate and exposed to CA in

mosques, while YG speakers are educated using MSA in all school subjects except foreign languages (e.g., English). Thus, the latter group's contact with other varieties either in schools or in urbanised areas may have affected their dialect. Interestingly, the influence of other languages—in this case, English and French—surfaced in both groups in the form of borrowed words. Their borrowing could fill a need for meaning or occur for other reasons, such as social–personal motivations as in the word *radio*, which in MSA has a standard synonym.

In sum, this study has confirmed that one feature of language is changeability, through which languages develop, by losing some lexical items and adding other invented or borrowed ones. Accordingly, linguists and speakers not stop language from changing, for language change is not only inevitable, but in many cases necessary to adapt to new social, cultural, and technological aspects of daily life. At the same time, linguists continue to investigate these changes in order to better understand various languages and language in general, as well as attitudes toward alternations. Ultimately, such knowledge can aid in predicting languages of the future and which aspects bear more influence upon language change.

Limitations and Directions for Future Research

Conducting this research has posed a handful of significant challenges. Firstly, literature addressing language change does not include any research on the Balawiy Bedouin dialect of Saudi Arabia, a limitation with both benefits and drawbacks. On the one hand, this gap in the research allowed the present study to pioneer investigation into a neglected dialect, particularly one widespread throughout northern Saudi Arabia. On the other, studying language changes between different generational groups without any

linguistic foundation in the literature to support the dialect examined could constitute a major setback. However, being a native Balawiy speaker, I was partially able to overcome this challenge.

Another limitation faced was the small sample of participants, who individually often used words and phrases that did not emerge in any other participant's speech. Though these words and phrases could highlight aspects of language change, particularly alternations, I had to exclude these data given the difficulty of identifying them as either dialectal alternations or aspects of the specific participant's speech as an idiolectic variety. To explain, Zuckermann (2006, p. 57) has indicated that language is as group of idiolects, language varies from person to person, though speakers nevertheless understand one another. However, in studying language, linguists cannot generalise a change demonstrated by one participant to represent a dialectal change—it needs to be used by other speakers of the dialect.

Altogether, given the lack of resources for studying the Balawiy Bedouin dialect and highlighting its features, future research should acknowledge the demand to document this variety. This should be done not because of its possible endangerment in the future since people still communicate and use it. Studying features of Balawiy can expand knowledge of Bedouin dialects in general, as well as clarify the cultural values and beliefs of its speakers. In a broad sense, there is a demand for a comprehensive description of Arabic dialects. Therefore, future researches are needed to investigate spoken dialects of Arabic and not to narrow studies on MSA and CA, although their importance.

Additionally, in conducting a descriptive study, though I sought to present how the Balawiy dialect has changed over time, I did not consistently examine motivations or reasons for such changes. Although some of these motivations are likely general among all language change, as the literature review illustrates (p. 24), future research nevertheless should address this point.

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