The Social and Cultural Representation of Saudi Dialects in the Media: A Sociolinguistic Study of Najdi and Hijazi Dialects

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Abstract

This study delves into the social and cultural depiction of the Najdi and Hijazi Arabic dialects in the Tash Ma Tash series. The investigation explores the dialects, lexical selections, attitudes, stereotypes, and social characteristics linked to the four main characters in the series. The technique emphasizes a qualitative analysis, with a focus on analyzing episodes in which the four characters played important roles. The process entails recognizing linguistic elements and documenting observations based on how the speakers are portrayed. The findings indicate that the Najdi dialect places a greater emphasis on accurately pronouncing letters rather than modifying them. In addition, the speech of younger individuals is often seen as more enjoyable, approachable, and casual compared to that of older people. The Hijazi dialect stands out for its charm and the intricate vocabulary it possesses. Furthermore, the integration of terms from different languages combines elements from classical Arabic, Egyptian, and Hijazi dialects.

Keywords: Sociolinguistics, Language attitudes, Media representation, Saudi dialects, Social programs

1. Introduction

The examination of language within the media has been characterized as intricately intertwined with a range of broader concerns centered on the concept of metalanguage, denoting the language employed to discuss language itself (Johnson and Ensslin, 2007). Across Arab countries, Arabic serves as the official language, prevalent in formal addresses, print media, government operations, and educational contexts. In parallel, individuals in Arab nations utilize dialectal variations of Standard Arabic for daily interactions, informal dialogues, artistic

expressions like music and cinema, with these variations exhibiting diversity across different regions. Aldosaree (2016) highlighted that within language variants in Saudi Arabia, individuals may hold diverse perspectives regarding various local dialects, sometimes even within the same geographical area. Consequently, most individuals possess the acuity to discern even subtle modifications in local dialects during conversational exchanges. The dialogue of characters functions not only as a conduit for disseminating information but also as a vehicle for portraying the regional and societal milieu in which the speaker is positioned. Nonetheless, the portrayal of accents on television has been notably overlooked by researchers in the field of linguistics.

1.1 Statement of the Problem

This study delves into the social and cultural representation of specific Arabic dialects in the media concerning regional dialects. It seeks to delineate the dialects, lexical nuances, attitudes, or ideologies exhibited by characters in series, as well as the social status and attributes associated with pronunciation and lexical choices.

1.2 Significance of the Research

The media exerts a profound influence on an individual's perception both at the international and local levels. Notably, research concerning the portrayal of dialects and accents on screen is still in its nascent stages. Consequently, studies that endeavor to illuminate how audiences perceive the accuracy or authenticity of dialects, or how they interpret characters, are relatively sparse, particularly in the Arab world. Thus, this current research sheds light on the representation of select Arab dialects in the media, focusing on the distinctive features of spoken dialects and lexical choices.

1.3 Research Questions

In contrast to previous studies, the current research provides insights into the portrayal of specific regional Arab dialects in the media by analyzing the linguistic characteristics and lexical elements of the Najdi and Hijazi dialects. Additionally, the study examines how characters in series are depicted from various perspectives. This study aims to address the following questions:

1. How is the Najdi dialect represented socially and culturally in the media?

2. How is the Hijazi dialect represented socially and culturally in the media?

2. Theoretical Background

2.1 Language Attitudes

The inquiry will commence by examining the concept of 'attitude' in a general context, rather than focusing solely on its application to language or other entities, processes, or behaviors. According to Lundervold (2013), the term 'attitude' encompasses multiple distinct definitions, mirroring the lack of consensus among scholars regarding an accurate definition. Similarly, Baker (1992) highlights the semantic disagreements and variations surrounding attitude definitions, particularly concerning the term's generality and specificity.

Traditionally, attitudes have been categorized into cognitive, affective, and behavioral components. The cognitive facet pertains to an individual's belief system, the affective aspect involves emotional responses, and the conative element entails the inclination to act towards the object of the attitude (Gardener, 1985). A seminal definition is proposed by Allport (1954, as cited in Garrett, 2010, 19), who defines attitude as "a learned disposition to think, feel, and behave toward a person (or object) in a particular way." Garrett underscores this definition for its comprehensive nature, emphasizing that attitudes encompass not only emotions but also thoughts and behaviors.

Language attitudes are anticipated to influence our interactions with other language users and aid in predicting their responses to our language usage, thereby shaping the linguistic choices we make during communication (Garrett, 2010). Garrett et al. (2003) asserts that individual and collective functions stemming from stereotyping in intergroup interactions are likely to influence cognitive processes in linguistic attitudes. In essence, language forms, variations, and styles can evoke perceptions about a speaker, their group affiliation, and assumptions regarding the characteristics of group members (Garrett et al., 2003).

Baker (1992, 29) identifies eight key aspects of language attitudes that have garnered significant attention in recent years, with a focus on attitudes toward language variation, dialect, and speech style. This paper specifically concentrates on the aspect of attitude towards language variation, dialect, and speech style.

In conclusion, the study of linguistic attitudes seeks to ascertain individuals' attitudes, their potential behavioral implications, and the factors that mold and define these attitudes (Garrett et al., 2003).

2.1.1 Stereotyping and the Use of Dialect On-screen

Stereotypes and attitudes are often used interchangeably due to their close connection, underscoring the importance of elucidating both concepts. Garrett (2010) posits that individual and collective functions stemming from stereotyping in social group dynamics are likely to influence cognitive processes in linguistic attitudes. Moreover, Smith and Mackie (2000, 160, as cited in Garrett, 2000, 23) define stereotypes as a form of social categorization that involves dividing the world into social groups and classifying individuals based on shared characteristics of a particular group.

Since the 1930s, film historians and critics have analyzed stereotypes, often criticizing them as "standard" and contrasting them with more positive qualities such as artistic, creative, nuanced, authentic, distinctive, or original (Schweinitz, 2011). An in-depth comprehension of stereotypes in sociology, social psychology, and technology is necessary to analyze how fictional characters shape, influence, or shape individuals' self-perceptions. Schweinitz noted that individuals belonging to a social or cultural group are frequently portrayed as either "representations of those who are different" or "representations of oneself." Thus, stereotypes commonly encompass sweeping generalizations about entire collectives.

According to Hodson (2014), the dialect employed by a character in the film is the sole indicator of their background. The manner in which a character addresses the audience in a

novel or film can provide a wealth of information regarding their social and geographical origins, thereby facilitating the comprehension of the plot. The dual function of dialect in literature is underscored by a study conducted by Hodson (2014), which is cited in Lien (2016). Kozloff (2000) and Lippi-Green (2012) contend that dialect may function to establish or perpetuate stereotypes and assign characteristics to characters without explicitly stating so.

2.2 Arabic Language

Al Motairi (2015) posits that the fundamental factors utilized in the identification of Arabic dialects are the geographical criterion, specifically the East-West dichotomy, and the ecological or demographic criterion, known as the Sedentary-Bedouin dichotomy. Banjar (2003) further categorizes Arabic into Classical Arabic, Eastern Arabic, Western Arabic, and Maltese, highlighting the diverse linguistic landscape of the Arabic language. Banjar (2004) emphasizes the prevalence of various colloquial variations of Arabic, known as Ammiyyah, which exhibit distinct national characteristics and regional differences.

The linguistic diversity within Arabic dialects is not only evident between different Arab countries but also within specific regions of a single country, as illustrated by the variations between the dialects spoken in the East and West of Libya (Ethelb, 2019). This diversity in dialects is a common feature across Arab nations, with individuals routinely utilizing these regional variations in their daily interactions. Dialect, as defined by Wardhaugh and Fuller (2015), encompasses a particular way of speaking a language that is associated with a specific region or social group, highlighting the distinctiveness of dialects within the Arabic language context.

It is essential to recognize that dialects serve as alternative forms of language that are naturally employed in less formal or stressful situations (Ethelb, 2019). The utilization of regional dialects in Arabic communication reflects the rich tapestry of linguistic diversity present within the Arab world.

2.2.1 Hijazi Arabic

The HA dialect is predominantly spoken in the western region of Saudi Arabia, particularly around the Red Sea coastline (Eifan, 2017). Altalhi (2014) explains that the western province of Saudi Arabia has a wide array of linguistic patterns, encompassing both urban and Bedouin variations of Hijazi Arabic. Alzaidi (2024) defines Bedouin HA as the particular dialect spoken by individuals residing in rural regions. This study will focus on analyzing Hijazi Arabic as it is spoken in urban settings, also known as Urban Hijazi Arabic (UHA). Ahyad and Becker (2020) highlight that UHA exhibits mutual intelligibility with neighboring urban dialects, such as Egyptian and Levantine.

2.2.1.1 The HA Phonological System

The HA phonological system, although not the primary focus of this paper, serves as a crucial aspect to consider when exploring how characters attempt to emulate native speakers of a particular dialect. Hence, it becomes imperative to delve into the phonology of the dialects under scrutiny, specifically the distinctive dialect features of Hijazi and Najdi Arabic dialects.

Omar's (1957) comprehensive exploration of the Hijazi dialect offers sociolinguists a valuable avenue to conduct research on various facets of the dialect. In his study, Omar (1957) highlighted the pivotal role played by the "th" consonants as the distinguishing feature that sets Urban Hijazi Arabic (UHA) apart from other predominant regional Saudi dialects. Remarkably, /θ/ is pronounced as /t/ or /s/, /ð/ is pronounced as /d/ or /z/, and / ðˤ/ is pronounced as /dˤ/ or /zˤ/.

2.2.2 Najdi Arabic

The dialect known as Najdi Arabic (NA) is spoken in Najd, situated in the heart of the Arabian desert region, which is now part of Saudi Arabia. The geographical expanse referred to as Najd lacks precise scientific or physical demarcations; however, colloquially, it encompasses an area extending from Yemen in the south to the northern borders of Jordan, and from the Ahsa oasis in the east to the Hijaz mountains and Asiir plains in the west, as detailed by Sweel (1990). According to Al Motairi (2015), the North-East Arabian dialects, commonly known as the Najdi dialects, are further categorized into three subgroups: 'Anazi dialects, Shammari dialects, and Syro-Mesopotamian dialects.

2.2.2.1 The Najdi Phonological System

As previously indicated, it is imperative to elucidate both the phonological system and the distinctive characteristics of the dialect, as emphasized earlier. Alghmaiz (2013) asserts that all phonemes present in Classical Arabic are also encompassed within the Najdi dialect; however, the reverse is not true. Nonetheless, there exists a variance in the frequency of these phonemes due to the incorporation of additional phonemes in Najdi, denoted by an asterisk in Table 4, which replace certain Classical Arabic phonemes in specific contexts. The ensuing table, sourced from data compiled by Al-Feneekh (1983), Sweel (1990), and Ingham (1994) and referenced in Alghmaiz's work (2013), delineates these phonological distinctions.

Numerous scholarly inquiries have delved into the distinctive characteristics of the Najdi dialect, with Alshargi et al. (2019) among those highlighting various phonological alternations within this dialect. Specifically, Alshargi et al. (2019) observed phonological variations such as the /dz/ variant of /q/ and the /ts/ variants of /k/, which, as noted by Al Motairi (2015), commonly manifest in the presence of front vowels. Additionally, Alshargi et al. (2019) posited that in Najdi Arabic, the pronunciation of the Classical Arabic etymological /dˤ/ and /ðˤ/ is uniform, with both phonemes articulated as the voiced emphatic fricative /ðˤ/ (Al Motairi, 2015).

Moreover, Abboud (1979) expounded that in the Najdi dialect, the *Hamza* is omitted at the beginning of verbs, as exemplified in instances like *māmūr* 'recommended', except in cases deemed as Classical borrowings, as illustrated by Ingham (1997).

Ingham (1997) explained Najdi vowels in depth. He remarked that the [ä] vowel lacks *imlah* or 'fronting', preserving a center quality but fronting to a -e- sound in forward contexts. The pharyngeal /h/ phoneme pronounces more like -e- than the more open position. In neutral surroundings, especially near r, h, and x, i/u can be dim and centered. The vowels ë/ö are typically pure but may glide before a plosive, as seen in words like [beit] for 'home'.

2.3 The Role of the Media

Sønnesyn (2011) suggests that while media has been proposed as a potential factor influencing language development and attitudes, there remains no consensus on the specific role it plays, if any. Lippi-Green (2012) points to a prevailing belief that regional variations in American English are diminishing, leading to a homogenization of speech patterns over time, with broadcast and print media sources being cited as catalysts for this trend. Discussions on this topic can be found in various media platforms, including letters to the editor, discussion forums, news items, and weblogs.

When it comes to attitudes, Garrett (2010) highlights that media exposure can influence perceptions across different domains. The portrayal of the elderly in the media as frail and unattractive perpetuates negative stereotypes, while reinforcing traditional gender norms and language controversies. These issues, frequently highlighted in the media, serve to maintain public awareness and serve as focal points for shaping, reinforcing, or challenging attitudes. Sønnesyn (2011) further suggests that media may play a role in perpetuating stereotypes and attitudes, whether by generating or reflecting these challenges, thereby keeping them at the forefront of societal consciousness.

2.4 Previous Studies Into the Representation of Dialects on Screen

Edensor (2009) conducted a study focusing on the phonological characteristics prevalent in three films directed by Ken Loach: Kes (1969), Looks and Smiles (1981), and The Navigators (2001). The aim was to demonstrate the decline of the Yorkshire dialect over time, transitioning towards a more standardized form of English. These selected films are regarded as representatives of the Yorkshire linguistic variety, with phonological transcriptions of specific scenes included in the analysis.

Meek (2006) provided an analysis of the linguistic features utilized in the creation of fictional American Indian speech, commonly referred to as "Hollywood Injun English," found in various forms of media such as movies, television series, and literature. This stylized form of speech incorporates nonstandard characteristics reminiscent of "foreigner talk" and "baby talk," as well as a refined variant of English intended to convey historical aspects associated with "the White Man's Indian." The study also explores how these linguistic features are employed to depict stereotypical American Indian traits and examines the grammatical elements used to distinguish Native American speech, often associated with negative portrayals when characters assume, perform, or imitate Indian identities.

Bucholtz and Lopez (2011) delved into the use of African American English by European American actors in Hollywood films as part of a complex form of language-based blackface minstrelsy. They highlighted how linguistic minstrelsy in such cinematic portrayals involves sociolinguistic processes of deauthentication, amplification of intertextual gaps, and regimentation of language production as a caricatured form of speech. Despite these performances being critiqued within the films for perpetuating racial essentialism ideologies, the study demonstrates how cross-racial depictions of African American English in

Hollywood productions reinforce entrenched beliefs about language, race, and gender through linguistic minstrelsy, signaling a shifting landscape in these ideologies.

Lien's (2016) research, closely related to the present study, explored the representation of accents in the initial season of Game of Thrones. The study aimed to investigate how accents are portrayed in the series and their correlation with character portrayals, with a focus on the assumption that accent representation may be tied to a character's regional background. However, Lien suggested that this connection is only partially accurate, suggesting a symbolic rather than realistic portrayal. The study revealed that male characters or those with lower levels of sophistication and social status were more likely to have non-prestige accents, while prestige accents were associated with a narrower range of variation, typically spoken by educated individuals of higher social standing. Female characters and young individuals predominantly spoke with a prestige accent, with interpersonal relationships and authenticity identified as factors influencing accent portrayal.

The literature review presented provides valuable insights into the role of media in influencing language development, attitudes, and the depiction of dialects on screen. Several key studies have highlighted the impact of media on language perceptions and stereotypes, as well as the representation of various dialects in film and television. However, a gap identified in the existing literature is the lack of representation of Arabic dialects in media. While studies have explored the depiction of various dialects such as Yorkshire dialects, American Indian speech, African American English, and accents in popular TV series like Game of Thrones, there seems to be a scarcity of research focusing on how Arabic dialects are represented in media platforms.

From this standpoint, my study fills a gap by examining how Arabic dialects are portrayed in media. Analyzing these representations and their impact on language attitudes broadens our understanding of language diversity in media and sheds light on how they influence societal views and challenge stereotypes, contributing to a more comprehensive understanding of language representation in the media.

3. Methodology

3.1 A Qualitative Approach

The chosen methodology aligns with the research objectives of investigating the representation of dialects. This study aims to analyze how regional dialects are portrayed in *Tash Ma Tash* and their potential influence on character presentation, incorporating various factors. The emphasis lies on identifying the spoken dialects, their characteristics, and lexical aspects of the six actors in the series. Non-linguistic variables like gender and social status were integrated for character analysis. This research approach prioritizes qualitative methods for data interpretation over quantitative analysis, focusing on explanatory processes.

3.2 Data

Regarding the data, *Tash Ma Tash*, a Saudi Ramadan comedy TV series that aired from 1993 to 2011, served as the primary data source. One episode from the series was selected for

in-depth analysis, viewed four times by the author and three others to gain diverse perspectives on character depiction. The data collection included details such as the episode's title, production year, location, each character's name, and their specific accent. Qualitative notes were taken on the dialogues, situations, and noteworthy aspects of the characters' speech, including unique traits and the use of vocabulary not typical of the Hijazi or Najdi dialects. Characters who had minimal dialogue were excluded from the dataset.

3.2.1 Selection of Data

In the data collection phase, a critical decision involved selecting episodes of Tash Ma Tash for analysis, considering the extensive content available from the 18 seasons comprising 30 episodes each, lasting approximately 30 to 40 minutes per episode. Due to the vast amount of material and the study's specific focus, it was impractical to assess every episode. Consequently, one episode from the 17th season, titled "The Similarities," which aired in 2010, was chosen to narrow the project's scope. Careful consideration was given to choosing characters who speak either the Najdi or Hijazi dialects and hold significant roles in the selected episode.

3.2.2 Collection of Data

The data collection process centered on three main characters—an elderly Najdi man, a young Najdi boy, and an adult Hijazi man—along with one minor character, a middle-aged Hijazi man. These characters were meticulously selected to represent Arabic dialects, specifically those of Najd and Hijaz. The analysis revealed two primary varieties: the Najdi and Hijazi dialects. To achieve the paper's goal of identifying and describing dialects through character representation, data collection involved watching the specified episode from the 17th season and coding for predetermined variables, along with capturing additional relevant information.

3.2.3 Analyzing the Data

For data analysis, an objective coding approach was employed alongside initial observations. The coding system encompassed details such as character names, ages, genders, social statuses, and dialects. Specific dialectal traits were recorded to accurately categorize the dialects, while lexical items played a crucial role in defining character dialects methodologically. To ensure the precision of dialect classification, a native speaker was consulted regarding certain dialect traits.

4. Findings and Discussion

The episode centers on the narrative of a prosperous Hijazi family, the Abu Hossam family, embarking on a quest to locate their vanished son, Hossam. Consequently, the father of the missing son offers a reward of one million riyals to anyone who can find him. Serendipitously, the missing son's uncle, Zaki, encounters a destitute Najdi boy named Ubaid, bearing a striking resemblance to his nephew. Zaki strikes a deal with Ubaid's father, Abu Ubaid, to have his son assume the role of the lost son, promising him one hundred thousand riyals in exchange. Subsequently, the uncle instructs the boy, who is to impersonate the

missing son, in the nuances of the Hijazi dialect and provides comprehensive details about the lost son, including the names of his kin, to convince the family of his authenticity. Upon presenting the boy to the lost son's family to claim the reward, they initially believe him to be their son, yet harbor suspicions due to discrepancies in personality. Ultimately, the real missing son returns to his family in a surprising twist after a prolonged absence of four years.

4.1 The Characters' Dialects Features

As previously elucidated, one of the primary objectives of the study is to investigate the specific characteristics of the dialect and lexical elements that signify the dialect's identity. In the fourth episode, it becomes evident that the diverse dialect traits and the carefully selected lexical items for each dialect serve to distinctly differentiate one dialect from another.

The initial focal character, the elderly Najdi Abu Ubaid, assumes the role of Ubaid's father, who subsequently collaborates with the uncle to orchestrate his son's impersonation as the missing individual. The subsequent table illustrates a compilation of Najdi dialect attributes and notable lexical items observed in the speech of the elderly Najdi character:

Table 1. The Najdi dialect' characteristics of the older character

The variable	The variant	Distinguished lexical items	The equivalent in the Hijazi dialect
(q)	[dz]	(wait for minutes) /dzaydz/	/dqayq/
(k)	[ts]	(liar) /ts ðob/	/kzab/
The Arabic (ض) and (ظ)	The voiced emphatic fricative /ðˤ/	(bite) /yaʕðˤ/	/yaʕdˤ/
The Arabic (ء)	*Hamza* dropping	(if) /in/	/in/

Despite being a prominent character in the episode, he had limited dialogue, possibly attributable to certain character traits suggesting cognitive challenges. The second key character, the Najdi boy Ubaid, assumes the role of impersonating the missing son, Hossam. The subsequent table presents a compilation of Najdi dialect features and notable lexical items observed in the speech of the twenty-year-old character, Ubaid.

Table 2. Characteristics of the Najdi dialect of the young boy

The variable	The variant	Distinguished lexical items	The equivalent in the Hijazi dialect
(k)	[ts]	(your speeches) /hatsikum/	/kalamakm/
(k)	[s]	/wshbis/ (what's wrong)	/ish bik/
The Arabic (ء)	Hamza dropping	/alhmr/ (Red)	/al'hmar/

The third main character, the Hijazi uncle Zaki, who plays the role of to be the uncle of the missing son and who saw a boy resemble his sister's son and later agreed with the boy's father to make his son pretend to be the missing son to gain the prize of finding him. The table below shows a set of Hijazi dialect characteristics and some distinguished lexical items found in the speech of the Hijazi adult character:

Table 3. Characteristics of the Hijazi dialect of the adult man

The variable	The variant	Distinguished lexical items in Hijazi	The equivalent in the Najdi dialect
(th)	[z]	(studying) /tzakik/	/tðakir/
(th)	[d]	(we took) /axdna/	/'xðna/
(th)	[s]	(for example) /mslan/	/matˤlan/
(th)	[t]	(three) /tlata/	/θlaθa/
The Arabic (ظ)	[z]	(memory) /alzakra/	/al ðakra/
The Arabic (ء)	[ʔ]	(take a walk) /ʔndur/	/qoh-natˤlaʕ/

The fourth minor character, the Hijazi father Abu Hossam, plays the role of being the kind father of his missing son and who sets a prize of one million riyals to whoever finds his missing son. The table below shows a set of Hijazi dialect characteristics and some distinguished lexical items found in the speech of the Hijazi middle-aged character:

Table 4. Characteristics of the Hijazi dialect of the middle-aged character

The variable	The variant	Distinguished lexical items in Hijazi	The equivalent in the Najdi dialect
(th)	[t]	(Many) /katyr/	/kaθyr/
The Arabic (ظ)	[z]	(saved) /mahfoz/	/mahfoðˤ/
The Arabic (ع)	[ʔ]	(be patient) /ʔsˤbory/	/ʔsˤbry/

4.2 The Socially and Culturally Representation of Najdi Dialect in the Media

One of the most influential families is the Abu Ubaid family, who have their home in Najd, especially in the province of Sudair. The House is composed of a father and his son, and they play significant parts in the episode. The character of the family speaks with a Najdi accent throughout the episode.

It is essential to highlight a few prominent linguistic stereotypes connected to the older Najdi people. A noteworthy example to discuss is Abu Ubaid, the only character in the episode to speak the "local Najdi dialect." Abu Ubaid is the focus of this discussion. To put it another way, because Abu Ubaid plays the part of an older person, he speaks in a manner that is clearly a stereotyped portrayal of the local Najdi dialect noticed in his pronunciation of the word "دتزياتز." However, the character's dialect is extremely convinced, characterized by the use of lexical items such as "وشهو" and " مانب " and a variety of other features, including the diminutive as "مسيكين", replacing /k/ sound with /ts/ as " يتسذب",pronouncing the etymological /dʕ/ as the voiced emphatic fricative / ðˤ/ as " تعظ ", replacing the sound / ق / with /dz/ as, " دتزيايز" and the deletion of hamza as "زملاو . " An additional finding is that there is a perception that elderly persons who speak with this accent are considered as low prestige even when the individual has obtained an education. Despite this, because the Najdi dialect is associated with the Saudi kings, high positions, and commerce, this, as a result, gives the perception of success and luck and so on as a result. When it comes to the state of the economy, the choice of words (such as "e.g., بتعبر فيه") provides an insight into the poor situation of the family's finances. Abu Ubaid represents the Najdi dialect; he is straightforward, impatient, welcoming, and modest.

The second key character in the story is the Najdi youngster Ubaid, who plays the role of pretending to be the missing son (Hossam). Even though he is the focal point of this episode, this character may be perceived as more of a mocking than a good representation of the issue. Nonetheless, it is pretty clear that the director chose to portray Ubaid in this manner to elicit laughter from the audience rather than to establish the situation. Respecting older people is a remarkable and admirable moral trait emphasized by this character's use of language. For

example, when Zaki contacted Ubaid, Ubaid responded with "سم" to demonstrate his respect for Zaki's senior status. On the other hand, there is an exaggerated stereotype idea that the director seems to want to draw viewers' attention to, that is, the pronunciation of /ts/ and /s/, which can be found in Obaid's speech at the end of the episode when he began overemphasizing the sound /s/ when speaking with Hossam's fiancée as if he were saying: "I am a Najdi youngster." In addition, there is an ideology behind this, which is primarily to make the audience laugh since Ubaid exposed himself or failed to imitate the Hijazi dialect.

Even though Najdi speakers are perceived as obstinate, stern, and sincere, the representation of the Najdi accent demonstrates an attempt to power the language with the precise pronunciation of the letters and not replacing one letter with another letter except in the case of the letter /dˤ/. Youngsters' dialect can be seen as distinct from olders' representation of the ND in that it is funnier, suaver, friendlier, and has a more relaxed overall tone. Noteworthy, many ND vocabularies are regarded as appealing, which likely catches listers' attention (e.g., مبطي and مانب).

4.3 The Socially and Culturally Representation of Hijazi Dialect in the Media

The other most influential family is the Abu Hossam family, seated in Hijaz, specifically Jeddah city. The House is composed of a father, mother, and son and daughter; their relatives, the uncle and the sister-in-law, play minor parts in the episode except for the uncle, who plays a central role. The characters of the family speak with a Hijazi accent throughout the episode.

Here, the primary antagonist of the episode is introduced. Uncle Zaki is the third essential figure in the story. From the moment he first appeared in the episode, with his thick mustache and conniving looks, he was a villain; thereafter, his conniving attitude also began to emerge. The uncle plays the part of finding a young man whose face resembles that of his missing nephew, which motivates him to agree with the young boy's father to let his son pose as the lost son so that the uncle can receive the reward of one million riyals set by Hossam's father.

The character's dialect is extremely convinced, characterized by the use of lexical items such as "هيا شوفي" and "أبويا" and a variety of other features, including the Classical Arabic phoneme /ð/ came to be pronounced [d] as in "اخدنا" or [z] as in "تزاكر". On the other hand, /θ/ is pronounced chiefly [t] as in تلاته or rarely [s] as in "مسلاً", also the Arabic phoneme /dˤ/ came to be pronounced [d] as in "المودوع". Lastly, the Arabic phoneme /ðˤ/ came to be pronounced [z] as in "محفوز".

The fourth minor character, Abu Hossam, performs the part of a caring father who has lost track of his son and has offered a reward of one million riyals to anyone who can find his son. The attitude and ideology of Abu Hossam's character in the episode give clues to represent the Hijazi middle-aged as a balanced, prudent, and intelligent person.

The representation of the Hijazi accent demonstrates an attempt to enrich the language with personality and charisma, although its speakers talk more rapidly than speakers of other dialects. Some Hijazi words are regarded quaint, which likely enhances their impact (e.g., قوام and اندور). Further, the existence of a vast number of borrowed words gives the feeling of

dialects mixing or maybe unconscious code-switching between classical Arabic, some Egyptian, and the Hijazi dialects.

Since there have not been many studies conducted on this subject, particularly in the Arab world, I have no means of relating the results to other research that's been done.

In this study, the categories of dialects, as well as the selection and definition of character roles, were based on my judgments. Regarding the dialects categories, the scope of the two dialects can be considered a minor flaw. For instance, the present study did not differentiate between Najdi and Hijazi region-specific dialects but instead grouped them under umbrella terms such as Najdi Arabic and Hijazi Arabic. Inconsistent diversity, such as the absence of female characters, was a minor disadvantage of the data source. This study has excluded dialects other than Najdi and Hijazi, which is a disadvantage.

The process of collecting and analyzing the data posed a number of challenges that needed to be overcome. To begin, due to time limitations, just one episode was possible. A second challenge is that the characters' roles are not as clearly defined as initially thought. Due to the episode's comedic nature, it is impossible to tell who the good guys are or who the bad guys are in the series. Thus, they were all divided into two categories based on their importance to the story and their screen time. Third, the identification of dialectal traits, on the other hand, was not without its difficulties. Some characters spoke with a dialect that put them in the middle of two different languages and possessed contradicting traits. For example, one character pronounced the (th) (ذ) variable with a [th] sound and sometimes with a [z] sound, which compelled me to consult a native speaker.

5. Conclusion

In summary, this research paper examined the social and cultural portrayal of Arabic dialects in media, specifically focusing on the Najdi and Hijazi dialects, as well as delving into the characters' attitudes and ideologies. The study was conducted using a qualitative approach, involving the observation of specific characters in a series where the Najdi and Hijazi dialects were prominently featured, with coding of variables and general observations being noted during the data collection process.

The findings of the study indicated that: a) Najdi speakers are often perceived as firm, serious, and sincere, with an emphasis on precise pronunciation and minimal letter substitutions in their dialect. In contrast, younger individuals exhibit a lighter, more amiable, and relaxed tone in their speech; b) the representation of the Hijazi accent aims to infuse the language with personality and charm, despite the rapid speech pace of its speakers. Additionally, the inclusion of unique Hijazi vocabulary enhances the dialect's impact. Moreover, the presence of borrowed words suggests a blending of dialects or potential unconscious code-switching between classical Arabic, Egyptian Arabic, and the Hijazi dialect.

This study is expected to serve as a foundational basis for future research endeavors. Comparative analyses could shed light on variations among different television production studios responsible for creating programs. Exploring similarities and differences in animated short films produced by Janopi, Hijazi, and Najdi studios presents a potential avenue for future

projects. Furthermore, expanding the scope of study to encompass additional dialects beyond Hijazi and Najdi, as investigated in this paper, is a plausible direction for further research.

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