The Use of Adjective Intensifiers by Najdi Dialect Speakers in Riyadh

Randah Abdullah F Alfuhaydi

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Declaration

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Dedication

To my dear parents, Abdullah & Haya

Abstract

This thesis explores the functional devices used for adjective intensification by Najdi dialect speakers in Riyadh and the linguistic and social parameters conditioning their usage by operationalising a sociolinguistic variationist analysis. This study is one of the first investigating intensifiers in the Najdi dialect. The corpus in this study, which is based on interviews, consists of 148,023 words. Adjective intensifiers in the dataset are categorised according to the model of Quirk et al. (1985). Among the 3,508 adjectives in the data, only 540 (15.39%) were intensified. Within the adjective intensification system of Najdi dialect speakers, amplifiers (e.g., *marrah* 'very') were the most frequent, followed by emphasisers (e.g., *waḷḷah* 'truly') and downtoners (e.g., *šwayy* 'a bit'). Within amplifiers, boosters like *marrah* 'very' were more frequent compared to maximisers such as *tamāman* 'completely'.

The social factors investigated in the variationist analysis are gender, age and education, while the linguistic factors are adjective semantic category, adjective syntactic function, adjective polarity, adjective emotionality, the seriousness of discussion topics and position of intensifier. Amplifiers were found to be highly sensitive to social factors, while downtoners were more conditioned by linguistic factors. Female speakers used amplifiers more frequently than male speakers. The two most common amplifiers, *marrah* and *jiddan*, had two different profiles and analysis of their usage in the aggregate data and in the speech of outliers underscored many social and linguistic aspects involved in their usage and change. Further, the booster *marrah* seems to be an enregistered marker of feminine linguistic style.

Overall, this study paves the way for future research on Arabic intensifiers. It offers theoretical and methodological insights for advancing the field of sociolinguistics, especially in relation to the variation of discourse-pragmatic features, the stylistic analysis of individual speakers and the implementation of digital discourse in sociolinguistic enquiries. It is also likely to be significant across various linguistic disciplines, such as language teaching and language acquisition.

Transliteration System

Arabic Letter	Transliteration	Arabic Letter	Transliteration
Consonants			
ء	ʔ	ض	ḍ
ب	b	ط	ṭ
ت	t	ظ	ḏ̣
ث	ṯ	ع	ʕ
ج	j	غ	ġ
ح	ḥ	ل (emphatic)	ḷ
خ	x	م	m
د	d	ن	n
ذ	ḏ	ه	h
ر	r	و (consonantal)	w
ز	z	ي (consonantal)	y
س	s	ة *(tāʔ marbūṭah)*	t
ش	š		
ص	ṣ		
Vowels			
َ	a	ـَيْ as a monophthong (front, mid, unrounded, long vowel)	ē
ِ	i	ـَيْ (diphthong)	ay
ُ	u	ـَو as a monophthong (back, mid, rounded, long vowel)	ō
ـَا	ā	ـَوْ (diphthong)	aw
ـُو	ū	ى *(ʔalif maqṣūrah)*	ā
ـِي	ī		

Other sounds or features	
Definite Article ال	Always used as *al-* for simplicity
Gemination *(šaddah)*	Double consonant
nisbah suffix	*-ī* (with feminine singular–*iyyah*, masculine plural *-iyyīn,* and feminine plural *-iyyāt*)
Nunation (*tanwīn*)	*-in*
Hyphen -	Add after prepositions like *b-* or *w-*
English words	Written in English spelling (not transliterated)

List of Abbreviations

ND	Najdi Dialect
HD	Hijazi Dialect
CA	Classical Arabic
SD	Saudi Dialect
EA	Egyptian Arabic
AA	Ammani Arabic
DPF	Discourse-pragmatic Feature
NP	Noun Phrase
PP	Prepositional Phrase
AP	Adjective Phrase
DegP	Degree Phrase
RNDC	Riyadh Najdi Dialect Corpus

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Chapter 1 Introduction

1.1 Preliminaries

An intensifier is defined as a "device that scales a quality up or down or somewhere between the two" (Bolinger 1972, p.17). According to Quirk (1972, p.376), intensifiers have "a common heightening or lowering effect on some unit in the sentence". Intensifiers in the Najdi dialect (ND) include words such as *marrah* 'very' or *šwayy* 'a bit' (example 1a and 1b)[1].

1)

a) w-mānī mtzawwij fa-mānī ḥāss b- al-taʔṯīr hāḏā al-guwī ***marrah*** (M3)

   and I'm not married so I am not experiencing this ***very*** strong effect

b) ykūn ṣaʕb ***šwayy*** fī ʔxtiyār al-magās biḏḏāt (M22)

   It is ***a little*** difficult in choosing the size specifically

Various labels have been given to intensifiers in the literature because of the different approaches linguists have followed in studying them (Paradis, 1997, p.14). One traditional approach, which has primarily focused on English and other (Indo-) European languages, has investigated intensifiers on the basis of their word class (Paradis, 1997, p.14). There has been disagreement about what constitutes an intensifier when approached from word class. For example, intensifiers are included by many linguists under the umbrella of *adverbs*, which is an approach that focuses on the semantic-grammatical aspects of these devices (Benzinger, 1971, p.105). There are also intensifiers which are categorised under the umbrella of *adjectives* (Quirk et al., 1985, pp.430, 457). Other approaches are centred on the functions of these elements, such as *intensifier*, *modifier*, *adjunct*, and *subjunct* (Paradis, 1997, p.14).

Intensifiers constitute a sub-category of discourse-pragmatic features (DPFs). DPFs are a heterogeneous category of items from different grammatical classes that have little or no semantic content, are syntactically optional, often make little or no change to the truth-conditionality of the utterances and perform various functions. These functions include: expressing the speaker's stance, channelling the interpretation of

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[1] Examples 1a and 1b, along with other examples in this thesis with codes like (M3, F6) are based on the corpus collected for the current study. In these examples, the speaker's gender is coded as 'M' or 'F' for male and female, respectively. Examples from other studies or resources are noted and cited accordingly. Other examples with no sources (e.g., example 2 in this chapter) are based on my own knowledge as a native Najdi speaker.

utterances and organising discourse (Pichler, 2013, p.4). They are known by various names in the literature, such as *discourse markers* or *pragmatic markers*.

Many features characterise this heterogeneous group of intensifying elements. Intensifiers occur at a high frequency in speech and writing (Benzinger, 1971, p.100). This feature led to their extensive examination in the literature compared with other intensification tools in language, such as intensive repetition, exaggeration, hyperbole, stress and word-order shifts (see Benzinger, 1971, pp.10–11; Bordet et al., 2017, p.1; Bordet and Jamet, 2015; Labov, 1984b, p.54). In addition, part of what makes intensifiers distinctive as intensification tools is that they usually become part of the functional elements in language based on lexical elements, which go through a process of grammaticalisation (Tagliamonte and Roberts, 2005, p.285). This means that these lexical items gradually lose all or part of their semantic content and become semantically bleached (Hopper and Traugott, 1993, pp.1–2). Hopper and Traugott (1993, p.XV) define grammaticalisation as "the change whereby lexical items and constructions come in certain linguistic contexts to serve grammatical functions and, one grammaticalized, continue to develop new grammatical functions.". Even when intensifiers become established in the intensification system, they continue going through periods of change over time (Bordet, 2015; König, 2017; Tagliamonte, 2008). The intensifying effect of intensifiers wanes over time because of their high usage, which means that there is always a need for newer forms that satisfy speakers' expressive needs (Lorenz, 2002, p.143). Older intensifiers (e.g., *well*[2]) can be reused after a period of decline in their usage for the purpose of achieving expressivity through a process called *recycling* (Bordet, 2015; Hopper and Traugott, 1993, p.122; König, 2017; Lorenz, 2002, p.143; Tagliamonte, 2008). Intensifiers are also optional, subjective, context-dependent and considered open-class (Athanasiadou, 2007, p.554; Benzinger, 1971, pp.36, 48, 148; König, 2017; Napoli and Ravetto, 2017, p.3). Researchers acknowledge the capacity of intensifiers (especially amplifiers) for stratification across a speech community (Ito and Tagliamonte, 2003; Buchstaller and Barnfield, 2010; Bueno-Amaro, 2021; Almossa, 2024, *inter alia*). Labov (1972, p.252) asserts that "[…] one cannot make any major advance towards understanding the mechanism of linguistic change without serious

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[2] The booster *well* was traced back to the thirteenth century (Mustanoja, 1960, p.327) and had observed a sharp decline by the mid-fourteenth century (Ito and Tagliamonte, 2003, p.278). Yet, this intensifier was observed in the speech of twentieth century teenagers in London (Stenström, 2000) which could be an indication of its recycling. Aijmer (2021) has also observed that *well* is re-emerging in spoken British English, expanding its semantic contexts and diffusing into broader geographical areas especially in the North.

study of the social factors which motivate linguistic evolution". Hence, studying the distribution of intensifiers across social factors is critical for understanding the stability and change in the intensification system being used, which is the focus of variationist research in investigations of these devices.

1.2 Research Objectives

This study overall aims to expand the knowledge of the adjective intensification system employed by Najdi Dialect (ND) speakers in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia. The study draws specific attention to adjective amplifiers in the analysis and the discussion. This goal is achieved by adopting a functional-semantic approach. Another dimension of the adjective intensification system in ND is explored by adopting a variationist approach. The variationist analysis aims to uncover the distribution of two sub-categories of adjective intensifiers: amplifiers and downtoners (excluding emphasisers) (for detailed explanation of these categories see Chapter 2, Section 2.2.1.1) across various social and linguistic parameters. Specific attention is then given to the two amplifiers in the data: *marrah* and *jiddan* 'very', motivated by their higher frequency in the data and their noticeable social significance compared to forms of downscaling. These two forms are further explored through traditional variationist analysis and analysis of their usage by individual outliers in the data. Finally, an additional pragmatic and social dimension of the amplifier *marrah* is uncovered through exploring how intensification using *marrah* is stylistically enregistered as a feminine linguistic feature, alongside other linguistic features in digital discourse. This is accomplished by conducting a narrow case study on male users' parody of feminine linguistic styles and their perceptions of what constitutes a feminine linguistic style, utilising a small dataset collected from X (formerly known as Twitter).

In the following sections of this chapter, the definition of adjective intensifiers adopted in this study is presented. This is followed by an overview of the diglossic nature of the Arabic language, an introduction to ND and an explanation of why the variety spoken in Riyadh is chosen for this project. After this, the research questions are listed. Next, the definition of adjectives in ND is detailed, followed by an explanation of the suitability of intensifiers for the variationist paradigm. Then, the social and linguistic parameters investigated in this project are outlined. Finally, the potential contribution of this research is explained.

1.3 Research Questions

This research aims to answer the following questions:

1. **What does the intensification system of adjectives in the speech of ND speakers look like?**

Within the first question, I will categorise adjective intensifiers according to their semantic effect on the modified adjectival head based on the classification of Quirk et al. (1985) and identify the quantitative profile of forms and categories, with comparisons to other intensification systems, including CA.

2. **What is the role of linguistic and extralinguistic factors in the selection of adjective amplifiers and downtoners by ND speakers in Riyadh?**

3. **What is the role of linguistic and extralinguistic factors in the selection of the adjective amplifiers *marrah* and *jiddan*?**

   - The social factors that will be explored in this study are gender, age and education.

   - The linguistic factors are seriousness of topics, semantic category, polarity and function of the intensified adjective and the position of the intensifier.

An in-depth exploration of *marrah* and *jiddan* is conducted by exploring the following sub-questions:

   a. How are *marrah* and *jiddan* utilised by outliers in the data? And to what extent is their usage similar to or different from the observed social and linguistic patterns in the variationist analysis?

   b. What role does *marrah* play in the enregistered feminine linguistic style in the Saudi dialect (SD)?

1.4 Definition of Adjective Intensifiers in the Current Study

In this study, intensifiers are defined as the optional lexico-grammatical devices which speakers have at their disposal to amplify, downtone or emphasise the quality of adjectives. This definition specifies the context of intensification, which facilitates the application of variationist quantification methods, as will be seen below. The intensifying function of intensifiers is achieved by scaling the degree of the adjective upward or downward or emphasising it by expressing the speaker's commitment towards the truth of its quality. These devices can belong to different grammatical classes, be in different syntactic structures and can be located before or after the

adjective. This definition is based on the functional approach and the semantic classification of intensifiers based on Quirk et. al.'s (1985) model that will be adopted in this study. This means that in this study, intensifiers are categorised as a separate class based on their intensification function. In addition, they are stratified based on the semantic effect they induce on the unit they modify (i.e., the adjective in this context). The functional approach adopted here overcomes the grammatical labels which restrict the label to items of an individual word class, despite their common function. As a result of this treatment, intensifiers are scattered between the varying labels (e.g., degree adverbs, adverbs of manner, adjectives, adjuncts, and particles), while the link between them is overlooked. The functional treatment prioritises and foregrounds their shared role as intensifiers (Bolinger, 1972, p.15; Paradis, 1997, p.15).

1.5 Classical Arabic, Vernaculars and What Is in Between

The Arabic language represents a typical example of diglossia, where there is a higher variety (*fuṣḥā* or Classical Arabic (CA))[3], while the spoken dialects are the lower forms (Ferguson, 1959, p.336). CA is the language used in formal contexts such as education, lectures, religious sermons, official documents and news broadcasts. CA is characterised by a standardised grammar, which is taught in schools. It is also traditionally respected and valued due to its link to the Qur'an, Islamic traditions and Arabian literature and culture. Arabic vernaculars, on the other hand, are the forms used in informal settings in everyday encounters and casual interactions. There are various Arabic dialects spoken in the Arab world[4] and the differences between these varieties extend to all levels of the linguistic system. Vernaculars are the forms used to express heightened emotions and jokes and they are the forms acquired by children. CA and the vernaculars interact in

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[3] CA is used here as a blanket term for CA and Modern Standard Arabic (MSA). Native Arabic speakers use only one form of the standard, which is *fuṣḥā.* Non-Arab intellectuals and linguists have used the name MSA to identify the modern version of CA (Haeri, 2003, p.45; Al-Wer and Horesh, 2019).The differences between CA and MSA are attributed to the cultural movement known as *al-nahḍah* or the Arab Renaissance, which took place between the nineteenth century to early twentieth century (Haeri, 2003, pp.9-10; Mejdell, 2006, p.8). The goal of this movement was to "simplify and modernise" CA to accommodate contemporary usage (Haeri, 2003, pp. 9-10). This was especially significant at that time to resist the foreign hegemony (Mejdell, 2006, p.8). The differences between CA and MSA, as noted by Ryding (2005, p.9) and Bateson (1967, p.84), primarily lie in stylistic and lexical aspects rather than grammatical structure. MSA exhibits a more flexible word order and incorporates neologisms. MSA also borrows heavily from Western languages, especially in the formation of compound words or complex concepts. Further, MSA shows syntactic simplifications that are influenced by the vernaculars and incorporates an updated lexicon aimed at accommodating technological advancements. It also shows a higher stylistic influence from the translation from European languages and the prevalence of bilingualism in the Arab world.

[4] Arabic language is spoken in many countries around the world. However, there are around 25 countries where Arabic is the official or co-official language (Abdelaziz, 2021). These countries are mainly located in the Arabian Peninsula, the Middle-East, North Africa and East Africa. These countries are Algeria, Bahrain, Chad, Comoros, Djibouti, Egypt, Eritrea, Iraq, Jordan, Kuwait, Lebanon, Libya, Mauritania, Morocco, Oman, Palestine, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Somalia, Sudan, Syria, Tunisia, Tanzania, United Arab Emirates, and Yemen.

Arabic speech communities and are critical components of the linguistic landscape in the Arab world.

Over time, scholars have approached the study of the variation between CA and colloquial forms in different ways. Badawi's (1973) influential contribution, which divided the Arabic language in Egypt into levels based on social and cultural aspects, established a framework that is applicable to other Arabic varieties and contexts. Badawi (1973) divides the Arabic language into five levels, with the purist form of *fuṣḥā* 'standard' (i.e., *fuṣḥā al-turāṯ* 'the Classical Arabic of the heritage') and the purist form of *ʕāmmiyyah* 'Colloquial' (i.e., *ʕāmmiyyat al-'ummiyyīn* 'colloquial of the illiterate') constituting the poles of the continuum. After the publication of Badawi (1973), an extensive body of research has been directed towards studying the forms that exist between *fuṣḥā* and *ʕāmmiyyah*. This intermediate variety has been given several labels, such as "Middle Arabic", "Mixed language" (Heijer, 2012), "Educated Spoken Arabic" (Khalil, 2011), "Elevated Colloquial" (Harvey, 1979) and "Formal Standard Arabic" (Mejdell, 2021). Khalil (2011, p.5) adds that it can be considered as "a relaxed version of the universally understood written language or as a corrected colloquial". Badawi's delineation, despite indicating that his levels are blended together, inevitably assumes that they are discrete and that a line is somehow drawn between those levels (Hary, 1996). However, Hary (1996, p.72) and others (e.g., Mejdell, 2006, p.3) argued against treating these levels as discrete categories, advocating for a more fluid understanding of language variation along a continuum. Thus, speakers' movement along the continuum from one pole to the other highlights an increase in the features of the targeted pole. At the same time, researchers argued that having pure or ideal forms does not reflect reality (Hary, 1996; Holes, 2004, p.343; Mejdell, 2006, p.2; Taha, 2007, p.109; Bassiouney, 2014, p.13). This is because one can always find some traces of the opposite end used in the other. Researchers agree that the features that distinguish CA from the colloquial forms can sometimes be fuzzy. Acknowledging this fuzziness is essential, given the frequent usage of CA features in the speech of Arabic dialects speakers. This means to document adjective intensifiers in ND and understand the factors involved in their variation, we must reach a relative identification of the features in ND and CA.

In order to understand the features of the middle variety, researchers analyse whether its features are part of CA or the dialect and what part of the linguistic system

they are (El-Hassan, 1978; Mitchell, 1978; Mitchell, 1980; Mitchell, 1986; Mitchell and El-Hassan, 1995; Youssi, 1995). The view that was held at that time was that this is a cross-regional koine variety that consists of mixed elements of CA and the dialect (Mejdell, 2021, p.202). Thus, those researchers attempted to describe the lexico-grammatical constraints that govern this middle variety. There is another view in the literature (Boussofara-Omar, 2006; Mejdell, 2006) which sees the middle variety in Arabic as a product of code-switching between CA and the dialects rather than a single form. Boussofara-Omar (2006) analysed the syntactic constraints which govern this code-switching and employed Myers-Scotton's (1993) Matrix language model. Mejdell (2006) explored code-switching using Petersen's (1988) "Dominant Language Hypothesis", which suggests that grammatical morphemes of the dominant language can co-occur with lexical items from either language, while those of the non-dominant language only co-occur with lexical items of the same language. Saussan Khalil (2020) believes that studying the precise differences between the two forms and also the degree of variation between them improves our understanding of what is known as code-mixing. This is especially valuable in instances where there are shared features among *ʕāmmīyyah* and *fuṣḥā*. Khalil (2020) attempted to distinguish between *ʕāmmiyyah* 'vernacular' using Egyptian Arabic (EA) as a model and *fuṣḥā*. By analysing phonological, lexical and grammatical aspects, Khalil aimed to identify fundamental differences between *fuṣḥā* and *ʕāmmiyyah* in order to propose a theoretical framework for Arabic writing analysis. Khalil argued that despite their differences, both forms constitute integral parts of the "one, unified" Arabic language system and their similarities outweigh their differences.

1.5.1 The Najdi Dialect

There are five different dialects spoken in Saudi Arabia[5] (Al-Rojaie, 2023)[6] which are ND, Hijazi dialect (HD), southern (*jinūbī*), northern (*šmālī*), and eastern (i.e., Gulf). ND is the dialect spoken in Najd region (Figure 1.1). Najd is a plateau that is located in the central part and some parts of the northern regions of the Arabian Peninsula. It is the variety spoken by the Saudi royal family and, thus, possesses a highly prestigious status in Saudi

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[5] It should be acknowledged that dialects in the Arabic language are mostly differentiated by geographical regions and not based on isoglosses, where linguistic features of various linguistic levels are compared (Behnstedt and Woidich, 2013). Therefore, differences between those dialects remain blurry.

[6] Some older references refer to only three dialects: HD, which can be sub-divided into southern and northern dialects; ND and the Eastern (sometimes referred to as Gulf) dialect (Ingham, 1994, p.8; Prochazka, 1988, p.3).

society (Alhazmi and Alfalig, 2021; Al-Rojaie, 2021a; Al-Rojaie, 2023). According to the Ethnologue website[7], there are more than 14 million ND speakers in Saudi Arabia (as of 2018) and more than 3 million ND speakers in Jordan, Syria, Iraq, Bahrain, Qatar, the United Arab Emirates and Kuwait as a result of migration. ND is one of the few conservative types of Arabic dialects. This means that many characteristics of CA are retained because of its speaker community being geographically enclosed between deserts and lack of foreign contact (Ingham, 1982, p.33; Ingham, 1994, p.7). It can be sub-divided into four varieties: central, northern, northern-central and southern ND (Ingham, 1994, p.5). There are differences between the three sub-dialects of ND across all linguistic levels (Ingham, 1994, p.5). The most easily identifiable differences between the first three sub-types are phonological and morphological differences, while the southern variety is marked by some syntactic and lexical features, which are similar to those of the dialects spoken in the south of the Arabian Peninsula (Ingham, 1994, p.5). Like many other Arabic dialects, there is a divide between Bedouin and the sedentary[8] or rural and urban varieties of ND (Ingham 1994, p.4).
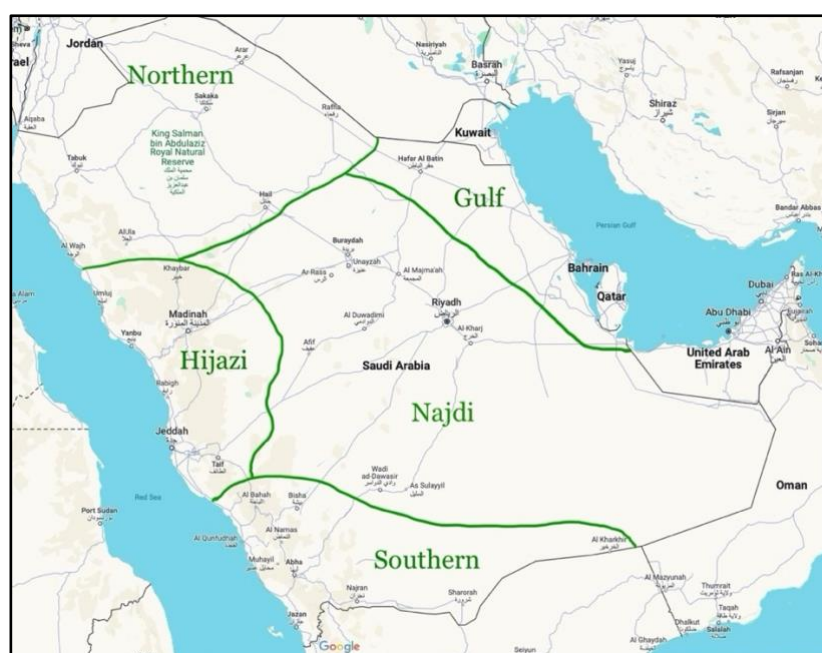
Figure 1.1 A Map Representing the Five Dialect Areas in Saudi Arabia[9]

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[7] https://www.ethnologue.com/language/ars (Accessed, April 8, 2022).

[8] This division is based on the documented differences in language use between Bedouins and sedentary people in the Arabian Peninsula. Bedouins were nomadic people who moved from one place to another in the Arabian Peninsula in the search for water resources for their livestock (Alajmi, 2019). Sedentary, on the other hand, refers to villagers who used to live in towns in the Arabian Peninsula and took up farming as their main financial resource. Later, and because this lifestyle of Bedouins and villagers are mostly replaced by modern lifestyles, these labels are now referring to those whose ancestors used to live by these lifestyles (Alajmi, 2019).

[9] This map is a replication of Alghamdi's (2020) map, cited in Alhazmi and Alfalig (2021).

1.5.2 ND in Riyadh

1.5.2.1 Riyadh: From a Small Enclosed Town to a Large Urban Capital

Riyadh was established as the base of the Second Saudi State by Turki bin Abdullah Al-Saud (1824-1891) (Al Naim, 2013). Before that, the First Saudi State (1771-1817)[10] had Ad Diriyah[11] as its centre (Sadlier, 1977, p.62; Al Naim, 2013, p.71). In 1902, King Abdulaziz restored Riyadh and in 1932[12], it was designated as Saudi Arabia's official capital city. This constituted a critical turning point, after which the city transitioned into an administrative centre that holds political and financial significance (Al Naim, 2013). Another significant change that led to the urbanisation of Riyadh was the discovery of oil in the kingdom in 1938[13] and the increased economic advancement in the world after World War II, which created a great global demand for oil from Saudi Arabia (Al Naim, 2013). The discovery of oil developed a radical and rapid urbanisation process in the country. Between the years 1970-1990, the urban-rural ratio in Saudi Arabia underwent an immense reversal[14] from 1:3 to 3:1. Before that, the lands of modern day Saudi Arabia in the Arabian Peninsula consisted of small towns and villages occupied by Bedouins and village-dwellers (Al-Oteiby, 1988, pp.1–2). The only urban centres were the Holy cities of Makkah and Medina and the seaport city of Jeddah[15], which are all located in the Western region (Al-Oteiby, 1988, pp.1–2). Thus, rural-urban immigration was not a common phenomenon at that time. In the 1950s, almost all the governmental ministries were transferred from Jeddah to the centre of the kingdom in Riyadh (Al-Oteiby, 1988, p.3). Further, the country's educational institutions were mainly built in Riyadh (Al-Oteiby, 1988, p.3). The economic advancement in the country disrupted the traditional exchange system, which was prevalent between nomadic Bedouins and villagers, where they exchanged animals and animal products for agricultural goods (Al-Oteiby, 1988, p.3). In the 1950s-60s, these traditional practices were further disturbed by major droughts, which with all the previous factors, triggered extensive waves of rural-urban migrations with the hope for higher-paying jobs, educational opportunities and better

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[10] https://riyadh.sa/en/city/l/AboutRiyadh/item/li/city/13520 (Accessed, February 13, 2024).

[11] Ad Diriyah is a town located in the north-west 20 kilometers from Riyadh (Sadlier, 1977, p.62).

[12] https://riyadh.sa/en/city/timeline (Accessed, February 14, 2024).

[13] Although oil was discovered in 1923, it was not until the year 1938 that oil was discovered in commercial quantities (Al Naim, 2013, p.71).

[14] https://eros.usgs.gov/earthshots/riyadh-saudi-arabia (Accessed, February 14, 2024)

[15] Jeddah is a city located on the west coast by the Red Sea. It has its economic significance as an international port for importing goods. It is also located next to Makkah and has an international airport where pilgrimages to Makkah must pass through.

living circumstances (Al-Oteiby, 1988). Thus, Riyadh became a destination for Saudis from all over the country (Al-Oteiby, 1988; Khraif, 1992), especially from towns and villages closer to the city. As the hub of modernity, urbanisation and progress, the capital city also attracted job seekers from outside Saudi Arabia.

When Riyadh was announced as the capital in 1932, it was only a small town of about one square kilometre (Al Naim, 2013), that is located near other small towns in the area like Ad Diriyah and Manfouha. The population in 1902 in Riyadh was only 8,000 and this number grew to 30,000 in the year 1940 (Table 1.1). In 2022, the population in Riyadh grew to more than 7 million[16]. 47.8% of these are Saudis, while the remaining 52.2% are non-Saudis. Riyadh now occupies around 3,115 square kilometres and is still expanding in all directions to this day.

Table 1.1 The Growth of the Population in the City of Riyadh

Year	Population[17]
1902	8,000
1918	19,000
1940	30,000
1970	400,000
1985	1,400,000
2016	6,506,700
2022	7,009,120

1.5.2.2 Why ND in Riyadh?

Compared to other capital cities in the Arab world, Riyadh is among the least linguistically researched in spite of the dramatic changes that took place in the city in the last fifty years (Al-Rojaie, 2023). As explained, Riyadh represents a hub for various Arabic and non-Arabic varieties. This triggered a process of levelling or koineisation as a result of dialect contact and urbanisation (Al-Rojaie, 2020; Al-Rojaie, 2021b; Alkhamees, 2023; Al-Rojaie, 2023), which is also taking place in other areas in Najd, although at a slower pace (Al-Rojaie, 2013). The process of dialect levelling is defined by Kerswill and Williams (1999, p.149) as "a process whereby differences between regional varieties are reduced, features which make varieties distinctive disappear, and new features emerge and are adopted by speakers over a wide geographical area". ND in Riyadh can be

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[16] https://portal.saudicensus.sa/portal/public/1/15/1367?type=DASHBOARD (Accessed, February 14, 2024)

[17] These numbers are based on the following four references: (Anon, 2016; Anon, 2024; Philby, 1922 cited in Al Naim, 2013; Saudi Ministry of Planning 1986 cited in Barth and Quiel, 1987).

considered the supra-local dialect in the Najd area. Supra-local[18] dialects are the dialects that speakers in a certain area tend to "emulate" for enhancing their prestige (Al-Wer and Horesh, 2019, p.4). Hence, the city represents an ideal site for studying language variation and change (Al-Rojaie, 2023, p.90). Schilling (2013, p.22) postulates that "communities characterised by intermixing and intercommunication are more linguistically dynamic" and thus represent a highly informative environment for sociolinguistic research. Intensifiers are distinguished by their dynamic and constant evolution and their responsiveness to trends and innovative usage (Bolinger, 1972; Hopper and Traugott, 1993; Peters, 1994; Woidich, 2018). Hence, given the limited literature on adjective intensification system, the current study will attempt to establish a comprehensive understanding of the current patterns of variation in the usage of intensifiers in ND. It will also examine the potential changes in the system. Thus, investigating these rapidly changing devices in an environment that is undergoing major changes is deemed fruitful.

1.6 Adjectives in Najdi Arabic

1.6.1 Definition

Adjectives are words that assign a property to noun phrases (NPs) (Almalky, 2020). In the Arabic language, traditional grammarians discerned three word-classes: nouns, verbs and particles or *ḥurūf* (Ingham, 1994, p.21). Adjectives were recognised and identified as a subclass of nouns (Ingham, 1994, p.21). This is because nouns and adjectives are morphologically similar and the criteria typically used in traditional grammar to categorise syntactic classes are based on morphological similarity (Ingham, 1994, p.47). They also have the same definiteness and indefiniteness linguistic indicators as nouns (Ingham, 1994, p.47). Linguists have identified different cross-linguistic standards for what distinguishes adjectives from nouns and verbs (Dixon, 2004, p.9). The following four criteria are some commonly used prototypical characteristics of adjectives that linguists have identified (Baker, 2003, pp.190–191; Dixon, 2004, p.10; Hajek, 2004, *inter alia*): ability to function attributively (e.g., *nxaḷah ṭwīlah* 'a tall palm tree'), ability function predicatively (e.g., *al-nxaḷah ṭwīlah* 'the palm tree is tall'), ability

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[18] This notion was used by Milroy et al. (1994) in their explanation of the diffusion of the glottal stop as a replacement for voiceless stops in Tyneside to explain that females create the prestige forms (i.e., supra-local). Arabic sociolinguists have used the notion of the *supra-local* standard to explain the standard dialectal forms in Arabic countries. It has been found that there is more than one dialectal standard (e.g., Abd-El-Jawad, 1987). This was evident after the influential work of Ibrahim (1986), who criticised Arabic variationist research that considered CA to be the standard variety and the most prestigious in Arab countries and confirmed that there are standard forms at the dialectal level.

to be modified by an intensifier (example 2a), and ability to form a comparative construction (example 2b). It must also be noted that the last two criteria might not apply to all adjectives. Not all adjectives in ND form the comparative construction using the *ʔafʕal* pattern like example 2b. Some are formed with the usage of *ʔakṯar* 'more' (example 2c). Some adjectives in ND like some *nisba* adjectives (see Appendix A) cannot be in a comparative construction, such as *ḥukūmī* 'governmental' as in *qiṭāʕ ḥukūmī* 'public sector'. These also cannot be intensified by intensifiers (*qiṭāʕ ḥukūmī marrah* '*a very public sector').

2)

a) al-nxaḷah *ṭwīlah marrah/šwayy*
    The palm tree is very/ a bit tall
b) nxaḷatna *ʔaṭwal* mn nxaḷathum
    Our palm tree is taller than theirs
c) malābsī *mtraššḥah ʔakṯar* mnnk
    My clothes are wetter than yours
    Because as we explained adjectives in the Arabic language are classed under the category of nouns, and because the universal criteria do not necessarily apply to all adjectives, Dickins (2022) has set criteria to discern nouns from adjectives that are specific to the Arabic language (based on the Sudanese dialect)[19] (Table 1.2).

Table 1.2 Criteria for Distinguishing Adjectives from Nouns (based on Dickins, 2022)

	Criteria	Example[20]
1	In contrast to an indefinite adjective, an indefinite noun can be "the complement of a verb (object), of a preposition, or of an adverbial annexion-head."	The example *šft walad* 'I saw a boy' is possible, but *šft jayyid* 'I saw a good' is not possible. We can also say *sāfar maʕ walad* 'he travelled with a boy' but we cannot say *sāfar maʕ jayyid* 'he travelled with a good'.
2	Adjectives cannot have the dual form; only countable nouns can.	Saying *ktabēn* 'two books' is possible but *kbīrēn* '*two big/large' is not.
3	Only adjectives have the forms masculine and feminine but nouns do not.[21]	Saying *kbīr* (masculine) and *kbīrah* (feminine) 'big/large' is possible but one cannot say *bēt* and *bētah* 'house'.
4	Adjectives have the capacity to be used in attributive function, while nouns lack this capacity[22].	Saying *walad ṣġīr* 'a young boy' is possible but saying *walad ktāb* 'a book boy' is not possible.

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[19] While there are differences between the ND and the Sudanese dialect across all linguistic levels, there are some foundational aspects of Arabic grammar that are shared among Arabic varieties, such as the criteria defining verbs, nouns and adjectives. At the same time, the transferability of the criteria provided by Dickins (2022) should be handled with caution and further research on ND specifically will be valuable in corroborating this.

[20] Examples in the table are based on Dickins' (2022) examples of Sudanese Arabic.

[21] There are some exceptions, such as the adjectives *ḥāmil* 'pregnant', *kafū* ' well-qualified, competent' and *nābiġah* 'genius' which do not change regardless of the gender of the modified noun.

[22] Some deviations from these criteria might occur, such as nouns that have a metaphorical adjectival sense, such as the noun *gmar* 'moon'. So, in ND, we can say *bnt gmar* 'a beautiful girl' (i.e., 'like a moon').

An additional significant aspect that should be discussed about adjectives in the Arabic language is the participle. The distinctive nature of the participle has intrigued many researchers (e.g., Almalky, 2020; Al-Raba'a, 2021; Hallman, 2017; Holes, 2004; Ryding, 2005). Holes (2004, p.149) postulates that the active participle in the Arabic language can function as a noun, adjective and verb. Moreover, the passive participle can function as a noun or an adjective. For these reasons, additional criteria aimed at identifying the adjectival participle are followed in the current project. The previous criteria by Dickins (2022) raise some confusion in some cases of the participle. When applying the previous criteria by Dickins, for instance, on the two participles *muhandis* 'engineer' and *mandūb* 'delivery person, representative', they fulfil the criterion of the dual form, which is designated for distinguishing nouns (e.g., *muhandisēn* and *mandūbēn).* They also fulfil one criterion for adjectives. They can be in the masculine and feminine forms: *muhandis* (masculine) and *muhandisah* (feminine) and *mandūb* (masculine) and *mandūbah* (feminine). Hence, in addition to Dickins' (2022) criteria, additional diagnostic criteria are adopted to eliminate nominal and verbal participles. Participles that take possessive pronouns, such as *muhandis* 'engineer' *muhandis-na* 'our engineer' and *mandūb-hum* 'their representative, delivery person', are eliminated because accepting possessive pronouns is a characteristic of nominal participles (Almalky, 2020, pp.129, 284). Moreover, participles that take an object, such as *mlammiʕt-h*[23] 'having polished it' and *fāhim al-dars* 'to come to understand the lesson', are eliminated because they are considered verbal participles (Almalky, 2020, p.171).

1.6.2 Adjective Patterns in ND

There are many morphological patterns for singular adjectives in ND such as *nisba* adjectives (e.g., *ṭabīʕī* 'natural'), *faʕlā* feminine adjectives (e.g., *ṭarmā* 'deaf'), *faʕlān* adjectives (e.g., *farḥān* 'happy') and *fʕīl* adjectives (e.g., *ṣġīr* 'small'). These include patterns of the active participle like *fāʕil* (e.g., *nāḍij* 'mature'), *mufāʕil* (e.g., *mufājiʔ* 'surprising') and passive participle like *mafʕūl* (e.g., *mašġūl* 'busy'). Plural adjectives are typically formed by adding *-īn* to adjectives such as *ʕunṣuriyyīn* 'racist'. Other plural patterns are also used in ND such as *ʔafʕiyā(ʔ)* (e.g., *ʔagwiyā* 'strong') and *fʕāl* (e.g., *kṯār* 'numerous'). Detailed description of these patterns is provided in Appendix A.

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[23] *-h* is a pronominal object.

The following sections shift in focus to sociolinguistic perspectives on intensification and the application of this framework to the ND setting.

1.7 Intensifiers within the Variationist Paradigm

1.7.1 Intensifiers as Linguistic Variables

There are several conditions for choosing the linguistic variables which are most suitable for variationist analysis. Labov (1972, pp.8–9) postulates that to identify an appropriate linguistic variable for variationist analysis, this variable should satisfy the following criteria. Firstly, it must be a frequent variable[24] that occurs in various contexts in natural conversations because this makes observing it and analysing it possible without the need for extensive and highly structured interviews. Secondly, it should be of structural importance; this means that it constitutes an integral part of the overall system in the language. The more it interacts with other parts of the language, the more interesting and valuable it will be for linguistic study. Thirdly, it must show a considerable level of stratification across the social strata because this asymmetric distribution is often an indication of the heavy social meaning it carries. Pichler (2013, p.215) adds a condition that is specifically essential for DPFs, which is the availability of co-variants for that chosen variable. This is because the variable rule which forms the basis of the variationist analysis is typically applied where there is more than one way of saying the same thing (Labov, 1972, pp.271, 322). However, co-variants are not always available for DPFs. Intensifiers and especially amplifiers seem to satisfy those conditions that make them highly suitable for variationist analysis compared to other DPFs.

1.7.2 Other Characteristics of Intensifiers

A critical feature of this heterogeneous group is that it is often formed within the linguistic system through the process of *grammaticalisation* or *de-lexicalisation*. This happens when certain lexical words undergo a process of semantic bleaching, whereby they fully or partially lose their semantic content and become functional elements

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[24] In studies of language variation and change, 30 tokens per cell for each environment is generally seen as an appropriate number for statistical modelling (Tagliamonte, 2012, p.137). This number is recommended to not fall below 10 tokens per cell for each environment, especially for syntactic and morphological variables which tend to be less frequent in speech compared to phonological variables (Tagliamonte, 2012, p.137). This is because having fewer than 10 tokens will increase random fluctuation instead of showing conformity with the predicted norm (Guy, 1980, p.20).

(Hopper and Traugott, 1993, pp.1-2). An example of this process is the amplifier *very,* which was originally the adjective *verraɪ* 'real, true' in Middle English and which later became semantically bleached (Mustanoja, 1960, p.326). The process of grammaticalisation can also include *divergence* where a less grammatical element becomes more grammaticalised while the older form maintains its function and features (Hopper and Traugott, 1993, p.115). The intensifiers *šwayy* 'a bit, little' in ND represents an example of this process where the quantifier developed into a downtoner while the quantifier is still used too (see Chapter 4, Section 4.4.3). A key characteristic of intensifiers is that their intensifying effect weakens with their increased usage, which motivates speakers to turn to novel ones to "achieve expressivity" (Lorenz, 2002, p.143). This leads intensifiers to have a remarkable tendency to change, which has attracted variationist interest (Hopper and Traugott, 1993, p.122; Lorenz, 2002, p.143). Intensifiers undergo periods of popularity and then decline over time (such as the intensifier *well*, see Section 1.1), where they disappear or merge into standard usage and sometimes might return to being fashionable, which is a process called *recycling* (Bordet, 2015; Hopper and Traugott, 1993, p.122; König, 2017; Tagliamonte, 2008). This means that studying their variational pattern in *apparent time*[25], which is what the current study will examine, might resolve some of the complexities involved in their grammaticalisation (Hopper and Traugott, 1993, p.122; Ito and Tagliamonte, 2003, p.262). This is done by examining their variation across the different age groups, which will be used to reflect their usage across diachronic time spans. This is specifically beneficial, given the scarcity of resources in present-day Arabic varieties that can be used for a diachronic examination of intensifiers, specifically for intensifiers in ND. Furthermore, generally, the usage of intensifiers is influenced by factors such as gender and age (e.g., Macaulay, 2006; Almossa, 2024). Thus, if these social factors influence the speakers' usage of intensifiers, this means that studying their interaction will reveal how the link between these linguistic tools and the social factors contributes to language change (Ito and Tagliamonte, 2003, p.262).

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[25] *Apparent-time* is a mechanism set by Labov (1972, p.133) to analyse language change, where variation among speakers from different age groups in synchronic data collected in the present time is interpreted as an indication of language change in progress. Different age groups are taken as a representation of a certain period. This method contrasts with *real-time* change, in which the data is collected diachronically at different points during a long period.

1.8 Social and Linguistic Factors

In the following section, I highlight the significance of the social (namely, gender, age and education) and linguistic factors (semantic and syntactic properties) chosen to be examined in the current study, along with some expected patterns for the current study. The discussion provides the contextual ground necessary for exploring the research questions and objectives in the current study.

1.8.1 Gender

Studies of intensifiers in different languages have reported that female speakers typically use intensifiers with an upscaling effect more than male speakers, including studies of English (Ito and Tagliamonte, 2003), German (Stratton, 2020), Norwegian (Stratton and Sundquist, 2022), Persian (Sardabi and Afghari, 2015), and Arabic (Omar and Alotaibi, 2017). This finding seems to be sociolinguistically universal and temporally persistent despite the different backgrounds and gender roles in those societies. For instance, Fuchs (2017) reports that when he compared data from 1994 and 2014 in the Spoken British National Corpus, female speakers in both datasets used intensifiers more frequently than male speakers. However, the difference between the frequencies of the use of intensifiers by males and females has declined over time. This could suggest that the more traditional gender roles in the community, the wider the difference between male and female speakers in their linguistic styles (including the usage of intensifiers). Therefore, in the current study, female speakers are expected to have a higher usage of amplifiers (forms and tokens) than male speakers. In terms of the preference of CA and ND variants, Arabic variationist studies have found that the local variants such as *marrah* (Almossa, 2024) and *kiṯīr* (Alshaboul et al., 2022) were favoured by female speakers, while the CA variant *jiddan* was favoured by male speakers (Alshaboul et al., 2022; Almossa, 2024). Therefore, a similar distribution is expected to be observed in the current study.

In terms of intensifiers with a downscaling effect, researchers have found that they are used more frequently by male speakers in the English language (D'Arcy, 2015) and German (Stratton, 2020). As will be explained in Chapter 2, studies on the Arabic language have focused on devices with an upscaling effect; thus, no data is available for Arabic downtoners. We can, however, predict that the results in the current data will likely be different from the findings in the previous two studies given the difference in

the nature of gender roles in those Western communities compared to the Saudi community that has more patriarchal and traditional gender roles. This speculation is further supported by the predicted effect of the speaker's gender on amplifier usage as mentioned above, where differences were observed between communities with traditional gender roles and those without (e.g., Western communities in the twenty-first century).

1.8.2 Age

In terms of age-related variation in the use of intensifiers, studies have reported that younger speakers tend to use intensifiers more frequently (Paradis, 2000, p.1; Bauer and Bauer, 2002; Macaulay, 2006; Barbieri, 2008; Xiao and Tao, 2008; D'Arcy, 2015; Tagliamonte, 2016). Tagliamonte (2016, p.35), for instance, found that the intensifiers *so* and *really* are among the most frequent words in the Toronto Teen Corpus of Toronto English. Specific intensifiers have been sometimes found to be restricted to teenagers, such as the intensifiers *pure* and *dead* in Macaulay's (2006) study of intensifiers in Scottish English. Researchers suggest that teenagers' use of specific intensifiers is a way of showing in-group membership (Peters, 1994, p.271; Tagliamonte, 2016). In Arabic variationist studies of amplifiers (Alshaboul et al., 2022; Almossa, 2024), local amplifiers are used more by the younger speakers, while the CA amplifier *jiddan* is often used by older speakers. Hence, younger speakers in the current study are expected to use local amplifiers more often than the older age groups, while CA amplifiers are expected to be used more by the older age groups.

Further, age in language studies, especially sociolinguistics, represents two sides: a stage in the life of speakers and a certain era or point in history (Eckert, 1997, p.151). Therefore, examining data across different age groups helps in identifying changes through apparent-time. This is achieved by collecting data synchronically from several age groups. This is critical for studying linguistic features in spoken Arabic vernaculars, where the use of older resources that can be used as a diachronic reference for examining language use at a specific point in history is often not possible. This is because, in the past, documentation of Arabic vernaculars was often overlooked and seen as a threat to CA (Albirini, 2016, p.177; Versteegh, 2014, p.85; Alghmaiz, 2018, p.9). Thus, resources that can be used to track language changes in Arabic vernaculars are scarce.

Examining the usage of intensifiers by the different generations will facilitate the interpretation of the results in light of the social changes within the community. As mentioned in Section 1.5.2.1, the different generations in the country observed varying stages of social and economic development (Almossa, 2024, p.36). Older generations[26] (those born before 1970) were witnesses to the dramatic transition of Saudi Arabia and Riyadh specifically, after the discovery of oil in the country. While the earlier periods in their lives were somewhat challenging due to a lack of financial resources, this soon changed when the economic shift in the country brought improvements in education and economic conditions (Almossa, 2024, p.36). Additionally, this generation witnessed the emergence of an Islamic movement known as *Sahwa* 'awakening', which developed in the late 1970s (Lacroix, 2011, p.265; Alhazmi, 2022). The movement often adopted an extreme interpretation of Islamic teachings (Almossa, 2024, p.36). The movement reached its peak during the 1980s (Lacroix, 2010, p.3); thus, while the following generation (born in the 1980s) continued to witness the financial growth, they grew up during the prominence of this ideology (Almossa, 2024). Sahwa reinforced religious and cultural conservatism in Saudi Arabia and influenced public discourse like media and education (Lacroix, 2011). It also opposed reforms, particularly those concerning women's rights; as a result, that period was marked by limited educational and career opportunities for women and the implementation of strict gender-segregation (Baki, 2004; Lacroix, 2011; Alhazmi, 2022). This movement began to decline after 1994 (Lacroix, 2011, p. 268).

The younger generations, born in the last decade of the twentieth century or the early twenty-first century, grew up during a time of extensive urbanisation and stable socio-economic circumstances and they witnessed the least influence of the Sahwa movement (Almossa, 2024). Additionally, these younger generations are also observing and perhaps being most influenced by the dramatic socio-economic transformations since 2016 that were triggered by the launch of Vision 2030. This vision aims to strategically develop all aspects of the country's economy and diversify its resources to reduce its dependence on oil. It also aims to increase the quality of people's lives,

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[26] Age categories in this study will be explained in Chapter 3, Section 3.6.1. The three generations discussed here roughly correspond to the categories used in the analysis.

empower women, reduce unemployment, enhance education and healthcare services, encourage innovation and enrich the cultural identity of Saudi Arabia[27].

1.8.3 Education

To understand the significance of exploring the sociolinguistic effect of education, we must bear in mind the linguistic landscape in the Arab world outlined in Section 1.5. Education in this study serves a dual role. First, it can be seen as an indication of using intensifiers that are shared with CA. CA is not the native language of anyone (Al-Wer, 1997, p.254), but must be formally learned in schools for a speaker to have a good command of it. Further, speakers will have higher access to CA through institutional education. Hence, we would expect to find that higher educational qualifications are indicative of a higher usage of intensifiers that are shared with CA for males and females (Parkinson, 1993). Second, the educational background of speakers can be interpreted as a "proxy" factor that acts as an indicator of the other unnoticeable factors, such as the size of someone's social network and geographic mobility (Al-Wer, 2013, p.247). The social mobility of speakers in Arabic variationist studies has been attributed to shaping their preferences towards specific phonological variables, which leads to change. This is because mobility provides an opportunity to be in contact with other dialects. This factor is specifically critical in Riyadh, given the large size of the city and the various spoken varieties there. In addition, for features that are characterised by quick change, like intensifiers, the effect of mobility may be more significant. Hence, for intensifiers that are not shared with CA (i.e., local), education will be used as an indication of mobility.

1.8.4 Seriousness of Discussion Topics

The seriousness of topics in discussions has been found in the literature to influence the employment of intensifiers. The usage of intensifiers often increases in discussions of serious and sensitive topics, like the discussion of class, culture, race, immigration and the issue of asylum seekers (Zhang, 2013; Littlemore and Fielden-Burns, 2023). Further, serious topics are more likely to trigger the speaker's emotions than less serious topics (Labov, 1966, p.92). Therefore, the emotional engagement of speakers can lead them to

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[27] https://www.vision2030.gov.sa/en (Accessed, October 25, 2024).

use expressive forms of the language, such as intensifiers and emphatics (Bednarek, 2011, p. 11).

The seriousness of discussion topics also represents a significant factor in variationist studies in the Arabic language, as it triggers higher usage of a more formal register saturated with CA variables. As will be discussed in Chapter 2, researchers have found that speakers of Arabic dialects utilised intensifiers that are shared with CA along with intensifiers from their own dialects. Although as observed in Section 1.5, accurately identifying features of CA that differ from those of vernaculars has been a major challenge for linguists. CA and the vernacular can be regarded as stylistic techniques that Arabic speakers possess which constitute parts of their linguistic repertoire. Mejdell (2021, p.208) confirms that precisely pinpointing what is part of CA and what is not is difficult[28]. Nevertheless, formal spoken Arabic, which is typically used in discussions of serious subjects is a variable style or register that provides Arabic speakers with access to the formal style (Mejdell, 2021, p.208). This is because Arabic speakers' competence in CA is variable and not all educated speakers will have the functional command to speak fluently in CA. Therefore, this formal style reduces speakers' anxiety about using an incorrect form of CA (Mejdell, 2021, p.208). A focus on studying structural features between the linguistic levels can lead to overlooking the flexibility that exists within the two systems and the potential expressive capacities arising from transitioning from one system to the other (Errington, 1988, pp.11, 14). A more fruitful approach is to shift attention toward studying the distinctiveness principles that govern and regulate the alternation between the two styles (Errington, 1985, pp.6, 21; Irvine, 2002, p.28). Khalil (2020) postulates that each form of the Arabic language is used in certain sociolinguistic contexts and mixing both forms also has specific sociolinguistic purposes. An approach that can effectively handle the patterns of DFPs in Arabic varieties is needed. For this reason, in the current study, the seriousness of the context is examined as a factor that possibly governs the patterns of intensifiers in the data. In the literature, researchers have listed factors that influence the speakers' tendency to move from the colloquial to CA and vice versa. Shifting to CA could be, for instance, a result of the high formality of the setting or the seriousness of the discussed topics (Al-Khatib, 1988; Hary, 1996, pp.76–77; Holes, 2004, p.347). Conversely, shifting to the vernacular could be a result

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[28] To mitigate this challenge, in Chapter 4, Section 4.3, I use available corpora of CA to draw a preliminary line between intensifiers found in CA and those that are not. This section serves as a rough framework for the subsequent chapters.

of being emotionally engaged or discussing non-serious topics (Hary, 1996). Hence, we can expect to find that overall intensifiers in CA and ND are both favoured in discussions of serious topics because, as we have explained, shifts to CA are typically more frequent in discussing serious topics. In addition, the higher-emotional engagement in these topics can lead speakers to shift to the vernacular. In non-serious discussions, on the other hand, speakers are expected to use ND variants more than CA variants.

1.8.5 Semantic Category of Adjective

The semantic category of adjectives has been measured in variationist analysis of intensifiers because it reflects their level of grammaticalisation (Bolinger, 1972). Intensifiers that have advanced in the cline of grammaticalisation tend to diffuse over various semantic contexts, even those that are restrictively modified by other intensifiers (Bolinger, 1972, p.18; Paradis, 2008, p.338). Further, using both the age of speakers and the semantic category of the adjectives allows us to observe the incremental development of intensifiers through the construct of apparent-time (Tagliamonte, 2008). For example, in their corpus of York English, Ito and Tagliamonte (2003) found that the intensifier *really* is used in the speech of older speakers (66+ years old) in the four contexts of *value*, *human propensity, dimension* and *physical property* only. An additional category is modified by middle-aged speakers (35-65 years old) which is *age* and a further category is modified by younger speakers (17-34 years old) which is *colour*. This meant that the intensifier *really* was undergoing a semantic diffusion, which signals their development. In spoken ND, diachronically tracking back such forms will prove very difficult because the spoken form of the language was not studied or documented until around the nineteenth century (see Albirini, 2016, p.177). Thus, the collocational tendencies of intensifiers with semantic contexts serve as an alternative approach to understanding their grammaticalisation status.

1.8.5.1 Adjective Emotionality

It became a typical procedure for variationist analysis of intensifiers to categorise the emotional value of modified adjectives into adjectives encoding emotions and adjectives that do not. Emotional adjectives are the ones describing human emotions or feelings like *happy* and *sad* (Ito and Tagliamonte, 2003). Previous research has suggested that intensifiers collocate more with adjectives that encode emotions (Tagliamonte, 2008,

p.380). Hence, we will be able to measure this hypothesis by identifying the emotionality of adjectives.

1.8.6 Adjective Polarity

The polarity of adjectives, which is often examined in variationist studies, can be an indication of two aspects. First, it can be seen as an indication of the development of the intensifiers (Ito and Tagliamonte, 2003). If the source of the intensifier is negative (e.g., *awfully*), for example, and it collocates not only with negative contexts but also with positive contexts, this is viewed as an indication of their advanced delexicalisation and vice versa (Partington, 1993, p.183; Claudi, 2006). Further, researchers observed that downtoners tend to mitigate adjectives with negative connotations (Klein, 1998; Paradis, 2000).

1.8.7 Adjective Function

The effect of the function of adjectives is typically examined in variationist research on English intensifiers. It was first employed by Ito and Tagliamonte (2003) who postulate that observing the modification of intensifiers shifting from attributive adjectives to predicative adjectives signals their advancement on the grammaticalisation cline. Ito and Tagliamonte (2003) base their assumption on Mustanoja's (1960, pp.326–327) observation of *very* in Middle English which was used as an adjective since the thirteenth century. Mustanoja noticed that by the end of the fourteenth century, *very* was collocating with attributive adjectives. *very* continued to develop and gradually occur with predicative adjectives which he took as a sign of the further stages *very* underwent as an adverb of degree. Childs (2016), for instance, used the predicative function as an indication of the status of the adjective *canny* as an intensifier in the North-East English dialect. Hence, we will be able to explore the effect of the adjective function on conditioning adjective intensifiers and comparing it to trends observed in previous research.

1.8.8 Position of Intensifiers

Literature on intensifiers in SDs indicates that intensifiers are either located in a pre-adjectival position or a post-adjectival position (Al-Shurafa, 2005; AlShammiry, 2016). This flexibility, however, may not apply to other varieties of Arabic, such as EA (Omar and Alotaibi, 2017). The previous evidence suggests that there are dialectal variations in

terms of the canonical distribution of intensifiers among Arabic dialects. Also, there could be a possibility of change or relocation of intensifiers which is what the current variationist research aims to discover. Hence, exploring the position of intensifiers in ND is a necessary aspect of their variational behaviour which ought to be explored.

1.9 Research Contribution

Examining adjective intensifiers in ND holds critical implications for linguistic research and contributes to a deeper understanding of this linguistic feature. It is important to document the adjective intensification system in ND because it is an essential dialectological aspect that plays an integral role in the language. This is particularly significant due to the neglect and stigmatisation of spoken Arabic, which has resulted in limited documentation of these vernaculars (Versteegh, 2014, p.85). Because ND is part of the national identity, a better understanding of variation in intensifiers, along with other linguistic variation in ND, makes it possible to use them for social and economic development. For example, research on ND covering aspects at all linguistic levels is valuable for marketing specialists and should inform marketing strategies. Likewise, researching aspects of ND is of relevance to ND teachers and curriculum designers. Many researchers have advocated for the inclusion of colloquial language forms alongside CA to Arabic L2 learners which helps in integrating them into society and understanding the culture (Al-Batal, 2018; Alghmaiz, 2018). Saudi Arabia is currently undergoing rapid development with the launch of Vision 2030. This has created greater opportunities for communication with non-Arabic speakers. This, therefore, highlights the need to facilitate communication with non-Arabic speakers through teaching local dialects (Alghmaiz and AbuMaleh, n.d.). Consequently, a better understanding and documentation of the dialect support the achievement of such goals and contribute to transforming Arabic language teaching into an economic asset. Intensifiers are essential in communication as they reflect the speaker's attitudes and emotions (Labov, 1984b, p.43; Partington, 1993, p.178) and incorrect usage may lead to unintended pragmatic messages (Zhiber and Korotina, 2019, p.71). Therefore, to include intensifiers in SDs teaching materials, there is a need for their documentation, as well as a better understanding of their nature and interaction with linguistic and extralinguistic factors.

Research on adjective intensifiers in ND is also beneficial for the area of socio-pragmatics. Focusing on intensifiers involves studying the use of these devices in different social contexts and examining the linguistic and extralinguistic parameters that govern and influence their employment. Such research is useful for understanding intensification as a pragmatic and social phenomenon. The current study can be used as a foundation for future studies that explore these devices in other Arabic dialects. This enriches our understanding of dialectal variation within the Arabic language (Feodorov, 2000; Zawrotna, 2018). Furthermore, research on adjective intensifiers in ND can be relevant within the field of language typology. This study contributes to the overall understanding of linguistic diversity in using intensifiers and how languages employ similar or different strategies or tools for this function. Further, this study can be used as a reference for first and second language acquisition research. Researchers can use the documentation and variations of adjective intensifiers in ND in this study as a basis for their findings and interpretations. For example, examining how children learn and use adjective intensifiers in their developmental stages contributes to a deeper understanding of their language acquisition.

In addition, this project fills the large gap in Arabic variationist research (Horesh and Cotter, 2016). Like variationist research in the Western world, Arabic variationist research has often focused on investigating phonological variables and few studies have handled the variation in DPFs (e.g., Habib, 2021; Almossa, 2023). Thus, the area of DPFs variation and change in the Arabic language is still in its infancy. There has been an extensive discussion in the literature about the applicability of the variable rule to non-phonological variables (Sankoff and Thibault, 1978, p.208; Lavandera, 1978, p.181; Dines, 1980, p.17; Romaine, 1982, pp.32–35; Schiffrin, 1987, p.69; Terkourafi, 2011; Waters, 2016, p.43). This is because the semantic equivalency, which forms the basis for selecting the variable and its co-variants, cannot be extended to other types of variables, especially DPFs, as most of them are semantically bleached. Despite the continuous developments in overcoming the methodological challenges in circumscribing the variable context in the variation in DPFs, linguists argue that generalising the established principles of phonological variation and extending them to include the variation in DPFs can be misleading (Cheshire et al., 2005, pp. 143–144; Pichler, 2013, p. 11). Conducting more research on the variation of DPFs deepens our understanding of the applicability of variationist principles to the variation of these types of variables. Additionally, even

in the variation of phonological variables, researchers in Arabic contexts sometimes have to investigate factors that are specific to the language and societies in the Arab world in order to explain findings that deviate from the norms usually expected in variationist research (Al-Wer et al., 2020). This means that there is a need for further exploration to uncover common norms and the challenges involved in non-English and non-European languages (Stanford, 2016) such as Arabic language varieties.

Moreover, because this study examines micro-level variations in the usage of amplifiers by individual speakers, it contributes to the advancement of Arabic sociolinguistics and sociolinguistics as a whole. While most available literature on Arabic variationist research is restricted to macro-level variations based on aggregate data, this study combines both macro-level and micro-level variations. This approach aligns with third-wave variationist research that accentuates the agency of individual speaker styles. Further, this study enhances our understanding of individual speakers' roles in shaping and creating gendered linguistic styles. This is evident in Chapter 8, where micro-level analysis of stylisation sheds light on the critical contribution of digital platforms in shaping perceptions and stereotypes of gender identities. Therefore, Chapters 7 and 8, in particular, represent an example of how micro-level and macro-level approaches can be combined in investigations of analyses of linguistic variation and change, which is the approach implemented by third-wave variationists. This approach allows for a deeper understanding of linguistic variation and change in Arabic and Islamic environments and how principles of linguistic variation, which are traditionally generated in Western societies, can be applied in these contexts.

1.10 Overview of Chapters

- **Chapter 2** provides a literature review which sheds light on the research gap in the relevant literature. The chapter particularly reviews some of the available taxonomies for categorising intensifiers along with the categorisation of Quirk et al. (1985), which is the taxonomy chosen for the current study. It also reviews works on intensifiers in CA as well as in Arabic varieties, including those on SDs or ND.

- **Chapter 3** presents details about the design of the study including the selection of participants, sampling approach, data collection process and method, data transcription, circumscribing the variable context, data coding and analysis.

- **Chapter 4** presents an overview of the adjective intensification system in ND. It presents a categorisation of intensifiers in ND and the frequency of all forms in the intensification system. It also highlights the phenomena of co-occurrence and iteration of intensifiers. Further, it presents a delineation of intensifiers based on their occurrence in CA and ND using available corpora. Finally, the chapter presents an explanation of the grammaticalisation of the common intensifiers in the data.

- **Chapter 5** explores the distributional analysis and the multivariate analysis of amplifiers and downtoners. It also discusses the most significant factors conditioning the use of amplifiers.

- **Chapter 6** explores the distributional analysis and the multivariate analysis of the amplifiers *marrah* 'very' and *jiddan* 'very'. It discusses the most significant findings observed in the distribution of *marrah* and *jiddan*.

- **Chapter 7** zooms in on the usage of the amplifiers *marrah* and *jiddan* in the speech of individual speakers. This is conducted by analysing the usage of amplifiers in the speech of four outliers in the data and reflecting on their utilisation of these forms and whether their linguistic usage of these forms is in line with or deviates from the observed distributions and patterns in the previous chapters.

- **Chapter 8** presents a case study which helps in visualising *marrah* as part of a larger gendered linguistic and stylistic system. This chapter uncovers some linguistic features (including the amplifier *marrah*) which are enregistered as constituents of the feminine linguistic style in SDs in the digital discourse. It explores what male users in X perceive to be part of the feminine linguistic style. This examination links traditional sociolinguistic variationist analysis with socio-pragmatic and stylistic analysis.

- **Chapter 9** summarises the most important findings and methodological insights in the thesis. It also highlights the limitations of the current research and provides recommendations for future research.

Chapter 2 Literature Review

2.1 Introduction

In this chapter, I provide an overview of available semantic categorisation of intensifiers in the literature, including the one adopted in this study and available literature on Arabic intensifiers in CA and Arabic dialects. In CA, intensifiers can be traced in areas like grammar (e.g., adverbs), translation, cross-linguistic studies, and grammaticalisation. In dialects, intensifiers are investigated within morpho-syntactic, dialectological and variationist and sociolinguistic studies.

2.2 Classification of Intensifiers in the Literature

As indicated in Chapter 1, Section 1.1, intensifiers have been categorised under various labels based on the adopted approach. There have been many attempts in the literature to classify intensifiers. The majority of these attempts are based on English intensifiers. The lack of consensus in the classification of intensifiers can be attributed to two reasons. First, as noted in Chapter 1, Section 1.1, the grammatical heterogeneity of intensifiers and their ability to affect a wide range of syntactic forms make unifying their categorisation challenging (Paradis, 1997, p.12). Additionally, defining the notion of intensification is not straightforward because of the complex and imprecise nature of this phenomenon (Labov, 1984b, p.43; Bordet and Jamet, 2015; Napoli and Ravetto, 2017, p.3). Labov (1984b, p.43) asserts that accurately defining intensity is challenging because it is "a gradient feature" and "often dependent on other linguistic structures". Benzinger (1971, p.51) confirms that "intensification is not an element of language which yields itself to simple definition and easy analysis". In the following sections, I focus on what intensification is linguistically and how intensifiers have been semantically categorised.

In order to explain *intensity*, researchers refer to concepts that are closely related to intensification, such as the notion of gradability (Bolinger, 1972). Traditionally, intensification is seen as a feature of gradable adjectives (Bolinger, 1972, p.21). Gradable adjectives (also called *degree* or *scalar* adjectives) are typically characterised by their ability to be modified by intensifiers (e.g., *very hot*) and to appear in comparative constructions (e.g., *hotter* and *more intelligent*) (Bolinger, 1972, p.21; Quirk et al., 1985, p.435; Paradis, 2008).

These features are possible because gradable adjectives can indicate different levels or degrees of the quality they describe. Paradis (1997, p.15) asserts that intensifiers need to be "licensed" in order to modify the head and the head needs to be gradable. Non-gradable adjectives, on the other hand, are the adjectives that represent absolute or binary qualities which are either present or not such as *dead* and *unique* (Paradis, 2008; Napoli and Ravetto, 2017). They typically[29] do not accept being modified by intensifiers or being in a comparative construction (Quirk et al., 1985, p.435; Paradis, 2008). At the same time, researchers acknowledge that gradability is a fluid concept and a clear-cut distinction is not always possible (Buchstaller and Traugott, 2006; Paradis, 2008). The gradability of adjectives can be highly dependent on the context of its usage and can also change over time (Paradis, 2008; Napoli and Ravetto, 2017). Buchstaller and Traugott (2006, p.348), for instance, explain that some adjectives that were historically viewed as non-scalar or bounded like *unique* and *dead* are now being used as unbounded or scalar. This is seen as a result of the shift towards relativistic ideologies which took place in the twentieth century. Hence, this re-conceptualisation means that speakers are moving away from strict binary constructions to gradient and variable conceptualisations. Further, while intensifiers are often viewed as modifying the semantic gradability, they can also operate on the pragmatic force by expressing the speaker's attitudes or stance towards the content (Ochs and Schieffelin, 1989; Besnier, 1990; Napoli and Ravetto, 2017). This means that non-gradable adjectives can also be modified by intensifiers. Modal intensifiers or emphasisers (e.g., *waḷḷah* 'truly'), for instance, are considered a category of intensifiers (see Fiorentini and Sansò, 2017; Quirk, 1972). However, their semantic effects are different from those of degree intensifiers, which have typically been linked to intensifiers (i.e., scalar or degree devices). While degree intensifiers upscale or downscale the quality of the modified adjective on a scale, modal intensifiers do not modify the degree of the quality of the intensified word but "the intensity of the speaker's commitment towards the truth value of the assertion" (Fiorentini and Sansò, 2017, p.174). According to Quirk (1972, p.376), when they function as adjective modifiers, they add "a general heightening effect".

The different semantic classifications in the literature reflect how linguists divide the degree levels and whether they add other categories, such as modality intensifiers,

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[29] There are some non-gradable adjectives which are intensified in colloquial speech such as 'completely dead'.

to their labels of intensifiers (Table 2.1). The majority of the available classifications maintain the dividing line between devices with effects of scaling up and down (e.g., Bäcklund, 1973; Paradis, 1997; Quirk et al., 1985; Stoffel, 1901). These two effects are based on whether they express the highest/lowest part of the scale and a high/low point on a scale. Several linguists also classify devices that express a moderate level or a middle level on the scale. Some categorisations (e.g., Allerton, 1987) consider the relationship between the intensifier and the adjective they collocate with by analysing their shared semantic properties.

Linguists also often refer to scale and scalarity in their explanation and categorisation of intensifiers. The notion of scale refers to organising lexical items in a hierarchical manner based on their levels of intensity (Paradis, 1997). Researchers understood this arrangement through using the relation of incompatibility and the principle of ordering. A group of words form a scale if they are incompatible to a certain extent to represent contrast and similarity (Lyons, 1977; Westney, 1986). For example, there is a contrast between the intensifiers *completely* and *very* because *very* is not the same as *completely* (Paradis, 1997). Further, both *completely* and *very* are similar in that they both represent degree (Paradis, 1997). Westney (1986, p.340) postulates that although contrast is obvious or "self-evident", a foundation for similarity is still required. Therefore, Westney (1986) employed the notion of entailment to elucidate the similarity among these lexical elements in scales. Hence, if something is *completely* different, it would imply that it is also *very* different (Paradis, 1997, p.22). Ordering, however, refers to organizing lexical items along a scale according to their relative levels of intensity (Paradis, 1997). The relationship of entailment determines the arrangement of lexical items along the scale, indicating which items logically come before or after others based on their relative intensity (Westney, 1986). If something is *completely dry*, for instance, it entails that it is *very dry* because if something is *completely dry*, it is also *very dry*. Yet, if something is a *little dry*, it indicates that it slightly lacks moisture which suggests a low degree of dryness. However, if something is *very dry*, it indicates that it significantly lacks moisture which suggests a high degree of dryness. The structure provided in this hierarchical arrangement[30] helps in understanding the semantic relations between the elements on the scale which are determined by their entailment (Westney, 1986).

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[30] This arrangement is not necessarily linear; it may be multidimensional or hierarchical, based on the semantic context. Linguists have observed that the concept of scalarity extends beyond rigid linear scales and can include multidimensional connections among lexical items (for more information, see Westney, 1986; Paradis 1997).

Table 2.1 Semantic Categorisations of Intensifiers in the Literature

Work	Categories
Stoffel (1901)	1. Intensifives (scaling up) 2. Downtoning adverbs (scaling down and moderate-degree adverbs)
Bolinger (1972)	1. Boosters (scaling up) 2. Compromisers (scale to a middle point or "look both ways at once") 3. Diminishers (scaling down or "looking down") 4. Minimisers (scaling down at the lower end of the scale)

Bäcklund (1973)	1. Adverbs expressing the complete or partial absence of the concept denoted by their head
	2. Adverbs expressing a minimum degree
	  a. Grading downward
	  b. Grading upward
	3. Adverbs indicating a low degree
	4. Adverbs indicating a low degree of a positive idea
	5. Adverbs expressing a moderate degree (i.e., the middle degree of the scale)
	6. Adverbs of increasing degree
	7. Adverbs expressing a high degree on a scale
	8. Adverbs expressing the highest degree on a scale
	  a. Pure adverbs of degree
	  b. Adverbs that weakly represent adverbs of degree
	    i. degree and manner
	    ii. degree and mood
	    iii. degree and restriction
	  c. Adverbs of degree and mood which are also capable of functioning as sentence modifiers
	9. Adverbs meeting the demand of a subsequent verbal

Quirk et al. (1985)	1. Emphasisers (modal intensifiers adding emphasis by referring to the truthfulness of the proposed quality)
	2. Amplifiers (degree intensifiers scaling up)
	  a. Maximisers (highest end of the scale)
	  b. Boosters (high point on a scale)
	3. Downtoners (degree intensifiers scaling down)
	  a. Approximators (the modified quality is more than what is relevant)
	  b. Compromisers (question the appropriateness of the modified quality)
	  c. Diminishers (low point on a scale)
	  d. Minimisers (point at the lowest end of the scale)

Allerton (1987)	1. Scalar intensifiers (the prototypical gradeability on a scale)
	  a. Boosters (scale upward)
	  b. Moderators (i.e., compromisers) (indicate a middle point on a scale)
	  c. Diminishers (scale downward)
	  d. Zeroizer (i.e., minimisers) (indicate the lowest point on a scale)
	2. Telic intensifiers (express the relationship between the degree of adjectival quality and the required degree for a specific purpose)
	3. Absolutive intensifiers (express that the quality of the modified adjective belongs to the extreme end of the scale)
	4. Differential intensifiers (express the difference between the degree of modified adjectival quality and some reference point)

Paradis (1997)	1. Totality (modify bounded adjectives, i.e., denoting an either-or concept)
	  a. Maximisers (reinforcers)
	  b. Approximators (attenuators)
	2. Scalar (indicate points on a scale and modify unbounded adjectives, i.e., denoting a more-or-less concept)
	  a. Boosters (reinforcers)
	  b. Moderators (attenuators)
	  c. Diminishers (attenuators)

2.2.1 Classification Used in the Current Study

In this study, I use Quirk et al.'s classification (1985). This classification is chosen because it is extensively implemented in variationist research and using it facilitates comparisons between my research findings and those of similar studies (e.g., Stratton, 2020; Alshaboul et al., 2022; Almossa, 2024). Moreover, the number of categories and sub-categories in this model is reasonable and practical for both qualitative and quantitative analyses. These categories facilitate the grouping of each category's elements based on functional equivalency (Stratton, 2020, pp.189–190). This is critical for variationist analysis because the elements of each category will be competing against one another, not against the members of a different category (e.g., amplifiers do not compete with downtoners) (Stratton, 2020). The classification also considers modal intensifiers. Researchers have observed that one of the productive sources of incoming intensifiers is the shift from "modal-to-intensifier", such as the case with *very* in the English language, which originally meant 'truly' (Partington, 1993, p.181). This means that these devices should be given significance as potential sources of degree intensifiers. Furthermore, the goal of my research is to establish a comprehensive taxonomy of adjectival intensification in the speech of ND speakers that is not restricted to degree.

2.2.1.1 Classification of Quirk et al. (1985)

Quirk et al. (1985) choose the label *intensifiers* for intensifiers of verbs and adjectives. Thus, their classification is stated in two sections of the book. The first is mentioned as part of the modification function of adverbs as modifiers of adjectives (Quirk et al., 1985, pp.445–447). In this section, only the three main labels (i.e., amplifiers, downtoners and emphasisers) are stated and no further sub-division is provided despite the applicability of the same divisions on the quality of adjectives. The second section where this classification is stated is within the functions of subjuncts, in which the modified unit is a verb. The classification of intensifiers is more fine-tuned in the second section (i.e., amplifiers and downtoners are further divided into sub-classes). In the literature, researchers (e.g., Tagliamonte, 2008; Stratton, 2020) who use the categorisation of Quirk et al. (1985) do not restrict the sub-division to verb modification.

Overall, Quirk et al. (1985) divide intensifiers into three classes. The first is the class of emphasisers, which are modal modifiers (Quirk, 1972, p.376). Quirk et al. (1985,

p.583) postulate that emphasisers (i.e., modal intensifiers) are words "expressing the semantic role of modality which have a reinforcing effect on the truth value of the clause or part of the clause to which they apply" (e.g., *indeed*, *really*, *honestly* and *literally*). Amplifiers and downtoners are degree modifiers and Quirk et al. divide them based on the degree force from the highest to lowest on a scale. Amplifiers are the scaling upward devices in Quirk et al. (1985, p.590). They are divided into two sub-categories based on whether they indicate the highest point in the scale (i.e., maximisers, such as *completely*) or a high point on the scale (i.e., boosters, such as *very*). Downtoners are scaling down devices and are sub-classified into four categories. Approximators serve to indicate that the quality of the unit modified by the approximator is more than what is relevant (e.g., *nearly*) (Quirk et al., 1985, p.597). The authors assert that approximators can be distinguished from other downtoners in that they have implications for a truth denial of the quality of the modified unit (Quirk et al.,1985, p. 599). Compromisers question the appropriateness of the quality of the modified unit and have slight lowering effects (e.g., *kind of* and *quite*). Their modification gives a stricter identification of the truth of the modified quality rather than denying it. Diminishers scale downward, such as *a bit.* Minimisers express a point at the lowest end of the scale (i.e., negative maximisers), such as *scarcely*. Minimisers include the downtoner *at all*, which requires a negative context (e.g., not easy *at all*).

2.3 Intensifiers in CA and Arabic Dialects

In the following sections I highlight the literature available on intensifiers in the Arabic language (CA and vernaculars).

2.3.1 Dialectological Studies

Information about intensifiers in ND is scattered within dialectological studies and analyses of the syntax of ND (or Gulf) Arabic (Ingham, 1994; Abboud, 1964; Qafisheh, 1977). Although they were some of the earliest references to intensifiers in ND and the Gulf dialects, they are very brief because they were studied as part of studying the whole dialect or the syntax of the dialect. For example, Ingham (1994, p.56) wrote about intensifiers as a subclass of the particles that can be part of the noun phrase (NP). He listed several quantifiers and intensifiers within this section and asserted that they can

be semantically considered as modifiers, such as *marrah* 'very', *wājid* 'much, a lot', *šwayy(at)* 'little', *(bal-)ḥēl* 'very' and *klliš* 'totally, completely'. He confirmed that these elements are "developments" in Arabic vernaculars that are not found in CA (Ingham, 1994, p.57). Ingham added that they favor occurring before the adjective but can also postmodify an adjective. Although Ingham (1994) categorised those items based on their modification function (i.e., intensification), there is a lack of consideration of the semantic aspect of those items.

Qafisheh (1977, p.190) categorised them with the label "others" in his classification of adverbs. He listed several of them, including *tamaman* 'completely', *klliš* 'totally', *wājid* 'very', *šwayy* 'little' and *ʔabadan* 'never'. The intensifier *marrah* 'very' was not in his list, probably because his data was mainly based on the Emirati dialect, which suggests that this intensifier may be restrictively used in certain Arabic dialects. This also underscores the regional variation among Arabic dialects in their usage of amplifiers. Abboud (1964, p.21) listed some intensifiers (*balmarrih* 'completely' and *jiddan* 'very') under the label "adverbials" which constitute a sub-category of particles in ND. In addition, the downtoner *šwayy* 'little' is acknowledged as a "complement of manner" which can modify the verb phrase (Abboud, 1964, p.40).

2.3.2 Grammatical Analysis

2.3.2.1 Grammatical Descriptions of CA Intensifiers

There are descriptions of CA intensifiers in modern grammar books, such as those by Ryding (2005) and Sawaie (2015). These works provide grammatical descriptions of intensifiers as adverbs of degree, which are considered a sub-class of adverbs in CA. It is important to mention here that the Arabic language has only a limited number of words that are inherently adverbs (Abu-Chacra, 2018, p.299; Ryding, 2005, p.276). What is valuable about these references is that they can be compared to what is available in ND, given the diverse forms that can be regarded as adverbs in the Arabic language and the scarcity of studies focusing on ND intensifiers. In addition, they can be used as references to the intensifiers used in discussions of serious topics, which tend to be flavoured by intensifiers from CA. As there is no single class of adverbs in the Arabic language, the classification of Ryding (2005) and Sawaie (2015) is based on other factors,

such as morphosyntactic features, functions and positions, which is the method followed in most modern studies on Arabic adverbs (Fassi Fehri, 1998).

In both works, although these items are categorised according to their general semantic category of degree and intensity, no significance is given to providing a sub-division based on the specific type of semantic modification they make (e.g., quantification, upscaling and downtoning). This reflects that these works are more grammatically oriented and the semantic aspect is not their primary focus. This approach leads to disregarding the resemblance that exists between members of each sub-category. By contrast, the functional approach used in the current study considers the primary role of intensifiers in modifying adjectives and the sub-divisions within this major role, which is based on the semantic modifications achieved by these elements. This leads to prioritising the kinship between language elements, which is what language theories should strive for (Bolinger, 1972, p.15; Paradis, 1997, p.15). In the following section, I will review Ryding's (2005) work in detail as an example.

Ryding (2005) investigates intensifiers under the label "adverbs of degree". A few intensifying expressions appear under "adverbs of manner", such as *bi-ʃiddah* 'strongly'. She believes that the function of adverbs of degree is to describe and quantify concepts such as intensity, measurement or amount. Ryding's wide definition of adverbs of degree is justified by the fuzzy nature of intensification, which is closely related to concepts such as quantification and measurements. However, one needs to be cautious when drawing on this study because describing and quantifying measurement and amount do not necessarily connote an amplification or diminution of degree (Quirk et al., 1985, p.486). Vermeire (1979, p.13) postulates that although quantification and intensification are relevant phenomena, the "abstraction" level can be taken as a distinguishing measure. The highest level of abstractness and what actually constitutes part of intensification is the quantification of uncountable abstract notions (e.g., *much* sadness). What makes differentiating the two possible is the scalarity level of the modified head (i.e., it must be gradable).

Ryding's definition (2005) allows a wide range of elements to be included under this label, which may not necessarily fit the definition of intensifiers that this project is using, such as *bi-kaṯīr* 'by a great amount', which is often used to modify comparative adjectives and *ʔajmaʕ* 'all', which is used to emphasise nouns (examples 1a and 1b).

1)

a) tabdū ʔaṣġara *bi-kaṯīrin* min ʕumriha

   She seems *much ('by a great amount')* younger than her age (Ryding, 2005, p.279)

b) fī ʔanḫāʔi al-ʕālami *ʔajmaʕ*

   In *all* parts of the world (Ryding, 2005, p.279)

In her book, adverbs of degree were not categorised according to the word classes they modify, which may conceal some of the variations or specifications in the modification of certain word classes, such as adjectives or verbs. She also includes repetition as a device used to show "measurement" or "gradual sequencing" (e.g., *far-dan far-dan* 'one by one') (Ryding, 2005, pp.277, 279). Although repetition is a well-known intensification strategy, it is part of the stylistic or rhetorical techniques of language, not the grammatical aspect (Bordet and Jamet, 2015). Unlike the orientation in Ryding, the current study focuses on intensifiers as lexico-grammatical components of language. Ryding (2005) categorises degree adverbs according to their grammatical compositions (e.g., words that are inherently adverbs, nouns and adjectives in the accusative).

Intensifiers have drawn attention in translation studies because of the syntactic and semantic effects they can have when added to the text and the difficulty encountered by translators when translating intensifiers in Arabic to English and vice versa (Obeid, 2014; Mahmood, 2015). Some references can also be found in comparative studies that highlight some intensifiers as part of achieving emphasis and hedging in the English and Arabic languages (see Al-Aubaidi, 2013; Khanfar, 2016; Al-Ghoweri and Kayed ,2019).

2.3.2.2 Syntactic Investigations of Adverbs in Arabic Dialects

Researchers have referred to intensifiers in Arabic dialects as part of their interest in the syntactic analysis of adverbs in Arabic dialects. These works on adverbs, although not focused solely on intensifiers, are valuable references for studying intensifiers. They provide guidance on identifying and examining intensifiers by analysing their morphosyntactic realisations, characteristics, modification abilities and hierarchal ordering within the structure of utterances, as well as the phonological factors that should be considered for their investigation.

Al-Shurafa (2005) and AlShammiry (2016) investigate the morphosyntactic distribution of adverbs in the Palestinian dialect, HD and Saudi Northern dialect respectively. Both linguists identify three prevalent constructions of adverbs in these Arabic dialects: NP, Adjective phrase (AP) and prepositional phrase (PP). At the same time, AlShammiry (2016) acknowledges that some adverbs do not conform to these three constructions, such as *šwayy* 'little', *kwayyis* 'well' and *bass* 'only'. Al-Shurafa (2005) argues that because of the grammatical heterogeneity of adverbs in HD and Palestinian Arabic, setting further criteria to identify and analyse adverbs, including their functional categories, morphosyntactic features and hierarchical ordering is necessary within the structure of the sentence. The position of these adverbs around their modified item is an aspect that has received attention in those syntactic investigations. Unlike the observation of Al-Shurafa (2005), which suggests the flexibility of verbal adverbs in terms of their location, AlShammiry (2016) asserts that adverbs have favoured and sometimes restricted slots around the verb. The focus of both Al-Shurafa (2005) and AlShammiry (2016) is directed towards verb modification, while adjective intensification had been given less consideration. Al Barrag (2014), within the framework of distributed morphology and in his analysis of the structure of the AP in HD, concludes that just like the NP is dominated by the determiner phrase, the degree phrase (DegP) dominates the AP. This means that the canonical position for intensifiers in the HD is before the AP, unlike in CA, where they are typically positioned after the AP. It is also possible that AP precedes the DegP, but in this case, an additional emphasis is added to the AP. In the Saudi Northern dialect, however, AlShammiry (2016) notes that normally, an intensifier will be positioned after the adjective it modifies, with the possibility of placing it before the adjective, but in this case, the intensifier will be pronounced using a higher pitch. This suggests dialectal variation in the canonical distribution of intensifiers among Arabic dialects. Their position may be conditioned by social and linguistic factors, which is what I investigate in the current project.

In her PhD thesis, Abou Shaady (1995) presents a comprehensive analysis of the morphosyntactic, semantic and functional properties of adverbs in EA based on data from movies, novels and radio. She confirms that any analysis of adverbs must simultaneously study "the function they perform and the position they occupy" along with the semantic aspects because there is usually a correlation between them (Abou Shaady, 1995, p.223). For instance, according to her proposed model, in example 2, the

degree adverb *xāliṣ* 'very' is classified as a degree adverb with a verb modifying function that has a relatively restricted final position and is optional.

2) al-duyūf ziˤlū *xāliṣ*

The neighbours got *very* upset (Abou Shaady, 1995, p.379)

In her observation of adverbs, Abou Shaady (1995, p.223) identifies various realisations of adverbs in EA. They include words that are inherently adverbs (e.g., *bass* 'only'), indefinite nouns that can be marked by the accusative suffix *-an* or not, such as *šamāl* 'north', definite nouns and NPs (e.g., *al-ḥaʔīʔah* 'the truth'), adjectives including those found in CA and those that are not, such as *kuwayyis* 'well', PPs (e.g., *bittaʔkiīd* 'surely'), clauses of time, causation and circumstantial clauses or *ḥāl* and verbs (e.g., *yimkin* 'possibly'). The verb category also includes a construction similar to the cognate accusative in CA in which the verb is followed by its verbal noun or *'maṣdar'* to add emphasis. This verb construction can likewise be specified by adding an adjective in the accusative form (e.g., *nām nōm kwayyis* 'he slept well').

These syntactic realisations of adverbs explained by Abou Shaady have varying grammaticalisation levels. For instance, the group of adverbs marked by the *-an* accusative case is "fossilised" in the dialect (Versteegh, 2014, p.56). It is originally derived by using the "cognate object". In classical grammar, the cognate object or *al-mafˤūl al-muṭlaq* is a noun in the accusative case that follows a verb to add emphasis or specification, and often, the verb and noun have the same root. Although the cognate object is still used as an intensification method, the *ʔiˤrāb* 'declension' system that assigns cases to the end of words, which was implemented in CA[31], is no longer present in most Arabic dialects (Versteegh, 2014, p.141). Thus, these elements represent a limited group of adverbs because the case is not used in most Arabic dialects, and they are mostly semantically bleached, although they may still have some semantic residue (e.g., *ṭabˤan* 'of course').

Adverbs with *al-* are less grammaticalised, and many of them still represent their semantic content (e.g., *al-ḥaʔīʔah* 'the truth'). Abou Shaady also considers words formed using the same derivation method (i.e., verb or adjective followed by *maṣdar*)

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[31] There is a lack of consensus on the historical explanations of the emergence of modern dialects and their relations to CA (see Versteegh, 2014, p.138).

but not marked by the accusative suffix *-an* as adverbs (example 3) (Abou Shaady, 1995, p.281). The verbs or adjectives followed by *maṣdar* constitute a productive derivational source of adverbs (example 3). Nouns like *suhūlah* 'easiness' (i.e., cognate accusative) are not lexico-grammatical forms that can be used to modify other verbs or nouns like the pool of fixed verbal nouns (e.g., *fiʕlan* 'really'). Thus, this derivation method may be considered a stylistic–syntactic construction that is used to add intensification that can be compared to repetition, but not a functional device, such as intensifiers (see Bordet and Jamet, 2015).

3)

    al-ʔimtiḥān kān sahl suhūlah

    The exam was extremely easy (Abou Shaady, 1995, p.281)

Abou Shaady (1995, p.262) confirms that some adverbs have collocational tendencies towards certain types of verbs, such as the style adverbials *taʔrīban* 'nearly, approximately', which tend to modify verbs of speaking such as *say* and *comment*. Although Abou Shaady does not support this observation with empirical evidence, this emphasises the usefulness of analysing the semantic value of the modified unit. It also underscores the tendency of adverbs to collocate with units based on certain factors, including their semantic content. She confirms that the topic of discourse, the level of formality and speaker's educational background affect the use of intensifiers such as the use of *nawʕan mā* 'kind of' and *giddan* 'very' by educated[32] speakers (Abou Shaady, 1995, pp.269, 275). The role of gender is highlighted when she states that the intensifier *xāliṣ* 'very' is used more by women. This suggests that there may be certain intensifiers preferred by specific social groups. Variationist analysis of intensifiers confirms this tendency. For instance, Macaulay (2006) in his corpus of Glaswegian English found that the intensifier *pure* is highly used among working-class adolescents. Another example is in the study of Omar and Alotaibi (2017) who found that in EA, *ʔawi* 'very' is used more by female speakers. Hence the current study investigates whether or not there are certain preferences in ND by some social group. Many further features are underscored in her study. Abou Shaady (1995) highlights the ability of intensifiers to pile together

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[32] In Abou Shaady (1995, p.9), educated speakers are characterised by using more CA forms in their speech.

(Abou Shaady, 1995, pp.272, 390) and the high mobility of adverbs within and outside the sentence (Abou Shaady, 1995, p.248). Both aspects are underscored too in the current study.

In her study, Abou Shaady (1995) also inspects the semantic roles of adverbs, including intensifiers. She postulates that the adverb can function as an intensifier by "indicating the scope or degree of intensity of the head verb or adjective" and she identifies many intensifiers in EA which can also be found in many Arabic dialects (Abou Shaady, 1995, p.269). In her analysis of adjective intensifiers, she uses the model by Quirk et al. (1985) and differentiates between intensifiers that add amplification and those that add emphasis (Abou Shaady, 1995, p.271). Although she sub-classifies downtoners according to the model of Quirk et al. (1985), a sub-categorisation of amplifiers into boosters and maximisers is not provided. Abou Shaady's application of Quirk's model is useful for the current study because the EA data can be compared with the ND data.

2.3.3 Grammaticalisation Framework

In the literature, there are some studies which focus on the grammaticalisation of Arabic intensifiers such as Feodorov (2000), Woidich (2018), Zawrotna (2018b) and Zawrotna (2018a), which identify their semantic origin. Identifying productive semantic sources of intensifiers, as seen in Feodorov (2000), Woidich (2018) and Zawrotna (2018), assists in identifying items that may be overlooked despite their intensification function, especially in under-researched vernaculars, such as *waḷḷah* in Arabic. Similarly, the current study aims to uncover the semantic meaning of the intensifiers used by ND speakers regardless of their semantic source.

Feodorov (2000) analyses the grammaticalisation of intensifiers and "augmentative" expressions in CA and other languages, such as Romanian and English. She specifically focuses on the semantic origins of intensifiers in CA and the various routes these intensification expressions take during their grammaticalisation. Feodorov (2000) concludes that the grammaticalisation of intensifiers is relatively predictable because they undergo similar developmental processes. Her findings imply that speakers of different languages have shared inclinations in "the way they understand their reality and the way they express their assessment in terms of linguistic structures"

for the purposes of intensification (Feodorov, 2000, p.107). I will focus in the following section on some examples from CA.

Feodorov (2000) postulates that *jiddan* 'very' is one of the highly grammaticalised intensifiers in CA based on the criteria set by Bolinger (1972) that test the level of grammaticalisation of an intensifier by its applicability in semantic contexts and its semantic emptiness. According to Feodorov (2000, p.100), *jiddan* consists of the noun *jidd* and the adverbial inflection *-an.* She believes that the noun *jidd*, which originally means 'perseverance, strain and diligence' in the accomplishment of physical actions, has acquired more abstract notions, such as 'seriousness' and 'importance', and, over time, has become used as an expression of the idea of 'upper limit'.

Another intensifier derived from the idea of force is the adjective *šadīd*, which is derived from the root *š-d-d* 'strength, power'. Feodorov (2000) argues that the verb *šadda* 'bind tightly, tie, fasten', which is often applied to concrete meanings, is the origin behind the wide extensions of this concrete meaning of tightness to more abstract and even diverse concrete concepts, such as strength, high intensity and hardening (e.g., increased wind and strengthened authority). Additionally, the concept of *qwwah* 'strength' represented in words such as *qawyy* 'strong', *qawwa* 'to strengthen' and *qawiya* 'to be strong' expanded its semantic connotation of physical concepts to include abstract concepts. A grammaticalisation of this type, which is mainly a semantic enlargement of applicability, is part of the development that intensifiers go through in their way to becoming functional words. In CA, similar to what was observed by Ryding (2005), *bi-šiddah* functions as a verb intensifier. It is even interesting to note that the adjective *šadīd* 'strong, intense' progressed to a fully-fledged intensifier in Sudanese Arabic, whereas the adjective *qawi* 'strong' became an intensification device in EA. Other common semantic origins of intensifiers are references to the idea of truth (e.g., *ḥaqq*), to the idea of completeness (e.g., *tamaman*), to a large quantity (e.g., *kaṯīr*) or a small quantity (e.g., *qalīl*) and to an average quality or to the limit (e.g., *li-lġāyati*).

Woidich (2018), like Feodorov (2000) draws on grammaticalisation frameworks to explore the semantic domains of amplifiers in slang EA and trace their degree of grammaticalisation. Their degree of grammaticalisation is measured by looking at the semantic contexts of their collocational tendencies. Their modification context reveals whether or not they are still restricted to their typical semantic domains or expanded into other domains, indicating a more bleached item. Woidich (2018) also provides some

observations about the position of some intensifiers and the definiteness of the modified NP.

Woidich's (2018) investigation included amplifiers like ʔawī, xāliṣ 'very' and mōt 'lit. death, terribly'. Woidich (2018, pp.257, 258) also considered the emphasisers bi-gadd 'lit. in earnest, really, seriously' and (bi-)ṣaḥīḥ 'truly' which are "stance adverbials" or "speech act adverbials". Woidich (2018) postulates that these elements when placed next to the items they modify can acquire intensifying function like that of established amplifiers, such as ʔawī. Moreover, Woidich investigated three rural based amplifiers which are: bil-hēl 'very much', bil-kull 'completely' and wāṣil 'lit. arrived, very, completely'. Further, Woidich (2018) was also interested in the semantic creativity in some of the recent innovations often used in the digital discourse like X and Facebook including amplifiers with vulgar or taboo amplifiers. Some of these are: ṭaḥn 'lit. grind, very', giddī 'lit. serious/or grandfather, really', nentī 'lit. grandmother, very, really', fḥt 'lit. digged hole, very', ʔāxir hāga 'lit. the last thing, extremely', dabbāba 'lit, tank, extremely', fašx 'lit. spread open, fucking, bloody' and nēk 'fucking'. This creativity in coining intensifiers highlights an advantage of the bottom-up approach in examining intensifiers by looking at the adjectival context as a starting point which is adopted in the current study (see Chapter 3, Section 3.10). This is because these innovative forms may be overlooked otherwise.

Similar to Feodorov (2000) and Woidich (2018), Zawrotna (2018a; 2018b) investigated the conceptual sources for coining taboo-based intensifiers, such as religion, God, death and sexuality, in her investigation of these features in EA. She further studied the degrees of grammaticalisation they have undergone. Although her analysis focuses generally on taboo-based expressions that have amplifying effects, several expressions analysed are simply considered cursing expressions in Arabic, such as yilʕan dīn ʔabūk 'may God curse the religion of your father' and ʔibn al-kalb 'son of a dog' (Zawrotna, 2018b, pp.189, 193).These profanity expressions (see Benzinger, 1971, p.15) are considered exclamatives or interjections but not intensifiers. Others can be compared to modal intensifiers (i.e., emphasisers) which are oath or swearing expressions that add emphasis by expressing the speaker's sincerity like waḷḷāhī 'by God' or w-ḥayāt rabbinā 'by the life of our Lord' (Zawrotna, 2018a). A few other items in her study can be compared to amplifiers as defined in the literature, such as mōt 'like death' (example 4). This is because they modify the adjacent word with an upscaling effect, as

suggested by Quirk et al. (1985, p. 445) in his treatment of intensifiers in the English language.

4) wāḥšnī *mōt*

    I miss you *to death* (Zawrotna, 2018b)

As we observed in these studies, they aid in underscoring potential sources of Arabic intensifiers. They highlight the danger of overlooking some new or uncommon intensifiers in Arabic research and support the bottom-up approach that I adopt in the current study.

2.3.4 Variationist Research on Intensifiers in Arabic Dialects

To my knowledge, there are only three studies in the literature that follow what we can consider a variationist approach in the analysis of intensifiers in Arabic dialects using a method that we can compare to the current study (Table 2.2). The field of Arabic variationist research on intensifiers is still in its infancy and in the following sections, I review these studies.

Table 2.2 Overview of Variationist Analysis of Intensifiers in Arabic Varieties in addition to the Current Study

Study	Arabic Variety	Category of Intensifiers	Method for Eliciting Intensifiers	Zero Variant	Social Factors	Linguistic Factors
Omar and Alotaibi (2017)	Egyptian Arabic and Saudi dialect	Amplifiers	Pre-identified list based on ungiven approach	Not Identified	Gender and country	Position of intensifier and phonological stress
Alshaboul et al. (2022)	Ammani Arabic	Amplifiers	Adjective extraction	Identified	Gender, age and education	Function, polarity, emotionality, and semantic group of adjectives and position of intensifiers
Almossa (2024)	Najdi Arabic	Amplifiers and emphasisers treated as a single category	A list based on manual inspection of data	Not Identified	Gender and age	Position was discussed in Almossa (2023) while other linguistic factors are yet to be discussed in Almossa (Forthcoming)
Current Study	Najdi Arabic	Amplifiers and downtoners	Adjective extraction	Identified	Gender, age and education	Function, polarity, emotionality, and semantic group of adjectives and position of intensifiers

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2.3.4.1 Omar and Alotaibi (2017)

Omar and Alotaibi (2017)[33] provide a sociolinguistic analysis of amplifiers by Saudi and Egyptian speakers. In their corpus that consisted of 30 episodes of Egyptian and Saudi radio programs, they extracted all the intensifiers used by the speakers and measured the frequency of each intensifier. Omar and Alotaibi confirm that they selected all the amplifiers without any bias, but they did not explain how this is achieved. Several intensifiers that were observed in previous investigations of the EA intensifiers were not found in their study, such as *mōt, gāmid* and *xāliṣ* (Abou Shaady, 1995; Zawrotna, 2018b; Woidich, 2018). Further, in SD, there are many amplifiers that were not found in their data (Chapter 4, Section 4.2.4.1 and Almossa, 2024). These observations raise questions around the efficiency of their bias elimination strategy or the nature of their data which contains both structured and spontaneous speech. The data comes from radio shows which involve interaction with the audience which means that the data contains spontaneous speech. However, like most radio shows, there are some scripted segments in the structure of these programs. This means that their data probably contains both scripted and unscripted language.

Table 2.3 The Findings in Omar and Alotaibi (2017)

	Egyptian Dialect	Saudi Dialect
Frequency	- *giddan* and *ʔawī* were used by Egyptian speakers - The most frequent is *giddan* followed by *ʔawī* (54.95% and 45.05%, respectively)[34].	- *jiddan*, *marrah* and *wājid* were used by Saudi speakers. - The most frequent is *marrah* followed by *jiddan* and *wājid* (44.66%, 43.42% and 11.92%, respectively).
Role of Gender	Both amplifiers were more frequent in the speech of female speakers (*giddan:* 54.99% vs.45.01%, *ʔawī:* 57.86% v.42.14%).	Women were found to be using all amplifiers more than men (*marrah*: 57.37% vs. 42.63%, *jiddan*: 54.10% vs. 45.90%, and *wājid*: 55.22% vs. 46.27%).

The analysis of Omar and Alotaibi (2017) focussed on the four intensifiers *giddan, marrah, ʔawī* 'very' and *wājid* 'a lot' across their datasets of EA and SD radio shows. As depicted in Table 2.3, Omar and Alotaibi found dialectal variation in the forms used in EA and SD while women were observed to employ a higher number of intensifiers in both dialects. The overall high occurrence of *giddan/jiddan* can be attributed to the style

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[33] Omar and Alotaibi (2017) do not claim to adopt a variationist approach; however, for the sake of organisation, I present their study alongside the two variationist studies.

[34] These percentages are calculated based on the raw frequencies provided in Omar and Alotaibi (2017).

that is often used in radio programs, which is relatively formal, an aspect that is not addressed in their study. Although, as we noted above, these radio programmes represent what can be called *talk shows*, in which broadcasters are generally more laid-back and listeners have many opportunities to participate in spontaneous speech, they must still contain structured segments within them like other programs. At the same time, it is well known that Arabic speakers tend to shift their style towards a more formal one that is characterised by using features of CA whenever they are being observed and recorded (Al-Batal, 1994). In his classical study, Bell (1982) analysed style shifting in the language of the news on radio stations of New Zealand. Bell confirmed that style shifting in the language of the media is at its highest level because there is pressure from the need for approval from the audience. It may also be an effect of the seriousness of the topics discussed in those radio shows. However, Omar and Alotaibi (2017) did not measure the effect of the seriousness of the topic on their participants' choices of intensifiers, which is a factor that the current study tackles. They also tested the effect of region on their informants' use. Overall, Egyptian speakers used a higher number of intensifiers when compared to Saudi speakers. Yet, because their data is elicited based on radio programs, age was not considered in the analysis, which I will investigate in my research.

In terms of the distribution of intensifiers, Omar and Alotaibi suggested that the canonical position of intensifiers is after the adjective which is a restricted slot for Egyptian speakers (Omar and Alotaibi, 2017, p.226) (example 5a). Abou Shaady (1995, p.380) has reported similar observations about amplifiers in the EA. However, for Saudi speakers, this position is not restricted since some speakers were observed to use pre-adjectival amplifiers (example 5b). They suggest that this is a pragmatic strategy which is a result of raising the constituent into a higher position in the sentence and is used to add emphasis and attract the attention of the listener. Although this explanation may be valid, according to what has been observed in Al Barrag (2014) and AlShammiry (2016), there is regional variation in the canonical position of intensifiers. One shortcoming of Omar and Alotaibi's (2017) study is that they treat SD as a single dialect. Therefore, regional variation in the canonical position is concealed under this treatment and explained as a pragmatic strategy. Another relevant aspect is the ability of the intensifier *marrah* to be attached to the preposition *bi-* and the article *al- 'bi-l-marrah'* which they suggest signifies the meaning of 'majority' (Omar and Alotaibi, 2017, p.227).

As will be explained in Chapter 4 (Section 4.4.1), this finding is significant. There could be regional variation in using this form of *marrah* (i.e., *bi-l-marrah*) and we know that the level of grammaticalisation of a single lexical feature could differ from one dialect to another (Woidich, 1996, p.260). Hence, identifying the specific dialect in which this form is observed may help us understand more about the grammaticalisation of *marrah* from the maximiser *bi-l-marrah* into the booster *marrah* where it is no longer attached to *bil-*. Yet, since they do not differentiate between SDs, it is difficult to achieve such understanding. Moreover, there needs to be caution in generalising the findings to all SDs (cf. Buchstaller and Barnfield, 2010).

5)
a) al-gaww al-nahārdah ḥarr *ʔawī* (or **ʔawī* ḥarr)
    The weather today is *very* hot (Omar and Alotaibi 2017, p.226)

b) al-sayyāarah ḥlwah *marrah* (or *marrah* ḥlwah)

    The car is *very* beautiful (Omar and Alotaibi, 2017, p.226)

The researchers made several illuminating observations throughout their investigation. One is the finding about multiplying intensifiers, which the authors claim add extra strength to the force of the intensifier. In addition to that, Saudi speakers were found to sometimes phonologically stress the intensifier *marrah*. They postulate that this stress strengthens the intensifier while other non-stressed intensifiers can function as fillers (Omar and Alotaibi, 2017, p.226).

Although Omar and Alotaibi measured the frequency of individual intensifiers, the social value of intensifiers, as explained before, is not only based on the frequency of their use but also on the form alternating with other similar forms in the system (Pichler, 2013, p.28). Intensifiers must be treated as members of a multi-dimensional unit because any change of a certain intensifier results in a change in the whole system (Bolinger, 1972, p. 18; Ito and Tagliamonte, 2003). The study is also limited in scope as it mainly focuses on intensifiers with an upscaling effect.

2.3.4.2 Alshaboul et al. (2022)

The study of Alshaboul et al. (2022) operationalised the variationist framework to examine the use of intensifiers in Jordanian Arabic spoken in the northeast of Amman

in a relatively small sample of 32 speakers. Alshaboul et al. (2022) collected the data through sociolinguistic interviews by asking questions that would lead to emotional engagement and higher usage of intensifiers but avoided sensitive topics. The current study, similarly, uses sociolinguistic interviews to collect data but in contrast to the questions in Alshaboul et al. (2022), the current study elicits the data through asking some questions that could be sensitive to some people like racism and classism with the aim of eliciting more intensifiers. Yet, in comparison to the radio data that was collected in Omar and Alotaibi (2017), interviews would not contain the type of scripted language found in radio programs.

Alshaboul et al. (2022) especially focused on the age, gender and educational background of the speakers in their investigation. In their study, age was divided into only two groups: young (18-40) and old (40+). This age division may conceal variations in the use of intensifiers given the complexity of language variation and change across the lifespan. This is especially critical as certain intensifiers were found to be increasing and becoming trendy among the younger age groups in previous studies (Buchstaller and Barnfield, 2010; Stratton, 2020; Almossa, 2024). Further, since intensifiers are known for their rapid change (Cheshire, 2016, p.254), using apparent-time as a tool to look into the past and the future (Holmes, 2013, p.229) can be hardly achieved with a wide age division like this. Researchers such as Pichler et al. (2018) also underscored the significance of considering older speakers because of the various factors that might influence their language use like the biological or psychological factors. Hence, lumping all 40+ speakers in one category can obscure important differences between their use of intensifiers.

Several linguistic factors have been tested such as the semantic domain of the adjective, the function of the adjective (attributive vs. predicative) and the emotionality of the adjective. The authors did not give any details about their extraction of adjectives and what was included or excluded during the circumscription of the variable context. A clear explanation of the process would increase the credibility and replicability of their approach. The variation of Arabic intensifiers seems to be underdeveloped and there might be challenges surrounding the extraction of adjectives within the Arabic data. In the variationist paradigm, "the principle of accountability" implies that researchers must not only identify the occurrences of a variable within a specific linguistic environment, but also recognise the instances where the variable could have occurred but did not

(Labov, 1972, p.72). Despite recognising the importance of abiding by "the principle of accountability" (Labov, 1972, p.72), the authors did not include unintensified adjectives in their final analysis.

The authors identified three forms of the intensifier *kiṯīr* 'a lot'. The three forms are: *kiṯīr, kiṯī:r* (the vowel is long) and doubled *kiṯīr* (i.e., *kiṯīr kiṯīr*). Distinguishing separate forms of the same form is an unjustified departure from typical variationist procedures studying these lexico-grammatical devices because there is only one intensifier used in all three cases. Adding stress or duplicating the intensifier has been recorded in previous research, but never treated as separate forms (e.g., Omar and Alotaibi, 2017). For example, Omar and Alotaibi (2017) conclude that duplicating the intensifier adds additional intensity. In addition to *kiṯīr*, Alshaboul et al. (2022) found that the intensifier *jiddan* 'very' was used by Ammani speakers. As illustrated in Table 2.4, the authors found some interesting findings such as the preference of intensifiers by female speakers like the findings in Omar and Alotaibi (2017). In addition, and as hypothesised in the current study, *jiddan* was favoured by educated speakers. They also found that *jiddan* was favoured post-adjectivally. In their multivariate analysis of the intensifier *kiṯīr*, none of the included factors was found to be significant except two. The significant factors were the semantic domain and the function of the adjective (attributive vs. predicate). Yet, Alshaboul et al. (2022) did not conduct a separate multivariate analysis for *jiddan* to uncover the significant factors that govern its variation. Their study, unlike the current study, is also limited in scope to amplifiers.

Table 2.4 Findings in Alshaboul et al. (2022)

Factor	Findings
Age	- *jiddan* 'very' was favoured by older speakers
Gender	- Females used more intensifiers compared to males (53% vs 46.8 %). - Male speakers used *jiddan* more frequently
Education	- Speakers with higher education favoured *jiddan* 'very' more than those with low education
Position	- *jiddan* was used more frequently after the adjective

2.3.4.3 Almossa (2024)

The study of Almossa (2024) is a recent variationist investigation of amplifiers in the ND spoken in Riyadh, which is part of Almossa's PhD thesis that studies the variation of several DPFs in ND. The data in Almossa's study is based on 30 self-recorded, dyadic and

spontaneous conversations with same-gender interlocutors. The participants were all speakers of Central ND and of sedentary background and her sample was balanced in terms of age and gender. The corpus consists of about 143,100 words. Self-recording will probably reduce the effect of the observer's paradox, which may have a greater effect in interviews that require the presence of the interviewer (see Labov, 1972, p.209). Nonetheless, having informal conversations adds a higher variability in the context of speech compared to interviews with a specific set of questions (Schilling, 2013, p.111) which can affect amplifiers given their context-dependent nature (Napoli and Ravetto, 2017, p.3). The social factors in her study are age and gender. Age was divided into three groups: young (18-21), adults (30-40) and older adults (55+).

To elicit the list of amplifiers and because the corpus is not tagged for part-of-speech, Almossa (2024) performed an in-depth manual inspection of the data and extracted all tokens of intensifiers in the data regardless of their modified head (N=18028). After that, tokens with an upscaling effect were extracted from this initial list. The list was reviewed by two native ND speakers to lower the effect of subjectivity. An additional process of coding was conducted for emphasisers in the list (e.g., ṣidg 'really') to ensure that the items conveying amplification only were included in the variation context. Based on the higher proportion of collocation with adjectives in the data (62.1%; N=699), Almossa focused on adjective amplifiers. A total of 699 tokens of amplifiers were observed in the data. The amplifiers included in the study are: *marrah* 'very', *jiddan* 'very', *b-ziyādah* 'very', *b-šakil* 'lit. in a way, very', *wājd* 'very', *kiṯīr* 'very', *bl-ḥēl* 'very' *and mōt* 'lit.death, extremely'. Almossa also included the emphasisers *waḷḷah* 'I swear to God, indeed', *ṣidg* 'really', *fiʕlan* 'truly' and *mn jidd* 'really' to the category of amplifiers. Like Woidich (2018), Almossa postulates that these items are undergoing grammaticalisation. This makes their function similar to that of scalar amplifiers when adjacent to adjectives in a trajectory that is comparable to *really* in the English language (Partington, 1993, p.181). At the same time, unlike scalar devices (i.e., amplifiers and downtoners) confirming if the emphasising effect of modal intensifiers like *waḷḷah* and *ṣidg* is directed towards the adjacent adjective can be challenging (Quirk et al., 1985, p.584) (see Chapter 5, Section 5.2). The range of their emphasising effect may include the noun or even other parts in the sentence (Quirk et al., 1985, p.584). Thus, keeping emphasisers in a separate category and not in a direct competition with scalar intensifiers in variationist research is a more sensible approach.

As explained above, Almossa's (2024, p.206) study does not consider unamplified adjectives in her analysis. Her focus is mainly on intensifiers, not on the intensification as a system or a strategy. This method avoids the time-consuming process of manual extraction of adjectives. The morphological similarity between nouns and adjectives in the Arabic language (Ingham, 1994, p. 21) makes identifying adjectives using automatic part-of-speech tagging a challenging process (see Chapter 3, Section 3.10.1 and 3.2). At the same time, it risks overlooking infrequent or innovative forms. Additionally, looking at unintensified adjectives provides us with a holistic view of the adjective intensification system, which is a vital facet of the system that ought to be unveiled. The various amplification forms observed in Almossa's study, as explained before, do not corroborate with the very limited list of forms found in Omar and Alotaibi's (2017) list. This observation, again, highlights a possible weakness in Omar and Alotaibi's (2017, p.223) method of extracting amplifiers.

In the results, looking at amplifiers only (excluding emphasisers) (Table 2.5), we find that the proportions of *marrah* and *jiddan* align with the pattern observed in Omar and Alotaibi's (2017) research where overall *marrah* was used more than *jiddan*. Yet, while *jiddan* was used more by female speakers in Omar and Alotaibi's (2017) study, *jiddan* was found to be used more by male speakers in Almossa's study, which is similar to the results in Alshaboul et al. (2022). Almossa, like Alshaboul et al. (2022), found that it was favoured by older age groups in an age-grading pattern. *Marrah,* on the other hand, was found to be favoured by female speakers and increasing over the age groups suggesting a change-in-progress. Almossa did not consider the role of speakers' educational backgrounds on their employment of intensifiers. In terms of the linguistic factors (Table 2.5), Almossa (2024) examined the position of intensifiers, syntactic function, semantic category, emotionality and polarity of adjectives. The booster *marrah* was slightly favoured in pre-adjectival position (57% vs. 43%; N=212 vs. 160), while *jiddan* was favoured in post-adjectival position (87% vs. 13%; N=40 vs. 6). In the multivariate analysis, the social factors gender and age were the most significant for the variation of the booster *marrah* followed by the position of intensifier (Almossa, 2024, p.238). For *jiddan*, position ranked the highest followed by gender and age respectively (Almossa, 2024, p.246).

Table 2.5 Summary of Findings in Almossa's (2024) Study

	Findings
Frequency	- *marrah* was the most frequent amplifier in the data constituting more than 53% (N=372) of the adjective amplification system. - *waḷḷah* was the second most frequent intensifier (29.8%; N=208) followed by *jiddan* (6.6%; N=46) and *sidg* (6.4%; N=45), respectively. - Those four forms were the most frequent in the system.
Gender	- *jiddan* was used more by male speakers - *marrah* was used more by female speakers
Age	- *jiddan* was used more by older speakers - *marrah* was used more by younger speakers
Position	- *jiddan* was used more in a post-adjectival position - *marrah* was used more in a pre-adjectival position

2.4 Conclusion

Previous studies have provided illuminating findings about intensifiers in the Arabic language. Some of these are summarised here. It can be inferred that intensifiers are syntactically found in different constructions, including NP, AP, PP and pure adverbs. They show varying levels of grammaticalisation, which range from fully grammaticalised function words, such as *jiddan* 'very', to those that are less grammaticalised, such as *ṣarāhah* 'honestly'. These studies suggest that there is regional variation among SDs and between Arabic dialects in their distributions and the forms used for intensification. Linguists suggest that a change from the typical position in the sentence is a strategy that adds extra emphasis to the utterance. Specific intensifiers, such as *xāliṣ* 'very', were found to be common among female speakers, whereas others were common among educated speakers, especially in formal discourse, such as *jiddan* 'very'. Arabic intensifiers can be repeated or compiled together, as observed in other languages.

Based on the previous review, there is a significant gap in the literature on Arabic intensifiers. Almost all available studies focus on the morphosyntactic aspect of intensifiers, while the semantic division of these intensifiers and their social value are overlooked. Even those who analysed adverbs are primarily concerned with adverbs that modify verbs, whereas little attention is directed towards adverbs modifying adjectives or degree adverbs (e.g., AlShammiry, 2016; Al-Shurafa, 2005). In addition, intensifiers in ND seem to be a "rag bag of elements[35]" derived from numeral adverbs,

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[35] Ingham (1994, pp.117–118) used this expression to describe modals in ND.

NPs, PPs, quantifiers and demonstratives. The various syntactic forms of intensifiers in the Arabic language highlight the value of a functional approach that prioritises the similar role these devices perform over the grammatical approach, which categorises words based on their parts of speech or syntactic forms and structures. The functional approach overcomes the typological limitations that lead to scattering intensifiers over several grammatical classes, thus overlooking their "fundamental kinship" (Bolinger, 1972, p.15). Categorising intensifiers based on their grammatical classes or parts of speech is particularly problematic for Arabic intensifiers. In the English language, for instance, intensifiers mostly belong to the grammatical class of adverbs. In the Arabic language, there is a limited number of adverbs that inherently belong to such a class. Most adverbs in Arabic, as previously reviewed, have various syntactic realisations (e.g., NP, AP and PP). Thus, the syntactic heterogeneity of intensifiers in Arabic can lead to disregarding their shared intensifying function. As we have seen in the literature review, only three sociolinguistic studies are available, and among them, only two can be considered variationist (Alshaboul et al., 2022; Almossa, 2024) and two are dealing with SDs (Omar and Alotaibi, 2017; Almossa, 2024). Omar and Alotaibi (2017) treat SDs as a single dialect, which disguises variation among SDs. Almossa (2024) appears to be the only promising study on the variation of ND intensifiers. Yet, the study also carries its own limitations, like including scalar and modal intensifiers in the same pool. The current study is a way of corroborating and expanding on these most recent findings in the variationist studies and evaluating the merits of the adopted approach in this project versus that of Almossa (2024), Alshaboul et al., (2022) and Omar and Alotaibi (2017).

All previous studies on Arabic intensifiers, despite their limitations and varying orientations, underscore the significance of intensification devices and pave the way for future research on these pragmatic tools, which have been overlooked for a long period in Arabic linguistics. Previous research emphasises the significance of a functional approach when analysing intensifiers. The current study attempts to fill some of the research gaps in the literature by sketching a categorisation of adjective intensifiers in ND based on their semantic effect of intensification on neighbouring adjectives. Extensive documentation of these socio-pragmatic devices in ND is a significant dialectological aspect that is not found in the literature. In this study, intensifiers are treated as individual categories based on their function of intensification. These studies also highlight the benefit of examining the development of these devices over time,

which the current study aims to address by adopting the variationist mechanism of apparent-time. In addition, previous studies underscore the role of social and linguistic parameters and their interaction in the variation and change of intensifiers. This is especially valuable in a diglossic context where forms from both CA and vernaculars are used in a complex manner. These studies also reveal the usage of intensifiers in non-Western environments, which helps improve the field of language variation and change in general by offering nuanced perspectives. Conducting variationist studies of adjective intensifiers can contribute to refining the principles and methodological approaches within the field by applying them to under-researched contexts (Horesh and Cotter, 2016). Hence, the current study provides a detailed analysis of the social and linguistic factors that may influence the usage of amplifiers and downtoners, especially through adopting a variationist approach.

Chapter 3 Methodology

3.1 Introduction

In this chapter I offer details about the study design, sample, data collection, processing, and coding and analysis used in this study. I provide details about my pilot study, the sampling strategy, universe, stratification and size of the sample. I also outline the process of data collection, the final data set, participants' profiles and data transcription. A significant aspect I explain afterwards is how the envelope of variation for intensification in ND is delineated. Information and examples related to coding social and linguistic factors are also presented in detail. I conclude the chapter by providing information about the distributional and multivariate analysis of the data. A main principle that runs throughout this thesis is adopting a data-driven approach, whereby I attempt to respond to the current dataset by exploring and focusing on what appears to be the most interesting aspects found in the dataset.

3.2 The Pilot Study

A pilot study was conducted for several reasons. First, to verify if the chosen variables would be used frequently by the participants in the data. I also wanted to test the applicability of online interviews through Zoom, refine the interview list of questions and train the research assistant. This preliminary stage was also used to plan a suitable transcription method. Automated transcription did not appear to be suitable because most of the available software (to the best of my knowledge at the time of the pilot study) was trained on CA and does not pick up dialects, which is why I chose manual transcription. Further, the pilot study served as a trial for extracting adjectives. I first extracted adjectives by using automated part-of-speech tagging. However, the part-of-speech tagging algorithms produced a high error rate in adjective identification. As such I replaced this method with manual extraction (see Section 3.11.1). In the pilot study I collected data from 10 ND speakers in Riyadh (5 male and 5 female speakers). The participants' ages ranged from 18 to 58 years. The participants were approached via my social network. I conducted interviews with two to three participants at a time via Zoom, and the speakers knew one another. In these interviews, the participants were prompted to speak about different topics through several questions that were asked.

The corpus consisted of a total of about 26,000 words.[36] In the pilot study, I only documented and categorised intensifiers without proceeding to the sociolinguistic analysis.

3.3 Sample

Sankoff identified three steps in choosing the sample for language studies. The first step is to define the "sampling universe"; identifying the geographical and social boundaries of the speech community (1974, p.21). The second step is to identify possible dimensions of variation within the community, i.e., to construct a stratification of the sample (Sankoff, 1974, p.21). The third step is to specify the sample (Sankoff, 1974, p.22).

3.3.1 Sample Universe

The geographical target for this research, as explained in Chapter 1, is the city of Riyadh, Saudi Arabia and the target dialect is ND. This means that ND speakers living in Riyadh are required for a representative data sample. In variationist studies, researchers focus on eliciting and studying the vernacular, which typically involves no hypercorrection since it typically reflects inadequacy in the speaker's competence[37] (Labov, 1972, p.208; Trudgill, 1984, p.11). Vernacular is "the style in which the minimum attention is given to the monitoring of speech" (Labov, 1972, p.208). This type of data is systematic and is considered the most valuable for linguistic analysis (Labov, 1972, p.208). Hence, since the goal of variationist research is to represent the natural unmonitored form of the language in a given community, it becomes vital to capture the speech of the native speakers of that community. However, there is the issue of defining who should be considered a native speaker of ND.

The idea of a native speaker has been fundamental to linguistic theory and language teaching. It has a complex history that involved a significant evolution over time and has been a subject of heated debates among researchers (Rivers, 2018). In the literature, conceptualisations of native speakers of the English language in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries were often centralised around the superiority and authority of the native speaker over the language and preventing impurifications being

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[36] The pilot study corpus was not used in the main project.

[37] It should be noted that this is not always the case, as hypercorrection can be just a performance error (Trudgill, 1984, p.11).

brought to the language by the public through standardisation (River, 2018). This view shifted in the early twentieth century, when Ferdinand de Saussure introduced the structural approach to linguistics (i.e., considering linguistics as a science and approaching language as a complex system consisting of interdependent elements), which shifted the attention from the native speaker to language systems (Rivers, 2018, p.23). Leonard Bloomfield avoided referring to the native speaker and often referred to the object of study, which is the language itself, aligning with a shift towards focusing on language and not the speaker (Davies, 2003, p.4; Rivers, 2018, p.23). Bloomfield postulated that native language is the language speakers learn "at their mother's knee", emphasising the significant role of early exposure to language, and that one's knowledge of languages learned after this stage cannot be similar (Bloomfield, 1927, p.435). Hence, Bloomfield seemed to still hold a less flexible position towards the native knowledge. Noam Chomsky, the father of generative grammar (Chomsky, 1965), viewed language development as any other natural process (Davies, 2003, pp.2–3). He emphasised the crucial role of the native speaker's intuition in linguistic theory (Rivers, 2018, p.26). Chomsky's model was based on an ideal speaker-listener model in a homogenous speech community, which does not mirror reality (Davies, 2003, p.5; Rivers, 2018, p.26). Accordingly, this model has been criticised by many scholars especially those adopting empirical approaches like sociolinguistics (e.g., Labov, 1972, pp.199–217); Paikeday, for instance, challenged the idealisation of the native speaker referring to the concept as a fictitious or "shibboleth" construction and called for a concept that appreciates the various social and cultural factors of individuals (Paikeday, 1985, pp.10, 42).

There are more recent debates on native speakerism in relation to language teaching, especially English language teaching. Contemporary perspectives on native speakerism continue to challenge the traditional conceptualisations that base their definitions on language hierarchy and competence. These recent perspectives advocate for more inclusivity and recognition of the linguistic abilities and cultural backgrounds of speakers (Davies, 2003, pp.161–170; Doerr, 2009, pp.7–8; Vulchanova et al., 2022). Researchers have emphasised the role of the native/non-native dichotomy in perpetuating linguistic imperialism and the marginalisation of non-native speakers. There have been calls for a departure from this monolithic view, which idealises the native speaker's competence as the perfect model, towards the prioritisation of effective communication skills (Davies, 2003, pp.161–170; Doerr, 2009, pp.7–8;

Vulchanova et al., 2022). This approach acknowledges the fluidity and complexity of language proficiency in societies.

As we can observe from the brief discussion of native speakerism in the previous paragraphs, the definition of the native speaker is intricate and still evolving. In the current study, Bloomfield's definition of native language is adopted. This is because the complex phonetic, syntactic and lexical patterns of languages or dialects are preserved through a process called *linguistic transmission* which requires an "unbroken sequence of parent-to-child transmission" (Labov, 2007, p.371). Although some researchers (e.g., Labov, 1966, p.110; Payne, 1980, p.175) argue that children of non-local parents can acquire the new dialect if they moved in at an early age (e.g., before eight years of age). It was also found that individuals with out-of-town parents may not be able to acquire the new dialect in all its details, despite the fact children are significantly better at acquiring the new dialect compared to adults (Payne, 1980; Trudgill, 1984, pp.13–14). Trudgill (1984, p.13), for instance, found that his Norwich participants with parents who were speakers of other dialects, were unsuccessful in mastering specific phonological features despite living in Norwich all their lives.

As previously explained, according to Bloomfield, native language is the language individuals learn from their home environment in the very early stages of their lives before receiving formal education (Bloomfield, 1927, p.435). Bloomfield (1993, p.43) postulates that "The first language a human being learns to speak is his native language; he is a native speaker of this language". It should be noted however, that this definition had been criticised for lacking inclusivity and acknowledgment of the multifaceted nature of language proficiency.[38] This said, Bloomfield's definition provides an applicable roadmap for delineating the sample and fulfils the child-to-parent continuous sequence suggested by Labov (2007, p.371), which is required for linguistic transmission. This specifically is important since this study is among the first to document and analyse adjective intensification in ND. ND (based on the definition of Ingham, 1994) is the dialect of people living in the Najd area. This extends to Riyadh and several cities and towns around it that are located in Najdi area. Thus, ND speakers in Riyadh from any of these areas are considered native. In addition, there are local

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[38] One of the arguments in sociolinguistics which contradicts this definition is that children tend to acquire and use the local vernacular that is spoken by their peers instead of that of the older speakers around them like their parents or teachers (Payne, 1980; Labov, 2001, p.423; Chambers, 2003, p.175). Hence, the speakers in the sample are probably affected by the varieties of their peers who may not always be ND speakers.

migrants who are ND speakers in Riyadh and come from a non-Najdi background (e.g., *jinūbī* 'southern' such as speakers from Asir Province, Hijazi such as speakers from Makkah Province, or Gulf dialect speakers who come from the Eastern Province). There are also non-Saudi ND speakers who have been living in the area for a long time (e.g., Egyptian, Syrian, and Moroccan ND speakers). The definition of Bloomfield eliminates non-Saudi ND speakers because they learn another dialect at home.[39] It also eliminates Saudi ND speakers who come from a non-Najdi background for the same reason. What we are left with are the ND speakers originally from the Najdi area. Participants whose parents are non-ND speakers are eliminated. Future research on ND can of course benefit from a more inclusive definition of ND speakers and even test if this factor plays a role in the variation of the variable at hand. The participants were questioned about the background of their parents in the initial online questionnaires (further details about the questionnaire will be explained later in this chapter), and based on their answers, a decision was made about their inclusion or exclusion. Despite the regional differences between varieties of ND, in the current study the goal is to cover the broad patterns of adjective intensification. Hence, participants were not differentiated based on their sub-dialect of ND.

3.3.1.1 Bedouin vs. Sedentary

In the sample, there was no attempt to differentiate between Bedouin and sedentary individuals as this dimension of variation is not within the scope of the current project.

3.3.2 Sampling Technique

While participants in the current study were ND speakers from Riyadh, researchers often have to adopt one of two primary sampling approaches followed in sociolinguistic research. I will briefly explain these techniques below, along with the methodology adopted in the current study.

3.3.2.1 Random Sampling

Random sampling is a way to ensure "genuine representativeness" of the community chosen for a study (Schilling, 2013, p.31). Random sampling, which is used in the earliest variationist research (e.g., Labov, 1966), means that each member in the population has

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[39] This includes situations in which only one parent is non-Saudi.

an equal chance of being selected for inclusion in the sample (Labov, 2001, p.38; Schilling, 2013, p.31). To select participants randomly, researchers often use pre-existing comprehensive lists of members in their subject population such as phone books or voter registries (Schilling, 2013, p.31), or access information of participants via schools (e.g., Shuy et al., 1986 cited in Milroy and Gordon, 2008a, p.29). Getting a large sample often ensures that the randomly chosen sample is representative and the results are generalisable to the whole population (Labov, 2001, p.38; Schilling, 2013, p.31). However, with the amount of time needed for data collection in sociolinguistic research which requires long interviews and transcriptions, getting a large sample can be problematic and time-consuming (Schilling, 2013, p.31). Even if one manages to collect a large data set, conducting in-depth analysis for larger datasets is extremely arduous, reducing the benefit of the study significantly (Milroy and Gordon, 2008b, p.29; Schilling, 2013, p.33).

3.3.2.2 Quota/Judgment Sampling

Another approach that is widely used in sociolinguistic research is when participants in the sample are pre-identified beforehand (Milroy and Gordon, 2008, p.30; Schilling, 2013, p.35), which was the method adopted in the current study. In this method, the criteria for selecting participants is based on the parameters analysed in the current project such as the age, gender, and ethnicity of speakers (Schilling, 2013, p.35). Eckert (2012, p.88) adds "in this way, speakers emerged as human tokens—bundles of demographic characteristics." Thus, the data can be looked at as cells that are filled with a specific number of speakers meeting the criteria (Milroy and Gordon, 2008, p.30; Schilling, 2013, p.35). The suitability or representativeness of the participants is judged by the researcher, who then fills these cells randomly from all suitable participants (Milroy and Gordon, 2008, p.30; Schilling, 2013, p.35). Another method is using the "snowball" technique (Milroy and Gordon, 2008, p.30; Schilling, 2013, p.35). In the snowball technique, the researcher asks the participant to recommend another speaker who can participate in their study and repeat this until they fill in the quotas (Milroy and Gordon, 2008, p.32).

In the current study, I used this second approach to sample my participants. I pre-identified informants based on the two factors: age and gender. To fill the needed cells in my sample, I used two approaches. First, I used judgment based on the responses

received in the questionnaires. Second, I also adapted a snowball technique to fill those cells. When a second interviewee was not available on the time slot of the interview, I asked the participant if they could invite a friend or a relative to join them in the interview. In addition, if a person filled the questionnaire but was not within the empty cells in the data (i.e., it was already filled), I proposed interviewing a family member who matched the desired participant profile for my study (if possible), since I already knew they are from Najd. Milroy and Gordon (2008, p.32) postulate that one benefit of this method is that it minimises the possibility of rejection by potential participants when the researcher mentions the name of the reference. In my current study, this was especially valuable since some participants showed some reluctancy to participate (see Section 3.3.5) but were more willing when they received reassurance from their relatives and received further explanation about the nature of the data collection, data management and storage, and the objectives of the data collection. This method also proved beneficial for getting in touch with older speakers who may have low digital literacy.

The quota technique does not follow strict random sampling procedures which means, technically, statistical representativeness is not ensured (Schilling, 2013, p.35). This, however, allows researchers to target their research questions directly by investigating linguistic behaviours of specific social groups. Following this method avoids the uncertainty faced when collecting an impractical, large, random sample hoping that it will yeild the desired sample characteristics (Schilling, 2013, p.35). Despite its non-random nature, researchers are often confident that conclusions drawn from data collected via judgment sampling can be applied to the larger community because of the relative uniform nature of linguistic behaviour compared to other social behaviours (Sankoff, 1974, p.22; Schilling, 2013, p.35). Hence, using pre-identified cells in sampling using key social parameters can yield robust findings and it is in-line with established practices in variationist research. In addition, I complement my analysis of the overall pattern observed in the data with an in-depth qualitative analysis of the outliers (see Chapter 7) to have a better understanding of possible factors behind their variability and to account for the overall complexity of the results.

3.3.3 Dimensions of Variation within the Community

Gender and age form the basis for stratifying the participants. Even though I consider the effect of education in the study, it was not a factor in participant selection.[40] Stratification based on education would make balancing the data a challenging process, especially since certain age groups are expected to be at specific levels of education. For example, 18–20 years old cannot have progressed any further than high school because of their stage in their life course. Therefore, older participants who are also high-school graduates will need to be restricted to balance the number of other educational levels.

3.3.4 Sample Stratification and Sample Size

In terms of the size of the sample, in large urban communities (as mentioned in Section 3.3.2.2) many sociolinguists have achieved a good understanding of the structure of social and linguistic variation of language by using a sample of fewer than 100 participants (Labov, 2001, pp.38–39). For example, Trudgill (1974) who studied the English variety in Norwich had a sample of 60 participants. Haeri (1997) who studied the Arabic variety in Cairo had a sample of 49 speakers, and Kendall and Fridland (2017) who studied American English had a sample of 86 participants. Hence, in the literature the sizes of samples vary considerably depending on factors like the variation dimensions investigated, and practical factors such as time limitations, financial resources, and the availability of research assistants (see Milroy and Gordon, 2008, p.29).[41]

In terms of the length of sociolinguistic interviews, the duration of an interview should allow participants to be relaxed and engaged in order to obtain data of spontaneous unscripted everyday speech in a comfortable manner and allow tokens[42] of the variables to be used by the interviewees (Labov, 1972, p.209; Milroy and Gordon, 2008, p.58). For this reason, carefully planning interviews is important. In the current study several aspects were considered which were hoped to attract the interest and engagement of the speaker while maintaining a considerable level of comfort, like conducting the interview online, with peers, and discussing interesting topics. In

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[40] A similar approach is also followed in variationist studies where participants are first recruited based on certain factors and then stratified by further social factors. For example, Labov (1966) in his seminal work on the variation of /r/ in New York approached the participants based on the store they worked at which reflected different social classes. He then considered other social aspects like the age, gender, occupation and race of those workers. Similarly, Trudgill (1974) in his study on phonological variation in the dialect spoken in Norwich recruited informants from different regions in the city and then proceeded to stratify them by age, gender and socioeconomic class.

[41] Investigating many dimensions may require larger samples to reach the required balance in all the dimensions.

[42] Tokens refer to the total number of intensifiable adjectives produced by the speaker.

addition to these aspects, the practical factors involved in data sampling are critical (Milroy and Gordon, 2008, p.29). To plan for this, I considered two factors: the transcription process and the coding process. Based on the pilot study, an hour of recording required approximately 10–12 hours of transcription which differed based on the density and the rate of speed in the interview. I also needed to consider the process of manually extracting and coding adjectives, which was also a time-consuming procedure and needed to be considered when designing and planning for this project. The plan when designing the study was to aim for a 30-minute recording per speaker, which for example would produce a total of around 25 hours if the sample included 50 speakers. Hence, this would be around 250-300 hours of transcription, which would require, assuming 6-hour working days, approximately two months of transcription. This is in addition to the time needed for coding, which depends on the usage of adjectives per speaker, but was expected to require around 30-40 working days to process the data. Overall, approximately 3–4 months for transcription and coding seemed to match the time frame of the current study. Hence, the size of the sample was motivated by this timeframe.

3.3.5 Approaching Participants

An announcement with the survey link was distributed through social media platforms[43], namely WhatsApp, Telegram, Instagram, TikTok, and X (Twitter).[44] As I mentioned above (Section 3.3.2.2), some women (especially older women) were reluctant to participate because they did not like anyone to hear their voices or to be recorded. In the studied context, women's refusal to be recorded or heard can be attributed to several factors. This may be due to conservatism and cultural traditions where the voice of women should not be made available for the public. It may also be a result of religious convictions, since some Islamic interpretations state that women's voices should not be a source of attractiveness, which may lead some women to refuse to participate (Kamalkhani, 1998, p.152; Al Momani et al., 2018). Others might be afraid of social criticism and negative views by their wider society. Some participants (of both genders)

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[43] Unlike using my personal social network to invite participants, which is the method I used in the pilot study, sending invitations via social media platforms facilitates collecting data from a wider spectrum of participants.

[44] Approval for this project was granted from the Faculty of Arts, Humanities and Cultures Research Ethics Committee (AHC REC) at the University of Leeds (reference: FAHC 21-116) (see Appendix 1).

may also refuse due to personal characteristics such as shyness, modesty and introversion which make these participants less comfortable with being recorded. Further, some might refuse in order to maintain their privacy.

It is challenging to predict how this reluctance of some speakers to participate might shape the type of data collected. Hence, it could mean (although not necessarily) that those who participated are less conservative culturally and religiously (especially for women) or more confident and outgoing. For women specifically, it could mean that those who participated probably study and work in less traditional environments like studying abroad and studying or working in less segregated environments. This may indicate that these women are more socially mobile in general and also have more access to male-based social networks. Hence, it may be that the intensification system of these mobile women reflects linguistic changes which are linked to higher mobility.

The survey has several questions which are used to verify and determine the appropriateness of the respondents for this study (see Appendices 2 and 3). These include the person's nationality, place of birth, place of residency (past and present), and the nationalities and backgrounds of their parents (i.e., Saudi Najdi vs. all other). Participants who qualify for participation were randomly selected according to the stratification guidelines (gender and age). I approached prospective participants through WhatsApp or email (depending on their preference) to arrange for a meeting with them via Zoom based on their suitability for the study.

Figure 3.1 summarises the participant selection process, which began with an announcement that invited people who are willing to participate. The participants were asked to use pseudonyms to protect their identities.[45] The total number of respondents to the survey was 109. Some 68.8% (N=75) were females and 31.2% (N=34) were males. In terms of age 44 (40.37%) were young, 50 (45.87%) were middle-aged, while only 15 (13.76%) were older participants (see Section 3.6.1).[46]

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[45] After the data collection was completed, I replaced these pseudonyms with the codes which are used in this paper.

[46] This observation was not surprising, given that older people tend to use social media less compared to younger people (Loos and Ivan, 2024). At the same time, there are studies that highlight the increased usage of social media by older people (Leist, 2013). Yet, researchers acknowledge that there are still factors and obstacles that contribute to the lower usage of social media by older individuals such as deteriorating physical and mental abilities, lower levels of technological skills, low interest, and negative attitudes towards social media (Leist, 2013; Ugalde et al., 2023).
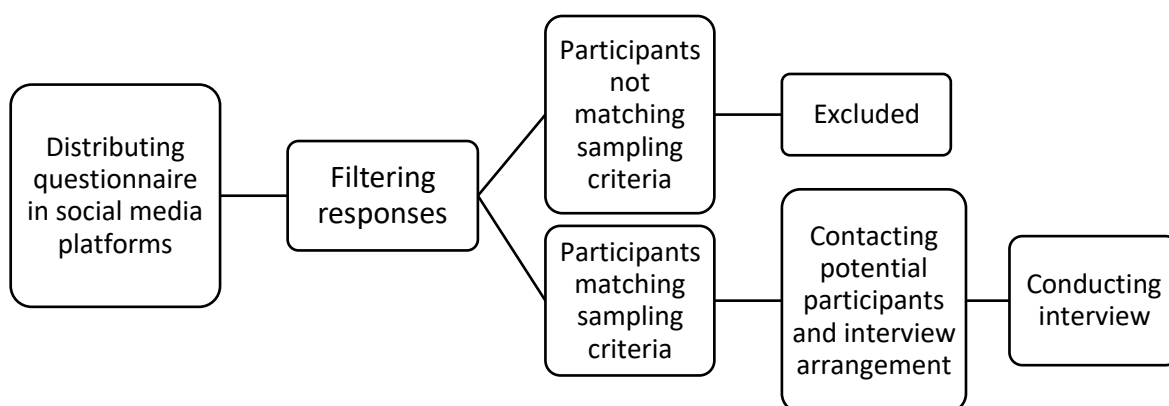
Figure 3.1 Stages of Approaching the Participants in the Current Study

Based on the previous discussion of the target sample in this study, I only approached those who were living in Riyadh and were from a Najdi background. Participants whose parents are non-Najdi or non-Saudi were not approached even if they were born and are living in Riyadh. This applies even if only one parent was non-Najdi. The survey was launched on the 30th of July, 2022. Interviews and their transcriptions were conducted between August and November 2022. A research assistant and I (both native ND speakers and MA holders) conducted the interviews. The demographic background of the interviewer has been acknowledged by sociolinguists to be one of the factors affecting how the participants might use language (Wolfram, 1969; Rickford and McNair-Knox, 1994; Wolfram and Thomas, 2002; Song, 2019). Rickford and McNair-Knox (1994), for instance, reported in their investigation of style shifting in the speech of an African American speaker that the participant would use more variants from African American vernacular like invariant *be* and zero copula when interviewed by people of the same race. Hence, having an assistant who is a ND speaker is important to minimise variation that might arise as a result of the different dialects of interviewers. The research assistant was recruited for interviewing the male participants as some of them might feel less comfortable speaking freely with a female interviewer for cultural reasons (Song, 2019). Genders in the Saudi society have been and still are to a large extent segregated in many places like schools, universities, and family gatherings. The gender of the interviewer is also specifically critical for the usage of intensifiers (Carli,

1990). As such, having a male interviewer helps in controlling any variation that might occur due to the interviewer's gender[47]. A total of approximately 25.5 hours were recorded.

3.4   Remote Data Collection: Interviews via Zoom

Several researchers used online data collection for linguistic research during the pandemic where this approach was the only available option (Watson and Lupton, 2022; Nesbitt and Watts, 2022; De Dijn and Van De Mieroop, 2023). These works assess the usefulness and applicability of using smartphone applications, videoconferencing, and websites to collect data and compare them to other technological equipment using face-to-face interaction like iPad or voice recorders in linguistic data collection (cf. Kostadinova and Gardner, 2024). Even before the pandemic, many researchers made use of and evaluated software and techniques of online data collection (Leemann et al., 2018; Archibald et al., 2019; Hall-Lew and Boyd, 2020). Many advantages have been identified in online collection of linguistic data such as: the speed of conduction (i.e., time-saving, see Nesbitt and Watts, 2022; Garcia et al., 2022); financial affordability (Archibald et al., 2019; Khan and MacEachen, 2022); reduced sensitivity to the interview setting (Żadkowska et al., 2022) and broader reach of recruitment (Archibald et al., 2019; Garcia et al., 2022). Even in non-linguistic research, Martin et al. (2012) found that remote communication represented a method with a much relaxed atmosphere for the students where they were less apprehensive.

At the same time, some limitations have been observed in the data collected via online methods. Despite the usefulness of using online data in linguistic research, researchers found some challenges like differences in F1 and F2 in online interviews compared to face-to-face interactions (Zhang et al., 2020; Zhang et al., 2021; Calder and Wheeler, 2022; Calder et al., 2022; Bleaman et al., 2022) and delayed turn-taking rhythm (see Bailenson, 2021; Boland et al., 2022) which are not essential for the current data. What was relevant to the current study was technical challenges like the loss of internet connection and the submission of multiple responses (Leemann et al., 2018; Garcia et al., 2022). Some of these limitations are influenced by the skills of users such as varying levels of digital literacy. Leemann et al. (2020) reported that some individuals were

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[47] In this study, however, I do not stratify the data to evaluate the impact this may have as a factor in quantitative analysis, but it is considered in qualitative discussion (see Chapter 5) and discussed further in the conclusion.

unable to participate in remote interviews because they did not have the required skills or equipment. Other limitations may be related to personality characteristics. Reynolds and Mason (2002, p.90), for example, found that some students did not prefer videoconferencing in lectures because of their "camera shyness".

In the current study, I used Zoom to conduct the interviews. Besides the previously mentioned advantages of using remote data collection, Zoom was chosen from the available videoconferencing options because of its simplicity and user-friendly features (Archibald et al., 2019). Zoom can load without previous installation on a device and offers the ability to join as a guest without logging in through existing accounts, unlike Teams for instance. Zoom is commonly used in Saudi Arabia which means that more participants will be familiar with it. Participants were asked to switch their cameras off. Based on previous research, this procedure contradicts researchers' observations about rapport building in remote interviews and we know that building confidence between the interviewer and the speaker is vital in interviews (King et al., 2019, p.95). Researchers noticed an increased rapport and "mutual empathy" created by the informal context where participants can see researchers' homes and the visibility of nonverbal cues (compared to audio communications) (Archibald et al., 2019; Watson and Lupton, 2022). At the same time King et al. (2019, p.95) postulate that there are no "guaranteed recipes for rapport" so researchers should attempt to facilitate it using appropriate methods. In Saudi Arabia, where conservativeness tends to be the norm, turning off cameras was deemed likely increase the participant's level of comfortableness and relaxation (Yyelland et al., 2023), especially for females and in the discussion of potentially sensitive topics. Turning off cameras during discussions of racism, religious subjects in schools, or criticism of the Saudi society will likely facilitate more open and candid conversation. Moreover, many women in Saudi Arabia cover their faces in public so they will not prefer to show it online (Guta and Karolak, 2015; Nuñez, 2021). Even for those not covering their faces, taking video recordings or photos by strangers is generally considered socially unacceptable (Yyelland et al., 2023). In the current study, two older women were approached through their daughters who participated in the study but refused to participate when they knew their participation required voice recordings. Speaker F22 (a 59 year old woman) was highly hesitant because she did not want anyone to listen to her voice but agreed when her daughter F21 explained to her the data management plan and the ethical considerations involved

in collecting their recordings. Therefore, this suggests that the requirement to video record interviews will eliminate a considerable percentage of the sample population. Keeping cameras off during the interviews is in-line with the cultural sensitivities and preferences of this community.

This emphasises the significance of considering community-specific cases that may go against recommendations and principles in the general literature. This helps in adapting the methodological approaches developed in Western societies where the values and culture are different. This observation also highlights the significance of remote data collection in the Saudi context especially with the large gaps in the literature of Saudi varieties and the scarceness of Arabic corpora with rich metadata compared to other well-researched languages. Therefore, utilising online platforms helps in filling these gaps in the literature and gaining data from a wider spectrum of participants to advance the field of Arabic linguistics.

3.5   Challenges

During the process of questionnaire distribution on social media, several users raised their concerns and suspicions about the purpose behind conducting such interviews especially since it is affiliated with a British university. This is perhaps due to the historical and political contexts where some British nationals gained controversial reputation in the Middle East. The goals and the nature of the project and their participation were all provided in the link along with the questionnaire but some users did not thoroughly review this information. Moreover, similar to the limitations outlined in the previous paragraph, my research assistant and I faced some technical issues during interviews such as loss of internet connection, low volume, and inability to log in the Zoom platform, which caused some delays in the interview process. Additionally, a few participants had some background noise and were asked to change their setting to a quieter place. Further, as explained in Section 3.3.5, reaching older speakers was challenging since I received few responses from this age group. However, I was able to overcome this obstacle by reaching out through collected responses (i.e., snowballing) where I would inquire if they can invite an older person in their family to join the interview or to be interviewed individually and help in filling out their information in the questionnaire and assist them during the interview.

3.6 The Riyadh Najdi Dialect Corpus

The sample in the current Riyadh Najdi Dialect Corpus (RNDC) consists of 52 speakers. The number of males and females is almost equal (25 and 27, respectively) and a relative balance is achieved also in terms of the number of participants per decade for both genders (Table 3.1).

Table 3.1 The Distribution of Participants across Age and Gender in RNDC

Age	Male	Female	Total
18-19	4	4	8
20s	6	3	9
30s	4	7	11
40s	4	5	9
50s	2	4	6
60s	3	3	6
70s	2	1	3
Total	25	27	
Grand Total		52	

Some 45 participants in the sample are second generation or higher.[48] This is to say they were born and raised in Riyadh themselves (second generation), or were born to parents who were born and raised in Riyadh, and so on (i.e., third generation, etc.). Seven participants are first generation in Riyadh (born elsewhere in Najd area but lived more than half of their lives in Riyadh) (see Table 3.2; Figure 3.2[49]).[50] Given that this latter group are all older speakers (47+ years old), to restrict the sample to second generation may lead to a lower number of older speakers in the sample, because between the years 1940-1970 (see Chapter 1, Section 1.5.2.1), the population in Riyadh was only 30,000-400,000. The seven speakers in the data are all 47+ years old[51] which means that the youngest (47 years-old) was born in 1975 while the oldest was born in 1947.

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[48] Dialectologists typically favour studying the varieties of third-generation residents in the place (Labov, 1972, p.304).

[49] This map is taken from google maps http://www.google.com/maps/

[50] Distance between Riyadh to Wadi ad-Dawasir is 621 km, to Az-Zulfi is 271 km, to Al-Kharj is 98 km, to Al-Qassim is 392 km, to Howtat bani Tamim is 165 km, to Al-Aflaj is 300 km and to Shaqraa is 190 km (based on google maps http://www.google.com/maps/).

[51] At the time of data collection in 2022.

Table 3.2 First Generation Residents in Riyadh in RNDC

	Speaker ID	Place of Birth	Moving Age	Current Age
1	M13	Wadi ad-Dawasir	18	47
2	F22	Az-Zulfi	17	59
3	F25	Al-Kharj	15	63
4	M14	Al-Qassim	18	65
5	M5	Howtat bani Tamim	18	70
6	M10	Al-Aflaj	6	70
7	F14	Shaqraa	15	75
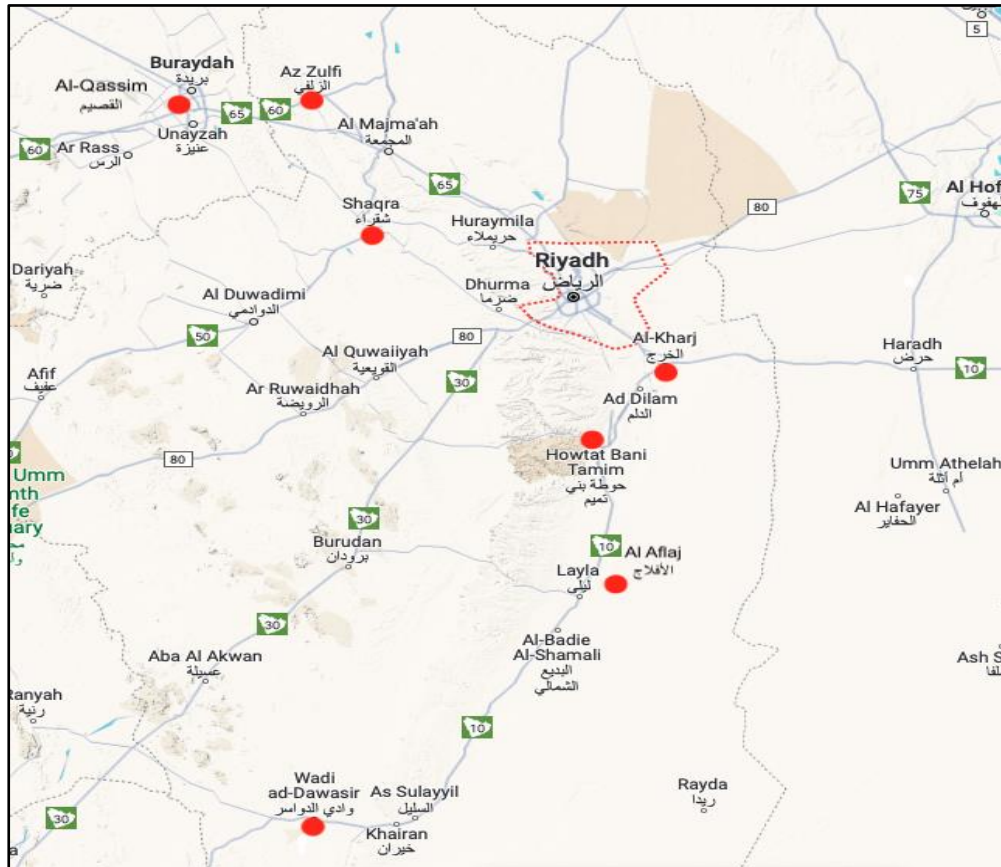
Figure 3.2 A Map Showing the First-Generation Participants' Places of Origin within Najd Area

An 18 year old female participant was excluded after recording an interview because she is not living in Riyadh (rather she was born in Riyadh but lives in Huraymila, a town located north of the city of Riyadh). This information was different from what she indicated in her information sheet, but emerged during the interview. To the best of my knowledge, all participants that took part in the current study met all the specified criteria, but there is a small chance that other participants did not meet some of the criteria.

The number of adjectives under investigation (N=3,508; Table 3.3) is comparable to that found in some similar variationist studies. Most of these studies extracted a random sample of adjectives from large corpora and did not study the total number of adjectives (e.g., Ito and Tagliamonte, 2003; Stratton, 2020). For example, Ito and Tagliamonte (2003) studied the intensification of 4,019 adjectives and Stratton (2020) studied approximately 2,493 adjectives in their extraction of random adjectives. RNDC contains 148,023 words.[52] Table 3.3 presents a breakdown of participants' profiles along with the tokens collected from each speaker.

Table 3.3 Participants' Profiles in RNDC with Total Intensifiable Adjectives per Speaker

	Speaker's ID	Age	Education	N Tokens	%	Adjectives per 1000 Words[53]
1	M2	21	High School	10	0.29%	16.77
2	M7	63	High School	15	0.43%	29.23
3	M22	18	High School	15	0.43%	10.86
4	M11	19	High School	19	0.54%	23.60
5	F24	42	BA	26	0.74%	21.81
6	M23	31	PhD	27	0.77%	15.81
7	F15	33	BA	29	0.83%	14.69
8	M1	29	MA	33	0.94%	19.83
9	F13	18	High School	34	0.97%	24.76
10	M19	57	Intermediate School	35	1.00%	16.23
11	F19	19	High School	36	1.03%	19.26
12	F4	23	High School	46	1.31%	19.00
13	M20	42	BA	48	1.37%	31.39
14	M13	47	Intermediate School	48	1.37%	23.65
15	M9	18	Intermediate School	49	1.40%	30.06
16	F22	59	High School	49	1.40%	17.65
17	M4	27	BA	51	1.45%	22.63
18	M16	32	BA	54	1.54%	24.46
19	M6	37	BA	54	1.54%	40.79
20	F14	75	Illiterate	54	1.54%	17.65
21	F17	19	High School	56	1.60%	21.98
22	M14	65	BA	57	1.62%	22.71
23	F27	61	Primary School	59	1.68%	17.15
24	F9	33	BA	59	1.68%	24.23
25	M8	19	High School	60	1.71%	26.53
26	F7	57	MA	63	1.80%	20.28
27	F26	23	High School	66	1.88%	22.99
28	M5	70	BA	66	1.88%	21.40
29	F2	55	Intermediate School	66	1.88%	34.73
30	M3	27	BA	68	1.94%	18.01
31	M10	70	Intermediate School	73	2.08%	26.46
32	F16	30	MA	73	2.08%	23.41
33	F23	40	BA	74	2.11%	35.93
34	M21	21	BA	74	2.11%	17.82
35	M24	43	MA	76	2.17%	18.50
36	F10	22	High School	77	2.19%	33.60
37	F1	34	PhD	78	2.22%	24.71
38	M17	62	BA	82	2.34%	25.00

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[52] After excluding data from interviewers in all interviews.

[53] These are normalised frequencies which are calculated based on the total number of words per speaker.

	Speaker's ID	Age	Education	N Tokens	%	Adjectives per 1000 Words[53]
39	F12	55	High School	84	2.39%	22.91
40	M12	35	PhD	90	2.57%	34.50
41	F3	32	MA	92	2.62%	22.56
42	F25	63	BA	95	2.71%	17.57
43	M15	40	BA	97	2.77%	25.20
44	F6	43	MA	100	2.85%	27.56
45	M25	52	MA	104	2.96%	30.45
46	F8	38	MA	110	3.14%	26.01
47	F11	19	High School	111	3.16%	36.93
48	F5	44	MA	115	3.28%	24.96
49	F20	61	Diploma	124	3.53%	29.89
50	M18	27	BA	130	3.71%	24.84
51	F18	44	BA	141	4.02%	34.28
52	F21	33	MA	156	4.45%	21.71
			Total	3508	100%	

3.6.1 Age Categorisation

The stratification of age is based on chronological age ranges. Age is treated as a categorical independent variable. Participants are divided into three age groups: Young (18-30), middle-aged (31-49) and older speakers (50+). This division is motivated by achieving a relative balance in the number of speakers in the data in each group and also the number of tokens produced by each age group (Table 3.4). This division facilitates the identification of the sociolinguistic changes in the usage of intensifiers using an apparent-time model by collecting synchronic data from various age groups.

Table 3.4 Age Groups in RNDC

Range	Age Group	Participants	Tokens
18-30	Young	18	1009
31-49	Middle	19	1475
50+	Old	15	1026

3.6.2 Education

In Saudi Arabia, there are three educational levels in school system: primary, intermediate, and high. Primary school consists of six years (6-12 years old), while intermediate (12-15 years old) and high school (15-18 years old) each consist of three years. After high school one can study a two-year course referred to as diploma or pursue a bachelor's degree. There is also a higher diploma that is typically studied after a BA. A master's degree is typically a two-year degree, and a PhD requires an MA and is typically finished within 6 years during which students study courses in the first 2-3 years while the last 3 years are dedicated to writing a thesis. In the past, there used to be

diplomas that could be studied after intermediate school because of the high demand for various occupations but such diplomas are no longer available.

The highest number of participants are bachelor's degree graduates, constituting 33% (N=17)[54] of the total number (Table 3.5). The second highest number of participants are high school graduates who constitute more than quarter of the total (27% N=14). Participants with postgraduate degrees (i.e., MA and PhD) constitute 25% of the sample (N=13), while those with lower educational levels (intermediate school and below) constitute about 12% (N=6) of the respondents.

Table 3.5 Educational Backgrounds of the Participants in RNDC

Educational Background	N	%
Illiterate	1	2%
Primary School	1	2%
Intermediate School	5	10%
High School	14	27%
Diploma	1	2%
BA	17	33%
MA	10	19%
PhD	3	6%
Total	**52**	

3.6.3 Categorisation of Education

In terms of educational background, participants are divided into two groups: high and low educational levels (Table 3.6). High education refers to people who obtained degrees starting from diploma[55] (i.e., diplomas, BA, MA, and PhD). Participants who are high school graduates and below (i.e., intermediate, primary, and illiterate) are grouped within the low education category. Although this grouping may flatten out potential differences, it allows for a comparable number of informants per group. In the analysis of the data, these categories are broken down whenever necessary as will be presented in the following chapters.

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[54] Among Saudi residents in Riyadh who are 10 years-old and above, bachelor's degree holders constituted 21.88% of all educational backgrounds (https://atlas.monshaat.gov.sa/ar/profile/region/ar-riyad/ Accessed, October 13th, 2024). This indicates that Riyadh is generally an educated region (the percentage will be even higher if the sample is restricted to individuals who are 18+ years old, like the sample in RNDC).

[55] Diploma here refers to a two-year program earned after high school.

Table 3.6 Participants according to their Educational Levels in RNDC

	N Participants	Tokens
High	31	2447
Low	21	1063

3.7   Interview as a Source of Data

An interview is a classical way of eliciting data in linguistic research and has proven to be relatively successful in producing reliable authentic data (Labov, 1972, p.209). Therefore, interviews are chosen as the data source in this study. Although speakers generally change their style of speaking when they are monitored, it is possible to elicit "spontaneous speech", which Labov considered a counterpart of "casual speech" that is used in informal situations (Labov, 1966, pp.64–65). Spontaneous speech can occur even in formal conversations (Table 3.7) (Labov, 1966, p.65).

Table 3.7 Contextual Styles according to Labov (1966, p.64)

Context	Informal	Formal
Style	Casual	Careful/Spontaneous

Interviewing more than one person in each interview can help in minimising the effect of what Labov identifies as the "observer's paradox", where participants' attention is focused on the form of language they produce, because they are aware of being monitored (Labov, 1984a, p.14; 1985, p.209). Through this method, there are higher chances of interactions between the participants, which makes the interviews more fruitful. This is why this setting is adopted in the majority of the interviews in the current study (Table 3.8) (Labov, 1966, p.67; Labov, 1972, p.210; Labov, 1977, p.212; Schilling, 2013, p.109).

To the best of my knowledge, there are no available corpora of spoken ND (at the time of data collection). Available corpora are based on written language, such as novels, internet blogs, and tweets (Almuqren and Cristea, 2021; Al-Twairesh et al., 2018, *inter alia*). Even in these corpora, ND is sometimes treated as part of one SD or differentiated using orthographical differences in spelling, which is not always precise. It is also difficult to have metadata related to the speaker's demographics, which is an essential part of any variationist study (Tagilamonte, cited in: Gardner, 2020)[56]. This

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[56] https://gettingdata.humanities.uva.nl/?p=1331 (Accessed February 21, 2024).

underscores the value of the corpus collected in this study, which I plan to make available for future research.

As indicated in Table 3.8, a total of 29 interviews were conducted. The majority of interviews were 3-way conversations (75.86%; N=22). One 4-way interview was conducted since one participant was able to arrange for two of his relatives to join with him in the same interview (40 and 65 years old). In sociolinguistic studies, these types of interview settings were found to be more comfortable for the interviewees and more productive in terms of spontaneous speech (Wolfram et al., 1999, p.6; Wolfram and Thomas, 2002, p.6). However, dyadic interviews were conducted whenever it was not possible to arrange for a second participant. This proved necessary since five out of six participants were older speakers aged 52+ whose availability was limited during this study (see Section 3.5). The participants in 16 interviews knew each other while in the remaining 7 interviews the participants were strangers to each other (Table 3.9).

Table 3.8 Modes of interviews in data collection

Interview Mode	N	%
One Participant	6	20.69%
Two Participants	22	75.86%
Three Participants	1	3.45%
Total	29	

Table 3.9 Relations between Participants in Interviews

Relation between Participants	N Interview	%
Close-relation	16	69.57%
Strangers	7	30.43%
Total	23	100%

During the interview, the participants were greeted and thanked for their participation. They were informed about the process and what is expected from them during the interview. Because the expected variety for Arabic language speakers in monitored speech is typically CA (Versteegh, 2014, p.133; Albirini, 2016, p.240), it was explained that they should feel able to speak spontaneously as they would in their everyday interactions with friends and relatives. They were told that they have the freedom to not answer any question whenever they wanted. Serious and non-serious questions were asked in a random order. This said, non-serious questions were always used to commence the interview to break the ice and make the participants feel more comfortable. In some interviews, all the questions were asked while in others this was

not the case, depending on how much time the speakers spent in their answers to each question. In the interviews, if a line of questioning was not productive, it was dropped and another question from the list was chosen. To prepare for this scenario, several topics were included as some topics might not be interesting to some speakers, or they might not like to express their opinions about them. Serious topics (see Appendices 4 and 5) include those about education, the Arabic language, Saudi society, the role of women in society, serious situations such as facing death and problems in school, the pandemic, the effect of social media influencers, and dealing with inflation. Non-serious topics include discussions of light subjects, such as dining out, celebrating Eid, hobbies, Uber trips, online shopping, childhood games, and proverbs.

3.8   Limitations of the Interview

There are some limitations to conducting interviews, such as the shifting to careful speech by informants (Labov, 1966, p.67), which constitute a challenge to collecting data for linguistic research, especially for Arabic language speakers. When Arabic speakers participate in interviews, they have an urge to "upgrade" their style to sound more "correct" (Versteegh, 2014, p.133). Versteegh (2014, p.133) argued that:

> In a situation of diglossia, this problem is even more intense than elsewhere, since there is a constant temptation for the speakers to move upwards on the speech continuum, even without the presence of a dialectologist.

This is especially true for educated speakers who have access to CA. At the same time, this limitation may also occur in unmonitored speech too but maybe in lower frequency. As seen in Chapter 1 (Section 1.5), researchers agree that the line between CA and vernaculars is blurry and that pure forms of each variety of Arabic are not used in daily life (Mejdell, 2006, p.2; Bassiouney, 2014, p.13). Thus, we can suggest that unless speakers are recorded without their knowledge, this problem is likely to be encountered, at least in some interviews or parts of interviews, particularly with educated speakers. However, recording speakers without their knowledge raises serious ethical issues. Ethical clearance for this project would not have been granted in this case. To attempt to mitigate the effect of the observer's paradox in the interpretation of the data in this study, I compare the data with available literature.

3.9   Data Transcription

Recordings of interviews were fully transcribed by adopting Conventional Orthography for Dialectal Arabic[57] (Habash et al., 2018) using ELAN. ELAN is a tool employed for the annotation of audio or video recordings. It aligns the transcription to the specific time laps. Furthermore, it has several features, such as the ability to create multiple tiers, such as creating a separate tier for each speaker, to search for words within the transcription and to save the text in several formats, which are all useful for the current project. I highlighted the pauses as indicated in Jefferson (2004), because they are critical in determining the position of intensifiers. I indicated unintelligible speech with empty parenthesis. When uncertain about a word, I enclosed it between parentheses (see Appendix B for a sample transcription).

3.10   Circumscribing the Variable Context

To quantify the variation of intensifiers, three approaches are usually followed in the literature, which delimit the variable context using a combination of function and position criteria. Items that have an intensifying function are selected and located by choosing the subjects of modification. Typically, adjectives are selected because intensifiers collocate with them in higher numbers (Bäcklund, 1973, p.279; Abou Shaady, 1995, p.137). For example, Almossa (2024) found that 62.1% (N=699) of amplifiers in her data collocate with adjectives. Hence, choosing adjectives means that we will get to understand several aspects about intensifiers with less effort, given that they collocate more with adjectives and that typically verbs tend to be used more frequently compared to adjectives (Waters, 2021). It will also allow comparisons with other non-Arabic studies in the literature, which is important given the limited number of studies on Arabic intensifiers.

The first approach calculates normalised frequencies of individual or several intensifiers (e.g., Fuchs and Ulrike, 2016; Méndez-Naya and Pahta, 2010; Unuabonah et al., 2021). These studies are not considered variationist because they violate the variable rule in the Labovian paradigm, defined as "two alternative ways of saying the same thing" (Labov, 2008, p.2). To be able to identify constraints on variation, we need to precisely describe the distributional environments of the variable, which requires

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[57] This is a writing system for representing dialects of the Arabic language. It aims to represent phonological and morphological properties of Arabic dialects with the goal of unifying the written transcription for research purposes.

pinpointing all occurrences of the variable under study and its co-variants within a closed set (Lewis, 2006, p.44; Schiffrin, 1987, p.71). Moreover, it is vital to analyse intensifiers as part of a unit because they are arranged in a multi-dimensional system in which the increase or decrease in the usage of a single member leads to adjustments to the whole system (Ito and Tagliamonte, 2003; Tagliamonte and Roberts, 2005; Tagliamonte, 2008). In addition, the social value of these elements is not only based on the frequency of their use but also on alternating with other similar forms (Pichler, 2013, p.28).

The second method circumscribes the variable context by eliciting a list of intensifiers based on previous research and measures their variation using relevant statistical regressions (e.g., Fuchs, 2017). However, there are two shortcomings to using this methodology. Although this method succeeds in closing the set of alternating items, it does not account for "the principle of accountability", which means that not only tokens of the variable under study should be recorded but also the slots where it could have occurred but did not (Labov, 1969, p.737–738; 1972, p.72). The null-variant in the variation of intensifiers is represented by instances of unintensified adjectives that can be modified by an intensifier (Ito and Tagliamonte, 2003, p.264).[58] Additionally, using a readymade list of intensifiers might result in unintentionally ignoring some intensifiers that emerge in the data (Unuabonah et al., 2021). This limitation can have greater effect on under-documented dialects like ND where lists of intensifiers are scarce. This means using a list of intensifiers to conduct a corpus-based method will likely ignore many of the forms used in these dialects because there are not many resources to rely on in the process of generating this list.

The third method, which is adopted in my research, overcomes these shortcomings by identifying and extracting intensifiable adjectives in the data, and the modifiers that are located around them are added to the closed set (e.g., D'Arcy, 2015; Ito and Tagliamonte, 2003). This method accounts for the principle of accountability since it facilitates finding instances of the null-variant where no intensification is implemented (Waters, 2016, p.52). Moreover, it establishes the envelope of variation

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[58] Adding all unintensified adjectives means that we are adding contexts where the variable cannot be used (e.g., in the noun phrase *a mutual friend*, the adjective *mutual* does not take an intensifier; therefore, it is not added to the variable context).

objectively based on what is observed and used by the participants rather than what is assumed to be used based on previous lists[59].

3.10.1 Adjective Extraction

Adjectives were identified and extracted from the data manually. The rationale for manually extracting adjectives was to replace automated tools which had high error rate in identifying adjectives (see Section 1.2). Manual extraction was chosen to ensure that there is a higher accuracy adjective identification, despite it being a time-consuming method. Based on the previous explanation of the principle of accountability, several procedures were followed to ensure adherence to this principle, as Table 3.10 illustrates.

Table 3.10 Adjective Extraction Criteria in the Data

	Adjective	Procedure	Example/Note
1	Adjectives that accept intensifiers	Included	*zēn* 'nice' and *wāḍḥ* 'obvious, clear'
2	Adjectives that do not accept intensifiers	Excluded	*tarfīhiyyah* as in *ʔamākin tarfīhiyyah* 'recreational facilities' and *mihanī* as in *jānib mihanī* 'professional aspect'.
3	Comparative and superlative adjectives	Excluded	They include an additional degree of intensity not found in regular adjectives (Bordet and Jamet, 2015). Examples 1a and 1b
4	Non-Arabic Adjectives	Excluded	They are excluded because the main objective of the project is to study ND. All adjectives in the data that are not Arabic are in English. Example 1c
5	Repeated adjective	Included as a single token	I marked them for further analysis Example 1d
6	Adjectives in fixed expressions like proverbs and poems	Excluded	*wajbāt sarīʕah* 'fast food', *al-ʕaḏīm* 'great' as in in *waḷḷah al-ʕaḏīm* 'God is the Greatest' and Example 1e
7	Adjectives indicating agreement with interlocutor	Excluded	Example 1f

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[59] There are researchers who have tested the effect of including or excluding the null variant. Bueno-Amaro (2021, p. 191), for example, concluded that there is no significant difference between the findings with or without the null variant. Excluding it makes the analysis more focused on the choice of intensifiers without skewing the results with zero tokens. However, including the null variant helps in understanding adjectival distributions in language and how intensifiers modify them, especially in terms of the adjective's function. Herk et al. (2015), on the other hand, postulate that in the process of intensification, the speaker first decides to intensify, then chooses from among available intensifier variants. Therefore, the null variant should not be included in the pool. Furthermore, they add that the null variant is also conditioned, which might skew the results due to these conditioning factors.

1)

a) tšufīn fī al-sūg *ʔaġlā* w-hū nafs al-šayy (F20)
    You see (it) at the mall ***more expensive*** but it is the same thing

b) taġayyaraw ṣāraw ymkn ***baytūtyyin ʔakṯar*** mā yḥbbūn al-munāsabāt al-kbīrah (F0)
    They changed they became ***more of homebodies*** they no longer prefer big occasions

c) yaʕnī hū šūfī (.) as ***urgent*** fa-mumtāz (F7)
    Let me tell you (.) as an ***urgent*** (solution) it is excellent

d) ḥattā ʕndnā ***ṣaʕb ṣaʕb*** al-taġyyīr (F26)
    Even in our society change is ***difficult difficult***

e) ʔahalk w-law šaḥḥaw ʕalēk ***krām*** (.) w-dārk w-law ḏāgat ʕalēk ***mrīfah*** (M19)
    Your family, even if they're stingy towards you, are ***generous***, and your home, even you feel is narrow, is ***spacious***

f) F0: ʔiḏā fīh ʕazīmah (.) w-jīt ʔawwal waḥdah (.) maḥad jā
    When there is a gathering (.) and I come first (.) no one comes (early)
    F11: ṣaḥ ṣaḥ ʔīh (.) wšfīhā ḏī jat badrī (.) ***ṣādgah***
    Right right yeah (.) why she's here early (.) you're ***right***

An important point should be clarified about the first and second criteria in Table 3.10 which is that in this study, the main criterion used for the identification process is based on the naturalness and appropriateness of degree intensification. This is the typical procedure followed in previous variationist investigations of intensifiers (Ito and Tagliamonte, 2003; Tagliamonte and Roberts, 2005; Tagliamonte, 2008; Brown and Tagliamonte, 2012; D'Arcy, 2015). This means that when adding degree intensifiers like *marrah* 'very' or *šwayy* 'a little' to adjectives, the usage sounded appropriate in context, and as such these adjectives were added to the final dataset.[60] After the initial identification process, I undertook a comprehensive review of the complete adjective list to review their appropriateness and revisit my initial judgment. The appropriateness of adding an intensifier was relatively straightforward for most of the adjectives such as *ṣaʕb* 'difficult', *qayyim* 'valuable', *ḥalīm* 'patient' and *mašġūl* 'busy' which I identified as intensifiable. This was also the case for adjectives such as *kīmiyāʔī* 'chemical' (e.g., *muhandis kīmiyāʔī* 'chemical engineer'), *manṭūqah* 'spoken' (e.g., *lahjah manṭūqah* 'spoken dialect'), *mašwī* 'grilled' (e.g., *al-ʔakl al-mašwī* 'grilled food') and *mṭallagah* 'Fem. divorced', which I identified as not accepting intensification. However,

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[60] Although there are researchers (e.g., D'Arcy, 2015) that considered gradability as an independent variable in their analysis, this is outside the focus of the current study and no attempt was made to distinguish between gradable and non-gradable adjectives.

there were cases that involved ambiguity and confusion and required revisiting. These were mostly cases of bounded or non-gradable adjectives which were used in contexts where a certain level of gradability can be perceived. The following examples explain some of these cases.

2)

a) ʔaḥyānan tḥss ʔnnahā xāffah w-ʔaḥyānan tḥss ʔnnahā ***mawjūdah*** (M25)

    Sometimes you feel it has declined, and sometimes you feel it is ***present***

b) al-ʕaṣir b-al-nisbah lī wagt ***mayyit*** (F15)

    The afternoon is a ***dead*** time for me

c) yaʕnī al-luġah ʕādiyyah yaʕnī tḥssīnahā šwayy yaʕnī zayy mā ygūlūn ***muḥāyidah šwayy*** (.) šaffāfah (F16)

    I mean the language is normal you feel it's a bit I mean like what they say ***a little neutral*** (.) transparent

d) al-ġālib ʕalayy waḷḷah ʔinsān ***baytūtī*** (M24)

    I am mostly a ***homebody*** person honestly

In example 2a for instance, *mawjūdah* 'present, existing' is typically a non-gradable adjective because something is either present or absent. Here, speaker M25 is discussing the degree of prevalence of racism in Saudi Arabia, so this adjective here means 'prevalent'. Thus, the adjective indicates the extent to which racism is present. Thus, we can say *mawjūdah b-šakil kibīr* 'present to a large extent' which is why I added this adjective as intensifiable. Another example is 2b, where the speaker is saying that her favourite times of the day are the morning and evening while midday and the afternoon are not. In the example, speaker F15 said that the afternoon time is *mayyit* or 'dead' for her, which means it is an unproductive or a not useful period of the day. Therefore, while *dead* typically describes the state of either being dead or alive, from the perspective of the speaker, it is rather a gradient quality of usefulness or productivity. Hence, we can say *marrah mayyit* 'very dead' or for instance *mayyit nawʕan mā* 'sort of dead'. Another example is *muḥāyidah* 'neutral' as seen in example 2c. Neutral is typically a non-gradable adjective because something is neutral or not and is not normally divided into degrees; however, the speaker here is using *šwayy* 'a little' for downscaling the adjective. Further, in example 2d, speaker M24 is speaking about his preference to go out and says that he is *mostly baytūtī* 'homebody', which indicates that there is room for degree here. Hence,

we could say *baytūtī marrah* 'very homebody' or *baytūtī ʔilā ḥaddin mā* 'homebody to some extent'.

As explained in Chapter 2, Section 2.2, this ambiguity regarding intensification is not an unexpected issue since the fuzzy nature of gradability can cause a certain degree of ambiguity that makes subjective judgment an inevitable aspect. In fact, intensifiers are characterised by being "markers of subjectivity" (Athanasiadou, 2007, p.554). König, (2017, p.28) postulates that intensifiers "may tell us more about the speaker than about the 'reality' described". Hence, they are not only used for exaggerating or heightening the meaning but also to show originality and verbal abilities (Tagliamonte, 2016, p.82). This level of subjectivity implies that the appropriateness of using intensifiers with adjectives might be perceived differently by different speakers. This scope for subjectivity might be a source of variation across different studies of the same variety since it depends on the perception of the speaker. Also, what can be gradable or not does not only depend on the context as we explained in the previous examples, but could be different from one variety to another or one language to another (Goddard, 2008; Kyung-Joo, 2008; McNally and Kennedy, 2008; Doetjes, 2008). As such, a margin for variation exists when comparing the results of different studies. This might have a specific effect on the proportion of unintensified adjectives in the data, meaning that we must be cautious in drawing definitive conclusions without considering these factors.

3.10.2 Negative Context

A total of 220 adjectives in the data are negated, 201 are unintensified (see example 3f), 14 of them are intensified by amplifiers (as seen in examples 3a, 3b, 3c, and 3d) and 5 are modified by downtoners (see example 3e). One of the protocols in previous variationist studies on amplifiers is to remove negative contexts (see Ito and Tagliamonte, 2003; D'Arcy, 2015). The rationale behind their removal is that negation changes the pragmatic function of amplifiers and instead they express a meaning of moderation; thus, it makes the contexts incomparable to affirmative contexts (Ito and Tagliamonte, 2003; D'Arcy, 2015). In this study negative contexts are maintained in the analysis of amplifiers and downtoners because of two reasons. First, amplifiers in those contexts have an upscaling effect regardless of the negation of the adjective which is the basis for circumscribing the context of these devices (i.e., can be compared to other non-negated contexts). Second, these elements are features in the speech style of those

speakers which could be intentionally employed to convey specific stances (Eckert and Podesva, 2021, p.29). Speakers of these tokens did not use downtoners in their utterance but chose to use those amplifiers. Thus, assuming that these forms have the same function as downtoners seems to underestimate the social content achieved by occurrences of these forms and their social meaning.

3)

a) ʔīh ʕādī šayy ʕādī yaʕnī ***mū marrah ḫlū*** bass ʕādī (F23)
   Yeah normal something normal it is ***not very beautiful*** but normal

b) ʔanā šaxṣiyyah ṣarāḥah mā ʔaḥbb al- (.) mā ***mub ʔijtimāʕiyyah marrah*** (F12)
   I am honestly a personality that does not like the (.) ***not very social***

c) gd ṭalabt mn mawgiʕ w-jānī fstān ***marrah*** al-quality ḥaggtah ***mūb kwayyisah*** (F15)
   I previously ordered from a website and it arrived with **a very *not good*** quality

d) lā ʔanā ***ġēr muʔayyid jiddan*** (.) lā ***ġēr muʔayyid*** (M6)
   No I am really not a supporter

e) ʔaḥss ʔnnah ***ʔabadan*** qarār ***mū ṣāʔib*** (F11)
   I think that it ***isn't a correct*** answer ***at all***

f) wllī yxaddir ʔatwaqqaʕ kānat al-skills ḥaggitah ***mhib Ø mumtāzah Ø*** (F1)
   An the anaesthetist I think his skills were ***not Ø excellent Ø***

3.11   Data Processing

In the process of adjective extraction, I uploaded the corpus in MAXQDA (VERBI Software, 2021) to facilitate careful reading and extraction of adjectives. MAXQDA is a software program designed for qualitative analysis which contains features that enable the processing of several types of files like texts and audio files. MAXQDA is used specifically because it supports the analysis of Arabic texts unlike other qualitative analysis tools, like NVivo for instance, which does not accommodate right-to-left languages. In an Excel sheet, I added the adjective along with the sentence where it was used and coded factors related to the adjective, speaker, and variables (Figure 3.3). If the adjective is not modified, this is coded as *zero* while other lexico-grammatical devices employed before or after the adjective are added for further categorisation based on the model of Quirk et al. (1985).

ID	Gender	Age	Edu	Adjective	Semantic group	Emotional Va	Polarity	Neg	Variable	Category	Var Repeti	Position	Seriousness	Adj Func	Token
F27/61	F	Old	Low	صغيره	Dimension	NA	NA	No	Zero	NA	NA	NA	Non-Serious	PR	و تطورنا يعني اول كذا من اول السوق يعني الشوارع حفت البيوت صغيره
F27/61	F	Old	Low	شديد	Human PRop	NA	Negative	No	shwai(ah)	Downtoner	NA	After	Serious	PR	وكان والله شديد شوي
F11/19	F	Young	Low	سخيفة	Value	NA	Negative	No	Zero	NA	NA	NA	Serious	AT	مستحيل تتطلق على اسباب سخيفه ف بالعكس انا اشوف الموضوع مره ايجابي للمرأة
F17/19	F	Young	Low	جديد	Age	NA	NA	No	Zero	NA	NA	NA	Serious	AT	فاتوقع انه تطور شي جديد
M18/27	M	Young	High	ممتاز	Value	NA	Positive	No	marrah	Amplifier	No	Before	Serious	PR	انا الشغل عن بعد (.) مره ممتاز
M23/31	M	Middle	High	صغير	Age	NA	NA	No	Zero	NA	NA	NA	Non-Serious	PR	انا ترى صغير انا هيه
M24/43	M	Middle	High	المفيده	Value	NA	Negative	No	Zero	NA	NA	NA	Serious	AT	(والاشياء من الاشياء المفيده في كل مكان مب بس السعوديه اللي هي عنصريه
M2/21	M	Young	Low	مضروبه	Value	NA	Negative	No	shwai(ah)	Downtoner	No	Before	Non-Serious	PR	ودي اكتسب في الادغام في الوقت (.) احس المواعيد عندي شوي مضبوطه
F21/33	F	Middle	High	كبيره	Dimension	NA	NA	No	Zero	NA	NA	NA	Non-Serious	AT	وبالليل فيه جمعه كبيره (.) آ (.) تكون دايمة في قاعه يعني
M15/40	M	Middle	High	جميل	Value	NA	Positive	No	jiddan	Amplifier	No	After	Serious	AT	واللهي شفت وانا اخوك المجتمع السعودي بشكل عام انا اشوف انه مجتمع جميل جدا حتى بعض الناس الان يقول الل
M15/40	M	Middle	High	ضخم	Dimension	NA	NA	No	jiddan	Amplifier	No	After	Non-Serious	AT	ابه ايه فيه سوق ضخم جدا حتى بعض الناس الان يقول الل
M3/27	M	Young	High	حساس	Human PRop	Yes	NA	No	b-zod	Amplifier	No	After	Serious	PR	وانا شخصيا بس اني اوضح لك شي انا شخصيا ما تأثرت ولا يعني ما مستوى بس احس از
F13/18	F	Young	Low	مركزه	Human PRop	NA	NA	No	b-ziyadah	Amplifier	No	After	Serious	PR	آ اشسمه كنت اقحمه يعني وبكون في النوم اين الحين ما راح فما اكون مركزه بزياده
M17/62	M	Old	High	الواضحه	Qualification	NA	Positive	No	Zero	NA	NA	After	Serious	AT	تنكلم معهم باللغه العربيه الواضحه البسيطه
M4/27	M	Young	High	طبيعي	Qualification	NA	NA	No	marrah	Amplifier	yes	After	Serious	AT	الاختلاف شي طبيعي مره مره
M13/47	M	Middle	Low	فعاله	Value	NA	Positive	No	Zero	NA	NA	NA	Serious	PR	واللي بالعكس انها كانت مجديه وفعاله ماهيب بالعكس ماهيه كان
M15/40	M	Middle	High	سيئة	Value	NA	Negative	No	lil-ghayah	Amplifier	No	After	Serious	PR	انا اشوف غالبية تحصيل الطلاب خلال فترة كورونا في المرحلة الابتدائية كانت سيئة لل
F18/44	F	Middle	High	حلو	Value	NA	Positive	No	Zero	NA	NA	NA	Non-Serious	PR	يعني كان بسيط كان حلو كذا ناخذ حلويات الماكدونلز ندور بها (.) يعني ابو طعم

Figure 3.3 Sample of Adjective Extraction and Coding in Excel

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3.11.1 Categorisation Process

It should be acknowledged that categorising intensifiers based on their level of intensity can be highly subjective because each speaker's perspective is based on their personal background, experience, and views (König, 2017, p.29). For this reason, and to reduce the effect of subjectivity, I informally consulted three ND speakers who are PhD researchers in linguistics and translation. The final list of intensifiers was scrutinised for representing the definitions provided in Quirk et al. (1985) for each sub-category. This includes checking the appropriateness of the translation of each element in the list. All of them were given the definition of these elements. Those ND speakers checked if these devices functioned similarly to the categories listed in Quirk et al. (1985). They also verified that the English translations of these devices were accurate.

3.12   Coding Linguistic Factors

3.12.1 Adjective Polarity

I categorised adjectives in the data into positive (e.g., *faxmah* 'luxurious' or *samḥ* 'lenient'; see examples 4a and 4b) or negative polarity (e.g., *muʕaqqad* 'difficult, complicated', *muḍṭahadah* 'oppressed', and *mustaġallah* 'exploited'; example 4c and 4d). Adjectives without positive or negative polarity are coded as neutral like *kbār* 'large', *zāydah* 'extreme', and *mašhūr* 'famous' (examples 4a, 4e, and 4f). As illustrated in Table 3.11, around half the adjectives in the data are neutral (50.34%; N=1766) while 32.19% (N=1129) are positive and only 17.46% (N=613) are negative.

4)
a) ʔllī sāknīn fī ḥṭṭīn mašaḷḷāh byūthm **kbār** w-sayyārāthum **faxmah** (M18)
   Those who live in Hittin neighbourhood have **large** houses and **luxurious** cars
b) maʕ ʔnnah hū **samḥ** fī kll šayy (F21)
   Even though he is **lenient** in everything
c) f-knnā lammā nadxl mawāqʕ ʕaxān nḥll wājbāt wallā nḥll kiḏā (.) kān yaʕnī
   šayy **muʕaqqad** (F17)
   So when we go on websites to do the homework or something (.) it was
   something **complicated/difficult**
d) lāzm fkrat ʔnnī **muḍṭahadah** malʕūb ʕalayy (.) **mustaġallah** (F3)
   There needs to be the idea that I am **oppressed** being manipulated (.) **exploited**

e) ʕndnā yaʕnī ʕayārah ***zāydah*** (M20)

We have ***extreme*** sarcasm

f) ʕmrh ʔarbʕīn sanah yalḥag lah bazr ʕmrh ʕšrīn sanah ʕašānah ***mašhūr*** (M25)

A 40 years old chases a 20 years old child just because he is ***famous***

Table 3.11 Adjective Polarity in the Data

Adjective Polarity	N	%
Neutral	1766	50.34%
Negative	613	17.46%
Positive	1129	32.18%

3.12.2 Semantic Categorisation of Adjectives

Table 3.12 depicts the semantic groups used to divide adjectives in the data and the number of adjectives in each category. The semantic division of Dixon (2004, pp.3–5) is used as a guide to categorise adjectives in the data. This division is used in other variationist studies of adjectives intensifiers (e.g., Ito and Tagliamonte, 2003; Tagliamonte, 2008; D'Arcy, 2015). Previous studies on English intensifiers did not include the categories *quantification*, *qualification*, *difficulty*, and *similarity*; however, Dixon (2004, p.5) explained that some languages include those categories in their adjectives. Thus, they were added to the division since there is a large number of adjectives that belong to this label in the data (Table 3.12). The label *other* was added to fit any adjective that does not seem to fit within the previous groups (see Appendix D).

Table 3.12 Semantic Categories of Adjectives in the Data

	Semantic Group	N	%
1	*Age*	275	7.84%
2	*Colour*	24	0.68%
3	*Difficulty*	199	5.67%
4	*Dimension*	198	5.64%
5	*Human propensity*	621	17.70%
6	*Other*	147	4.19%
7	*Physical property*	214	6.10%
8	*Position*	38	1.08%
9	*Qualification*	383	10.92%
10	*Quantification*	420	11.97%
11	*Similarity*	148	4.22%
12	*Speed*	7	0.20%
12	*Value*	834	23.77%
	Total	3508	100.00%

Human propensity as described by Dixon (2004, p.4) refers to adjectives describing words like *happy*, *angry*, *kind* and *generous* (see Appendix D). I also added other adjectives that describe humans to this category like *rich*, *poor*, *busy*, *conservative*, *educated* and *hard-working*. *Physical property* refers to adjectives like *hard*, *cold*, and *strong* including *corporeal* properties like *sick*, *well*, and *tired* (Dixon, 2004, p.4). I also included adjectives like *strong* and *intense* to this category even if they refer to conceptual strength (e.g., strong opinion). The *speed* category includes adjectives like *fast* and *slow* (Dixon, 2004, p.4). The *value* group includes adjectives like *good*, *bad*, *lovely*, *annoying*, *important*, and *necessary*. I also added to this category adjectives describing price, such as *cheap* and *expensive*. *Colour* describes colours such as *black* and *blue*. *Age* describes words like *old* and *young*. *Dimension* includes adjectives like *tall*, *wide*, *big*, and *deep*. Adjectives describing conceptual (i.e., not physical) dimension are also added under this label such as *limited* and *inclusive*. The *difficulty* category includes adjectives like *simple*, *hard*, and *difficult* (Dixon, 2004, p.5). *Similarity* refers to adjectives such as *similar*, *strange* and *different*. *Qualification* includes adjectives such as *true*, *false*, *appropriate*, *common*, *natural*, *normal*, *noticeable*, and *obvious* (Dixon, 2004, p.5). I also added adjectives such as *basic*, *primary*, and *secondary* to this group. *Quantification* category describes words like *many*, *some*, *few*, and *enough*. The position group describes words like *far*, *close*, *near*, *high*, and *low* (Dixon, 2004, p.5). Note that some adjectives have the exact lexical forms but are added to their matching semantic categories depending on the context. For example, the adjective *wāsiʕ* which literally means 'spacious' is also used in the data to mean 'numerous, many'. Therefore, the first one is coded as *dimension* while the second one is coded as *quantification*.[61] A second example is *hādī,* which was coded with the *human propensity* when describing a person as 'calm' and also added with *physical property* when describing a quiet place. Another example is the adjective *kbīr* 'big or old' which was coded according to its meaning to *dimension* or *age*.

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[61] It should be noted that previous research mainly provided explanations similar to this discussion, where each category is briefly described with some adjectives given as examples. This made the categorisation process more challenging because there is a certain degree of subjectivity involved in judging the category of each adjective. To mitigate this limitation and support replicability and transparency, I provide a list of all the adjectives extracted from the data with their categories in Appendix (D), which can be used as a guide for future research.

3.12.2.1 Adjective Emotionality

Adjectives are coded according to their emotionality by adopting the categorisation in Ito and Tagliamonte (2003). All emotional adjectives are categorised within the *Human propensity* category. For example, the adjectives *mstāns*, *farḥān* 'happy', *xāyif* 'scared', and *mktʔib* 'depressed' are emotional adjectives while *mtwāḍʕ* 'humble', *ḏakiyy* 'smart', and *fāhī* 'thick-headed' are non-emotional. As indicated in Table 3.13, 97.92% (N=3435) of the adjectives in the data are not emotional. Other researchers have adopted alternative approaches to categorise adjective emotionality. Aijmer (2018, pp.114–115), for instance, employed *Appraisal Theory* (Martin, 2001; Martin and White, 2005), which classifies adjectives into three categories—*affect, appreciation* and *judgment*—based on their emotional or evaluative value. This approach is also utilised by Bueno-Amaro (2021). Almossa (2024) follows Aijmer's (2018) method by mapping the semantic categories of *value* and *human propensity* onto these three categories (i.e., all adjectives under these categories are also labelled as emotional).

Table 3.4 Adjective Emotionality in the Data

Adj Emotionality	N	%
Non-Emotional	3435	97.92%
Emotional	73	2.08%

3.12.3 Adjective Functions

Adjectives are coded into attributive or predicative according to their function in the sentence. Adjective functions in ND are explained below. Table 3.14 depicts the total number of attributive and predicative adjectives in the data.

Table 3.14 Adjective Function in the Data

Adj Function	N	%
Attributive	1522	43.39%
Predicative	1986	56.61%

3.12.3.1 Attributive Adjectives

Attributive adjectives[62] follow the noun they modify (although not necessarily immediately such as in annexation construction) (Erwin, 2004, pp.321–322). In

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[62] Information about the syntactic functions is based on Erwin's (2004, pp.321–322) book of Iraqi dialect grammar.

attributive function, when the noun is definite, the adjective is also definite. The noun is definite in four cases (Erwin, 2004, pp.321–322):

1. If it is attached to the definite article *al-* (e.g., *al-gaḷam* 'the pen')

2. If it is attached to a pronoun prefix (e.g., *gaḷamhā* 'her pen')

3. If it is a proper noun (e.g., *jiddah* 'Jeddah')

4. If it is an annexation[63] construction where the noun is definite by being in any of three previous cases as in the following examples:

    a. *gaḷam al-bnt* 'the girl's pen'

    b. *gaḷam jāratna* 'our neighbour's pen'

    c. *gaḷam ʔaḥmad* 'Ahmed's pen'

The adjective is attributive when it has an article prefix *al-* 'the'. Hence, attributive adjectives modify nouns of all the previous cases of definite nouns such as *al-gaḷam al-ʔaḥmar* 'the red pen', *gaḷamhā al-xarbān* 'her broken pen', *jiddah al-tārīxiyyah* 'Historical Jeddah' and *gaḷam ʔaḥmad al-jdīd* 'Ahmad's new pen'.

Nouns other than the previous definite cases are indefinite and so the adjective modifying it is also indefinite (e.g., *gaḷam jdīd* 'new pen').

3.12.3.2 Predicative Adjectives

When an adjective comes in the predicate of a sentence and modifies the noun or pronoun in the subject, it is considered a predicative adjective (e.g., *al-bnt taʕbānah* 'the girl is ill' or *hī taʕbānah* 'she is ill') (Erwin, 2004, pp.321–322). Predicative adjectives do not have the definite prefix *al-* regardless of whether the noun they modify has it or not (Erwin, 2004, pp.321–322) (e.g., *al-gaḷam jdīd* 'the pen is new', *ʔaḥmad farḥān* 'Ahmed is happy' and *gaḷamhā jdīd* 'her pen is new').

3.12.4 Seriousness of Topics

The questions asked during the interview (Table 3.15) are categorised into serious and non-serious questions (see Appendices 4 and 5). Serious questions include topics such as dealing with the financial crisis, criticism of Saudi society, and the role of women in society, while non-serious questions include topics such as Uber experience, dining out,

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[63] The typical and most common annexation construction consists of two nouns where the first is modified by the second (see Erwin, 2004, p.370).

and favourite times of the day. Small talk in-between the questions was coded according to the topic discussed.

<div align="center">

Table 3.15 Seriousness of Questions in the Data

Type of Question	N	%
Non-Serious	1263	36.00%
Serious	2245	64.00%

</div>

3.13 Distributional and Multivariate Analysis

Calculations of the distributions of all forms were conducted in Excel. In the distributional analysis, I used SPSS[64] to conduct chi-square tests of significance to measure if the observed distributions are statistically significant. For the multivariate analysis I used Rbrul. Rbrul (Johnson, 2009) is a package that is installed in R and has been developed specifically for variable-rule analysis, which is part of sociolinguistic variationist analysis. In this analysis, the new user-friendly web-based 'shiny' version of Rbrul is employed instead of the older text-based interface. The old Rbrul however, is used for cross-tabulating interactions between factors since this feature is not yet available in the new version.

The following discussion of Rbrul and statistical methods is based on Johnson (2014). A vital improvement in Rbrul is that it can conduct mixed-effect regressions unlike older statistical tools that have been used in variationist research such as GoldVarb. Sociolinguistic research often relies on naturalistic data which is rarely balanced. This unbalanced feature is a result of "by-speaker" and "by-word" imbalance (Johnson, 2014, pp.11–12). This means that the data will be unbalanced on the speaker level and on the word level. There are fluctuations in the data when it comes to the number of tokens produced by each speaker. This issue had been controlled in fixed-effects models by restricting the number of tokens per speaker which meant that some data had to be deleted. Additionally, on the word level, there are inconsistencies in the frequency of words since some words are very frequent while others are scarcely observed. The other common matter in variationist analysis is the "nesting" problem (Johnson, 2014, p.15). An example of this is when a predictor like speaker is nested in another predictor like gender or age. Yet, for instance, the female category in the data

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64 IBM SPSS Version 29.0.2.0 (20)

in fact consists of a group of individuals who might vary in their usage of a specific variable. In other words, a specific constraint may not have the same effect on all speakers. Thus, mixed-effects models accommodate for the inconsistencies that are an intrinsic part of naturalistic data and also account for individual speakers' deviations if they exist. Fixed-effect models often augment the significance of predictors as they do not take into account data imbalance or individual differences between speakers and words (Johnson, 2009; Johnson, 2014). This usually leads to committing a type I error, which occurs when a factor is found to be significant, when in fact it is not (Johnson, 2009; Johnson, 2014). One the other hand, Rbrul is more conservative in assigning significance to factors which leads to avoiding type I errors. Yet, this conservative feature can sometimes lead to type II errors, where a factor is significant but not found to be so (Johnson, 2009; Johnson, 2014).

Another practical advantage of the new 'shiny' app is that it tests the significance of predictors if they are placed within the potential predictors column and also tests potential interactions between the predictors and thus makes building the model reasonable based on the statistical significance and detected interactions. Yet, one disadvantage of Rbrul is that as the number of factors increases, it tests all interactions between them and this process takes a very long time for the model to compute. Further details about the analysis and interpretation of the results will be given in Chapter 5 (Section 5.4). It must be noted here that the quantitative analysis of the data is supplemented by further qualitative analysis and supplementary data which is collected from X. The qualitative analysis is conducted in the analysis of outliers (see Chapter 7) while the data from X is used for the case study in Chapter 8.

3.14 Conclusion

This chapter laid the groundwork for the study design. Chapters 4-7 are all based on this data set. The methodology outlined here also provides a reference for future explorations of intensifiers in Arabic varieties and also enlightens variationist investigations of intensifiers in non-Arabic varieties.

Chapter 4 Distributional Analysis: Overview of the Adjective Intensification System

4.1 Introduction

This chapter focuses on answering the overarching question of what the adjective intensification system in ND looks like. The following question and sub-questions are targeted:

1. **What features characterise the adjective intensification system of Riyadh-based ND speakers?**
   a. How frequent is adjective intensification in ND compared to unintensification of adjectives?
   b. How frequent is adjective amplification compared to adjective moderation and emphasis?
   c. What forms are present in the system and how are they distributed?

In this chapter, I also present a categorisation of adjective intensifiers using the model of Quirk et al. (1985). In addition, I address more holistic points that have arisen from an examination of the evidence in RNDC. I compare between the frequency of boosters and maximisers within the category of amplifiers and also explore the two phenomena of co-occurrence and iteration of adjective intensifiers. I underscore how the adjective intensification system in ND is similar to and/or different from other Arabic varieties and languages in the previous characteristics and trends explored in the first question. Further, I explore the intensification forms that are restrictively used in ND and the forms that are shared with CA, the linguistic origin of commonly used adjective intensifiers in ND and the grammaticalisation processes that these forms have possibly undergone.

4.2 Distributional Analysis

4.2.1 Proportion of Intensified Adjectives

The total number of intensifiable adjectives in RNDC is 3,508 (Table **4.1**). Out of these adjectives only 540, which constitute 15.39% of the adjectival heads, are intensified, while the remaining 2,968 (84.61%) are unintensified.

Table 4.1 Intensified and Unintensified Adjectives in RNDC

	N	%
Intensified[65]	540	15.39%
Unintensified	2968	84.61%
Total Adj	3508	100.00%

Table 4.2 A Breakdown of Categories of Intensifiers and Unintensified Adjectives in RNDC

	N	%
Amplifier	309	8.76%
Downtoner	94	2.66%
Emphasiser	157	4.45%
Total intensifiers	560	15.87%
Null-variant Ø	2,968	84.13%
Grand Total[66]	3,528	100.00%

It is not unexpected that the null-variant (i.e., unintensified adjectives) would be higher than the proportion of intensified adjectives. The function of intensifiers would not be valid if their usage were applied to all adjectives (Tagliamonte, 2016, p.82). Yet, the null-variant in this study is higher than in previous Arabic language research (see Alshaboul et al., 2022). To compare the results in ND with other studies, we must differentiate between studies that focused only on adjective amplifiers (e.g., *marrah* 'very') and those that focused on both adjective amplifiers and downtoners (e.g., *šwayy* 'a little') (Table 4.3 and Table 4.4). Almost all variationist studies in the literature are limited in scope to amplifiers and downtoners, therefore, emphasisers (e.g., *fiʕlan* 'really') in their data must have been marked as a zero variant which does not allow us to conduct comparisons of this particular kind of intensifier with the current results.

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[65] Note that when the adjective is intensified by two intensifiers, the adjective is repeated in two tokens while highlighting its status as a duplicate adjective. However, when the same variant is repeated with one adjective, the variable is only added as a single token in the data while highlighting its status as a repeated variant.

[66] This number is higher than the total number of adjectives (N=3508) since it counts intensifiers not adjectives. There are 20 adjectives intensified by two different intensifiers. To avoid confusions, calculations of the categories and sub-categories except for Table 4.1 depend on this number (N=3528) rather than (N=3508).

As depicted in Table 4.2 and Table 4.3, the proportion of adjective amplification in RNDC (8.76%; N=309/3,528) is lower than that found in AA (60%; N=581/969) and York English (24%; N=950/4,019). One factor that might have contributed to this difference is the possible variations in gradability across varieties, languages and contexts in what can be treated as gradable and what cannot (see Chapter 2, Section 2.2 and Chapter 3, Section 3.10.1) and the level of subjectivity involved in identifying the gradability of adjectives. Despite these variations in the proportion of unamplified adjectives cross-linguistically, overall, the amplification rate in the current study and in Ito and Tagliamonte (2003) is comparable and shows the expected distribution of a lower rate of adjective amplification compared to unamplification (see Tagliamonte 2016, p.82). Yet, we find that the amplification in Alshaboul et al. (2022) contradicts this expected pattern. Their dataset consists of 969 adjectives where 60% (N=581) are amplified and 40% (N=388) are unamplified.

Table 4.3 Adjective Amplification in RNDC in Comparison to Other Studies

Study	Language	Amplified	Unamplified
Current study (RNDC)	Najdi Arabic	8.76%	91.22%
Alshaboul et al. (2022)	Ammani Arabic	60%	40%
Tagliamonte (2008)	Toronto English	36.1%	63.9%
Ito and Tagliamonte (2003)	York English	24%	76%

The difference in adjective amplification rates between the current study and AA study is intriguing. Both ND and AA are varieties of the Arabic language, so one would expect to find a smaller difference between them, given the semantic resemblance between them. For example, the difference between the proportion of intensified heads in Toronto English and York English is 12.1% (see Table 4.3) while the difference between the current study and AA study is 51.19%. The data collection methods are interviews in both studies. One reason for this observed difference in intensification (amplification) rates could be the varying sensitivity of the topics discussed during these interviews. Alshaboul et al. (2022) in their interviews asked questions that are emotionally engaging but not sensitive. The type employed in Alshaboul et al. (2022) can be compared to unserious questions in the current study that may not trigger strong emotions such as Eid celebrations, friendships and dining out. Yet, as stated before, the current study also included a second type of serious questions that may be sensitive to some participants

such as racism, classism and the role of women in Saudi Arabia as the goal was to trigger stronger emotional engagement. The distributional analysis (see Chapter 5, Section 5.4.3) shows that in the current study, amplifiers are used slightly more frequently in light-hearted discussions (8.94% vs. 8.73%). This difference, however, was not found to be statistically significant neither in the distributional analysis (p-value=0.7507) nor the multivariate analysis (p-value=0.894). Hence, since amplifiers seem to be slightly favoured in non-serious topics, this may partially explain the higher amplification rate found in Alshaboul et al. (2022) as their interviews only included these types of topics. Thus, this difference may be due to the type of questions asked during data collection. This also can explain the lower rate found in ND in RNDC. The other possible reason for the observed difference is the criteria for the exclusion or inclusion of adjectives in the data in Alshaboul et al. (2022). Their account of the data collection and extraction may be the missing evidence we need to explain why adjective amplification is very high in their data.

Table 4.4 illustrates the difference between the proportion of both amplifiers and downtoners in comparison to unintensified adjectives in ND and other languages. Comparing the results of the current study to cross-linguistic studies like Ito and Tagliamonte (2003) and the studies in Table 4.4 reveals a less substantial difference than that found in AA. The data in Ito and Tagliamonte (2003) consists of 4,019 adjectives extracted from a corpus of York English. They observed that 24% (N=950/4019) of the adjectives were amplified, whereas 76% (N=3069/4019) were not (Table 4.3).

Table 4.4 Adjective Amplifiers and Downtoners in RNDC Compared to Other Studies

Study	Language	Intensified	Unintensified
Current study (RNDC)	Najdi Arabic	11.42%	88.56%
Stratton and Sundquist (2022)	Oslo Norwegian	44.70%	55.30%
Stratton (2020)	German Language	37%	63%
D'Arcy (2015)	New Zealand English	31.03%	68.97%

The proportion of intensified adjectives in RNDC, if we count both amplifiers and downtoners, is only 11.42% (N=403/3528) (Table 4.4). D'Arcy (2015) found in her data of 12,933 adjectives, which was extracted from the ONZE corpus (Gordon et al., 2007),

that 31.03% (N=4013/12933) of the adjectives[67] were intensified (i.e., amplified and downtoned), whereas 68.97% (N=8920/12933) were bare. Similarly, in another Germanic language, Stratton (2020, p.197) extracted 2,493 adjectives from a spontaneous speech dataset of German language in the FOLK[68] corpus. Stratton (2020) observed that 63% (N=1574/2,493) of these adjectives were bare with no modification, whereas 37% (N=919/2,493) were modified by either an amplifier or a downtoner. In Norwegian, Stratton and Sundquist (2022, p. 398) found in their dataset, which consisted of 1,910 adjectives extracted from sociolinguistic interviews in the NoTa-Oslo corpus, that intensified adjectives constituted 44.7% (N=854/1910) of the total adjectives; the remaining proportion of adjectives (55.3%; N=1056/1910) were unmodified. Hence, based on the previous results we observe that the proportion of intensified adjectives in RNDC is lower than those studies.

These intralinguistic and interlinguistic comparisons suggest that adjective intensification is comparably low in ND as suggested by the current dataset. They also suggest that the reason for the divergence of intensification rate in the current ND data is partly explained by the seriousness or sensitivity of discussed topics in the data. Further research is needed to investigate other forms of adjective amplification that may be more common in ND than these lexico-grammatical elements to intensify adjectives. These forms may be syntactic for instance, such as repetition of adjectives or prosodic, such as stress.

An important aspect to note here is that although the social meaning of linguistic variables with higher frequencies is more noticeable, variables with low frequencies still have an opportunity to develop social meaning (Moore, 2021, p.58). Thus, the low occurrence of intensifiers overall does not eliminate their potentiality of acquiring social meaning although this social meaning may not immediately stand out to the sociolinguistic researcher (Moore, 2021, p.58).

4.2.2 Co-occurrence

In the literature, studies that tackle co-occurrence often investigate only that of amplifiers. According to Méndez-Naya (2017, p.267), co-occurrence refers to the case

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[67] The adjectives were extracted from the diachronic representation of various periods starting from the year 1946 (D'Arcy, 2015).
[68] Forschungs- und Lehrkorpus Gesprochenes Deutsch [Research and Teaching Corpus of Spoken German]

where two different amplifiers modify the same adjective (e.g., *very greatly* glad). Méndez-Naya (2017) postulates that co-occurrence of amplifiers serves a function and should not be seen only as decorations. This phenomenon seems to be common in periods of change and renewal in the amplification system (Méndez-Naya, 2017). In this section, I describe the co-occurrence of all categories of intensifiers. In ND, intensifiers with similar or different functions can modify the same adjective. This observation is also recorded by Abou Shaady (1995, pp.727, 390) in EA where she explains that intensifiers can string together without conjunctions.

In the current study, out of 3,508 adjectives, intensifiers were observed co-occurring only with 20 adjectives (0.57%)[69] (Table 4.5). This proportion is low which suggests that this is not a common phenomenon in ND. More than half of co-occurring intensifiers (70%) were cases where an amplifier collocated with an emphasiser (N=14/20) (examples 1a and 1b). This is followed by an equal proportion (10%; N=2/20) of emphasisers co-modifying with other emphasisers (example 1c) and also co-modifying with downtoners (example 1d). A downtoner was used with an amplifier to modify one adjective (5%; N=1/20) (example 1e). Lastly, one adjective was modified by two downtoners (5%; N=1/20) (example 1f).

Table 4.5 Co-occurrence of Intensifiers in RNDC

	N	%
Emphasiser + Amplifier	14	70.00%
Emphasiser + Downtoner	2	10.00%
Emphasiser + Emphasiser	2	10.00%
Amplifier + Downtoner	1	5.00%
Downtoner + Downtoner	1	5.00%
Total	20	100.00%

1)
a) waḷḷah alʔān ʔaṣbaḥ yaʕnī lābudd minh yaʕnī mā fīh ʔaḥad yistaġnī ʕan al-tasawwq al-ʔiliktrōni (.) wa-ʔin kān ḥagīgah fīh salbiyāt kiṯīr ***jiddan al-ṣarāḥah*** (M14)
   Wallah now it became a must no one can live without online shopping (.) despite the fact that it truly has ***honestly very*** numerous disadvantages
b) bass ʔatwaqqaʕ ʔnnū bšakil ʕām (.) ʔašūfh ***marrah*** ḥilū ***ṣarāḥah*** lamman ʔaxāṭb nās (.) b-lahjathum (M16)
   But I guess that generally (.) I think that it's ***very*** nice ***honestly*** when you speak to them in their own dialect

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[69] Comparisons with studies (e.g., Bennett and Goodman, 2018; Richter and Van Hout, 2020) are not possible because they mainly focus on the co-occurrence of amplifiers, while in the current study tokens of this type were not observed (see Table 4.5).

c) mā kntanā mtwaqqʕ ʔnnh mumkin ttġayyar f-hāḏā šayy ʔījābī **ṣarāḥah lil-ʔamānah** (M15)

I didn't expect that it was possible for it to change so this is something positive **honestly to be honest**

d) w-kān **waḷḷah** šdayyid **šwayy** (F27)

and he was **a little** strict **I swear**

e) muḥāḍarāt **kiḏa jiddan** baṣīṭah ʔun ḷāyn (M24)

Sort of very simple online lectures

f) yaʕnī ʔaḥss ʔnnī ʔaḥbb al-dine in w-ʔaḥbb yaʕnī ykūn **kiḏā šwayyah kiḏā** mkān rāqī w-ḥilū (F10)

I think that I like dine-in (restaurants) and I like the place to be **sort of little sort of** a fancy and a nice place

The highest proportion as indicated in Table 4.5 is the collocation of amplifiers and emphasisers (70%; N=14/20). A closer look at this kind of co-intensification (Table 4.6) reveals that 13 out of 14 (92.68%) of the amplifiers are boosters and *marrah* constitutes 64.29% (N=9/14) of the total proportion. The variant *(al-/b-)ṣarāḥah* 'honestly' is the only emphasiser that co-intensified with amplifiers (examples 1a and 1b). Collocation of amplifiers can be attributed to the loss of expressivity and the weakening of well-established forms, which co-occur with other amplifiers to reinforce their power (Méndez-Naya, 2017). For example, *wel* 'well' in Middle-English was found with the amplifier *ful* and *wonderlich*. We observed in RNDC that *marrah* and *jiddan* co-occurred with the emphasiser *ṣarāḥah* which might indicate their waning expressivity. As referred to previously, in the literature, researchers mainly focus on the analysis of co-occurrence of amplifiers (see, Bennett and Goodman, 2018; Méndez-Naya, 2017; Richter and Van Hout, 2020; Scheffler et al., 2023). In the current data, however, no tokens have been recorded for this specific collocation (Table 4.5).

Table 4.6 Co-occurrence of adjective Amplifiers and Emphasisers in RNDC

Amplifier			Emphasiser		
Variant	N	%	Variant	N	%
marrah 'very'	9	64.29%	*(al-/b-)ṣarāḥah* 'honestly'	14	100%
Jiddan 'very'	4	28.57%			
lil-ġāyah 'immensely'	1	7.14%			
Total	14	100%		14	100%

Co-intensifiers have a higher tendency (60%; N=12/20) to surround the modified adjective (examples 1b and 1d) than to be used consecutively; this means that one is positioned pre-adjectivally and the second is located in a post-adjectival location. The remaining proportion of co-occurring intensifiers (40%; N=8/20) was either located in a pre-adjectival (example 1e) or a post-adjectival position (example 1a) (i.e., positioned consecutively) (Table 4.7). An interesting observation is that all tokens of co-occurrences except four cases (which are all amplifier + emphasiser that occur consecutively) seem to follow a certain positioning rule. When the two forms have the same function, they stack together (either before or after the adjective) while when they have different functions, one appears before and the other appears after the adjective. However, to arrive at any conclusions about this phenomenon requires a very large corpus due to its extremely low rate (Méndez-Naya, 2017).

Table 4.7 Position of Adjective Co-intensifiers in RNDC

Position	N	%
Pre- and post- adjective	12	60.00%
Positioned consecutively	8	40.00%
Total	20	100.00%

4.2.3 Iteration

Iteration refers to the repetition or duplication of the same intensifier before or after an adjectival head (Table 4.8) (Méndez-Naya, 2017). A total of 32 (5.71%) out of the 560 intensifiers in the data were iterated (example 2). The majority of duplicated intensifiers (87.50%; N=28/32) are amplifiers and all of these elements are boosters. This finding suggests that the upscaling effect of boosters makes them prone to being duplicated. Klein (1998, p.133) postulates that devices with rhetorical force can be replicated, especially those with a boosting function. This characteristic has been observed in EA amplifiers (see Abou Shaady,1995). However, replicated amplifiers in ND are different from EA amplifiers in that they can be positioned in a pre-adjectival or post-adjectival location around the adjective while Abou Shaady (1995, p.272) observed that EA amplifiers can only be duplicated in a post-adjectival position.

2) ʔistrātījyyāt ḏakyyah *jiddan jiddan jiddan jiddan* (M24)
   Very very very very intelligent strategies

Table 4.8 Iteration of Intensifiers in RNDC

Intensifier	Gloss	N	%
Amplifier		31	86.11%
marrah	'very, so'	19	52.78%
jiddan	'very'	12	33.33%
Downtoner		3	8.33%
kiḏā	'kind of, sort of'	2	5.56%
ʔbadan/ʔbadd	'at all'	1	2.78%
Emphasiser		2	5.56%
fiʕlan	'really, actually'	1	2.78%
ṣidig	'truly'	1	2.78%
Total		36	100.00%

Another observation is that only two forms of amplifiers are iterating in the data, which are *marrah* and *jiddan.* Iteration is seen as a typical feature for grammaticalised amplifiers, while less grammaticalised forms are less prone to iteration (Gary, 1979, p.66 cited in Klein, 1998, p.133). This could indicate the status of *marrah* and *jiddan* as well-established amplifiers as they are the ones being replicated in RNDC. These two forms, as already noted above (Section 4.2.2), are also the amplifiers that co-occur with other intensifiers and support the suggestion that they do so because they experienced a loss of expressivity (Méndez-Naya, 2017). Pragmatically, this repetition can be explained in light of the notion of *markedness* (Levinson, 2000, p.137). This implies that the choice by the speaker to use the marked and costly (relatively more complex) expression despite the availability of an unmarked (simpler) expression, is an indication of the speaker's intention to deliver a distinct message which contrasts with the stereotypical message delivered by the unmarked and less effortful expression. This means that the iteration of intensifiers is a form of a marked feature that is aimed at communicating a distinct, more intense or extreme value (Levinson, 2000, pp.149–152). The pragmatic interpretation of iteration, thus, means that repetition of intensifiers adds more of their function. Further, repetition or *parallelism*[70] is a strategy that has been identified by researchers as a strategy to increase the emotional intensity of the speaker by adding a rhythmic effect (Leech, 2014, p.65).

Individual adjective intensifiers in RNDC are duplicated up to 2-4 times (Table 4.9). The majority of iterated intensifiers are duplicated (78.13%; N=25/32). There are

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[70] *Parallelism* is a linguistic feature whereby linguistic elements are repeated to emphasise the content (Leech, 2014, p.65).

also tokens where the intensifier is triplicated (18.75%; N=6/32) and also, rarely, quadruplicated (3.13%; N=1/32). This suggests that repeating adjective intensifiers twice is the most common form in ND as suggested by the data.

Table 4.9 Proportions of Intensifier Iteration by Repetition

Iteration	N	%
Duplicated	25	78.13%
Triplicated	6	18.75%
Quadruplicated	1	3.13%

A similar pattern is observed in the iteration of English amplifiers. A search in the British National Corpus (BNC) spoken sub-corpora[71] shows that for instance, the adjective amplifier *very* is duplicated in 549 tokens and triplicated in 14. No tokens were repeated four or more times. For *really,* similarly, the highest proportion of iterated tokens is duplicated (N=43) while no tokens were triplicated and only one token was quadruplicated.

Overall, both co-occurrence and iteration as seen above are not very frequent in RNDC if we look at these phenomena based on all categories of intensifiers and based on the total number of adjectives (i.e., intensified and unintensified). When we narrow down the discussion to amplifiers to allow comparisons with other studies, we see that iteration of adjective amplifiers in the data occurs more than their co-occurrence. Out of 309 tokens of amplifiers in RNDC, 31 amplifiers are replicated. This constitutes 10.03% of the total amplified adjectives which suggests that this is a relatively frequent phenomenon in RNDC while as seen above, no tokens of co-occurrence were recorded for amplifiers.

The low frequency of iteration and co-occurrence corroborates the results found in Méndez-Naya (2017) across historical periods of the English language. Like what is found in RNDC, Méndez-Naya (2017) found that in present-day English, iteration of

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[71] I accessed this corpora using Sketch Engine https://www.sketchengine.eu/british-national-corpus-bnc/. This sub-corpora is approximately 10 million words and the collection period was 1991-1994. It consists of a wide range of speech contexts, such as radio broadcasts, informal conversations, formal meetings and educational exchanges. For these searches I used the query: [word!="very"][word="very"] [word="very"][tag="JJ"][word!="very"] which restricts the search to adjective modifiers and counts only tokens where *very* is repeated two times. This process was repeated (and modified according to the target token) when searching for triplicated and quadruplicated tokens. This query ensures that, for instance, when we search for the triplicated token, no tokens of quadruplicated are appearing in the search.

amplifiers is more common than their co-occurrence[72]. Unlike what is observed in present-day English, in older English data, the proportion of co-occurrence is higher than that of iteration[73]. Overall, the frequency of iteration in all English data in Méndez-Naya (2017) seems to be lower than the proportion found in RNDC. Méndez-Naya (2017) confirms that these features occur in spoken language or language with a high degree of "speechlikeness" such as dialogues in fiction and diaries. Since RNDC only uses spoken language, the proportion of iteration is logically higher compared to the data used in Méndez-Naya (2017) which contains both spoken and written language. Scheffler et al. (2023) and Richter and Van Hout (2020) investigated co-occurrence of amplifiers in X (Twitter) in German and Dutch languages, respectively. Scheffler et al. (2023) found that 8.4% (N=7492/89,358) of adjective amplifiers occurred consecutively[74] (i.e., next to each other). In Dutch, Richter and Van Hout (2020) found that 13.95% (N=515/3692) of adjective amplifiers piled together. A possible reason for the high rate of co-occurrence in these studies compared to RNDC could also be the mode of the language used there. In writing, unlike in speech, authors would often avoid repeating the same word more than once in the same passage, which is a practice known as "elegant variation" (Fowler, 1926, pp.130–131).

4.2.4 Categorisation and Distribution of Intensifiers

As explained in Chapter 2, the categorization of Quirk (1972) and Quirk et al.(1985) is applied here. In order to apply this categorisation, the function of each intensifier in the data is measured against the definitions and intensifiers in each sub-category in the English language provided by Quirk (1972) and Quirk et al. (1985) and each intensifier is matched to its designated group. Table 4.10 depicts a breakdown of all the forms used by ND speakers for adjective modification in RNDC. In total, 30 forms with adjectival modification functions are recorded. The information in Table 4.10 is important because, as indicated in Chapter 2, besides the list of amplifiers found in Almossa (2024), no previous research provided such an analysis of the adjective intensification system in

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[72] Based on a corpus of 520 million words, which is the Contemporary Corpus of American English (COCA). Unlike the current study which investigates all forms in the system, Méndez-Naya (2017) based her study on a limited list of five amplifiers (*full*, *well*, *very*, *right*, and *swiþe*).

[73] Méndez-Naya (2017) used a corpus of Old, Middle and Early Modern English which consists of 4.4 million words to investigate these linguistic features.

[74] Scheffler et al. (2023) analysed a corpus of Twitter messages, which consisted of 6 million tweets posted as part of reply chains in April, 2013 (https://osf.io/69x8b/).

ND. In Table 4.10 we observe that several forms are found in CA too. This is not unexpected (see Chapter 3, Section 3.7) because linguistic research on the Arabic language must deal with the diglossic nature of the Arabic language (Versteegh, 2014, p.133). For this reason and to shed more light on the forms shared with CA, an additional analysis will be conducted to demarcate intensifiers found in ND only and those shared with CA (Section 4.3).

Table 4.10 Adjective Intensifiers in RNDC

Intensifier		Variant	Gloss	N	%
Amplifier				**309**	**8.76%**
Maximisers (Signify the highest point in the scale)	1	tamāman	'completely'	9	0.26%
	2	miyah-bil-miyah	'100%'	7	0.20%
	3	b-ziyādah	'exceedingly, extremely'	4	0.11%
	4	b-zōd	'exceedingly, extremely'	1	0.03%
	5	lil-ġāyah	'immensely, extremely'	1	0.03%
Boosters (Signify a high point on the scale)	6	marrah	'very, so'	202	5.73%
	7	jiddan	'very'	73	2.07%
	8	kṯīr	'a lot'	6	0.17%
	9	b-šakil kibīr	'to a large extent'	3	0.09%
	10	b-šakil faḏ̣īʕ	'terribly'	1	0.03%
	11	ʕalā ġayr al-ʕādah	'Unusually'	1	0.03%
	12	gwwah	'strongly'	1	0.03%
Downtoners				**94**	**2.66%**
Approximators (point that the modified quality is more than what is relevant)	13	taqrīban	'nearly'	4	0.11%
	14	šibh	'semi-'	4	0.11%
Compromisers (Question the appropriateness of the modified quality)	15	nawʕan mā	'kind of, sort of'	2	0.06%
	16	kiḏā	'kind of, sort of'	25	0.71%
Diminishers (signify a low point on a scale)	17	šwayy(ah)	'a little'	50	1.42%
	18	b-šakil xafīf	'slightly, to a small extent'	1	0.03%
	19	ʔilā-ḥaddin-mā	'to some extent'	2	0.06%
Minimisers (Signify the lowest end of the scale)	20	ʔbadan/ʔbadd	'at all'	6	0.17%

Intensifier		Variant	Gloss	N	%
Emphasisers				**157**	**4.45%**
(Add emphasis by referring to the truthfulness of the proposed quality)	21	(al-/b-)ṣarāḥah	'honestly'	75	2.13%
	22	waḷḷah(ī)	'truly, I swear'	45	1.28%
	23	ʔkīd	'surely'	9	0.26%
	24	ṭabʕan	'of course'	8	0.23%
	25	fiʕlan	'really, actually, in fact'	7	0.20%
	26	ṣidig	'truly'	5	0.14%
	27	al-ḥagīgah	'truly'	3	0.09%
	28	bi(kull)ʔmānah/l il-ʔmānah	'honestly'	3	0.09%
	29	bil-fiʕl	'actually'	1	0.03%
	30	ḥarfiyyan	'literally'	1	0.03%
		Null-variant Ø		**N**	**%**
	31	Zero		2968	84.13%

In terms of the distribution among the sub-categories of intensifiers (Table 4.10; Figure 4.1), amplifiers constitute more than half of the total number of intensifiers in the data (55.18%; N=309/560). Emphasisers are the second highest category in the data (28.04%; N=157/560). Downtoners constitute the least used category of intensifiers by ND speakers (16.79%; N=94/560). Comparing the results of emphasisers to findings in relevant literature is not possible since similar studies did not include them in the intensification pool.
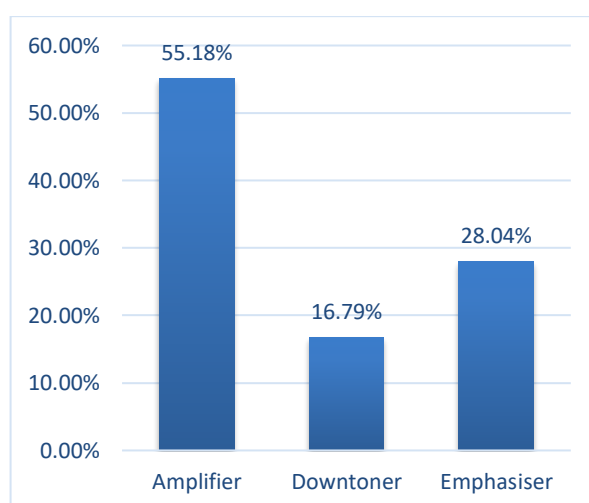
Figure 4.1 Distribution of Intensifiers According to their Sub-category in RNDC

Figure 4.2 illustrates the proportions of only amplifiers and downtoners. In this case, amplifiers constitute 76.67% (N=309/403) of the adjective intensification pool,

while downtoners modify 23.33% (N=94/403) of intensified adjectives. For English, German and Norwegian (Table 4.11), researchers have similarly reported that amplifiers are used more than downtoners, which suggests that this is a cross-linguistic phenomenon. Moreover, the findings in Table 4.11 suggest that, despite the reduced size of the adjective amplification system found in RNDC, the proportions of subcategories inside this system are in line with relevant studies in the literature. For example, in the English language, D'Arcy (2015, p.460) found that downtoners modify only 8.37% (N=336/4013) of intensified adjectives in her data while amplifiers modify around 91.63% (N=3677/4013) of intensified adjectives. Stratton (2020, p.200) found that downtoners in German modify 33% (N=919/2,493) of the intensified adjectives while the remaining 67% (N=1,574/2,493) were modified by amplifiers. In Norwegian, Stratton and Sundquist (2022, p.399) reported that 70.7% (N=604/854) of intensifiers are amplifiers while the remaining 29.3% (N=250/854) are downtoners.
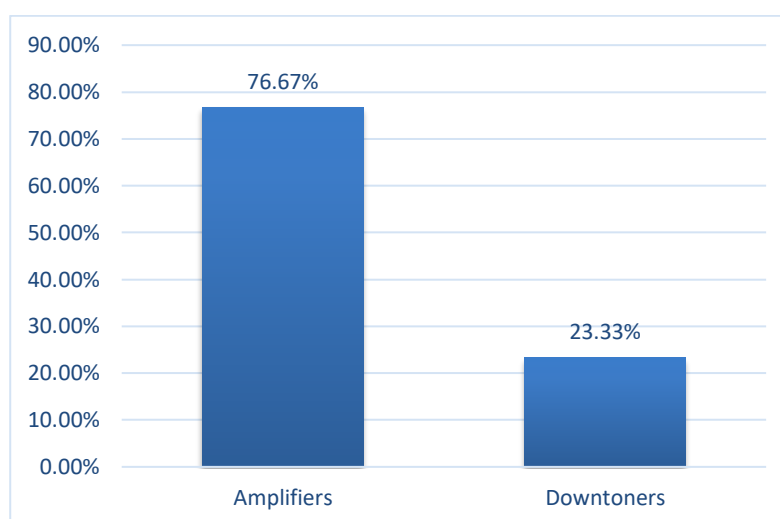
Figure 4.2 Distribution of Amplifiers and Downtoners (Excluding Emphasisers) in RNDC

Table 4.11 Distribution of Amplifiers and Downtoners in RNDC Compared to Other Studies

	Language	Amplifiers	Downtoners
Current study (RNDC)	Najdi Arabic	76.67%	23.33%
Stratton and Sundquist (2022)	Oslo Norwegian	70.70%	29.30%
Stratton (2020)	German Language	67%	33%
D'Arcy (2015)	New Zealand English	91.63%	8.37%

Twelve forms[75] are used for adjective amplification which is the highest number of forms in the adjective intensification system compared to only eight forms used for downtoning and ten for emphasising (Table 4.12).

Table 4.12 N of Adjective Amplification forms in Relevant Arabic Literature Compared to the Current Study[76]

	Language	N Adj Amplification Forms
Abou Shaady (1995)	Egyptian Arabic	4
Omar and Alotaibi (2017)	Saudi Arabic	3
Alshaboul et al. (2022)	Ammani Arabic	2
Almossa (2024)[77]	Najdi Arabic	8
Current Study (RNDC)	Najdi Arabic	12

The observation that the overall forms used for amplification are more than those for downtoning echoes similar studies (e.g., D'Arcy, 2015). Table 4.12 illustrates the number of lexical forms used in adjective amplification in ND (as observed in RNDC) and other Arabic language studies. These studies show fewer forms. In AA, Alshaboul et al. (2022) identified only two forms of amplification. In SD, Omar and Alotaibi (2017) found only three forms of adjective amplification. In EA, Abou Shaady (1995, p.269) identified four forms of amplifiers while Almossa (2024, p.219) found eight amplification forms in her data of ND (Table 4.13).

Table 4.13 Amplifiers in Almossa's (2024) Dataset

Boosters			
	marrah	372	85.71%
	jiddan	46	10.60%
	b-šakil	5	1.15%
	wājid	1	0.23%
	kiṯīr	1	0.23%
	bal-ḥēl	1	0.23%
	mōt	1	0.23%
Maximisers	*b-ziyādah*	7	1.61%
	Total	434	100%

The current study, unlike most of these studies, identifies the list of intensifiers based on the modified adjective. This approach is used instead of generating a list based

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[75] As indicated in Appendix C, there are four additional amplification forms used in ND but not found in RNDC.

[76] Identification and classification of intensifiers in these studies are based on Quirk et al. (1985) which makes the comparison possible.

[77] In this table (and others of Almossa 2024), four forms of emphasisers are part of what Almossa (2024, p.219) considered as amplifiers. Therefore, for the sake of comparison, *waḷḷah* 'I swear to God, indeed' and *ṣidg* 'really' were removed while *fiʕlan* 'truly' and *mn jidd* 'really' were not because they were grouped under the label 'other' (4%; N=28). Hence, these categorised with *other* were not excluded.

on assumptions that certain forms are used, especially given the scarcity of studies documenting these devices. The observed difference may result from the approach of the current study, which was able to capture less common forms.

4.2.4.1 Distribution of Amplifiers

Table 4.14 illustrates that boosters are the prevalent amplification elements in the data. Boosters constitute 92.88% (N=287/309) of the total number of amplifiers used in RNDC while maximisers are only found intensifying adjectives in 22 tokens (7.12%). Quirk et al. (1985, p.590) assert that boosters constitute an open category that is constantly undergoing renewal. Maximisers or devices that express the idea of completeness continually become weaker and less emphatic which creates a demand for new ones that express the highest degree on a scale (Stoffel, 1901, p.2; Bolinger, 1972, p.18). This specific feature may account for the higher frequency of boosters compared with maximisers, which are constantly losing their sense of completeness.

Table 4.14 Distribution of Amplifiers in RNDC

	Variant	Gloss	N	%
Boosters	*marrah*	'very, so'	202	65.37%
	jiddan	'very'	73	23.62%
	kiṯīr	'a lot'	6	1.94%
	b-šakil kibīr	'to a large extent'	3	0.97%
	b-šakil faḏīʕ	'terribly'	1	0.32%
	ʕalā ġayr al-ʕādah	'unusually'	1	0.32%
	gwwah	'strongly'	1	0.32%
	Total boosters		**287**	**92.88%**
Maximisers	*tamāman*	'completely'	9	2.91%
	miyah-bil-miyah	'100%'	7	2.27%
	b-ziyādah	'exceedingly'	4	1.29%
	b-zōd	'extremely'	1	0.32%
	lil-ġāyah	'immensely, extremely'	1	0.32%
	Total maximisers		**22**	**7.12%**
Grand Total			**309**	**100%**

When we compare the results to the proportions found in amplification systems in the Arabic language (Table 4.15), we notice that maximisers are either absent or found in small proportions. In AA, SD and EA, Alshaboul et al., (2022) and Omar and Alotaibi

(2017) only reported forms of boosters in their data and no maximisers were recorded (Table 4.15). In ND, maximisers in Almossa's (2024) study constituted only 1.61% (N=7/434) of the amplification system (Table 4.13). However, as explained above, this could be a result of the method adopted in the circumscription of the variable context that could disregard some used forms.

The proportion of maximisers in other languages such as English and German is also smaller than boosters (Table 4.15) (Reichelt and Durham, 2017; Stratton, 2020; Stratton and Sundquist, 2022; Tagliamonte, 2008). For example, in the English language, Tagliamonte (2008) found that maximisers modified only 3.86% (N=138/3571) of the amplified adjectives while boosters modified the majority of the amplified adjectives (96.14%; N=3433/3571). Stratton and Sundquist, (2022, p.400) reported that in their Norwegian data, boosters modified 79% (N=479/604) of the total amplified adjectives. On the other hand, maximisers were observed amplifying only 21% (N=125/604) of amplified adjectives. This means that even though amplifiers in ND are used at lower frequencies, the findings suggest that within the system, there is a parallel image to those of other languages in terms of proportions. What is different about the ND is the reduced propensity for adjective intensification as a pragmatic practice.

Table 4.15 Distribution of Boosters vs. Maximisers in the Current Study and in Relevant Studies

Study	Language	Boosters	Maximisers
Current study (RNDC)	Najdi Arabic	92.88%	7.12%
Almossa (2024)	Najdi Arabic	98.39%	1.61%
Alshaboul et al. (2022)	Ammani Arabic	100%	0%
Omar and Alotaibi (2017)	Saudi Arabic and Egyptian Arabic	100%	0%
Stratton and Sundquist (2022)	Oslo Norwegian	79%	21%
Tagliamonte (2008)	Canadian English	96.14%	3.86%

The most frequent amplification form in the data is the intensifier *marrah*, which is employed by the participants 202 times to amplify adjectives (Table 4.14; Table 4.16). This constitutes 65.37% of all amplifiers in the data. If we look at the whole intensification system, we can see that *marrah* constitutes 36% (N=202/560) of intensifiers. Looking at scalar intensifiers alone (i.e., amplifiers and downtoners), *marrah* makes up half (50.12%) of the proportion of scalar intensifiers (N=202/403). The second most highly used intensifier is *jiddan*, which is, unlike *marrah,* also found in CA. The findings mentioned previously are in line with previous research on Arabic intensifiers

(Table 4.16). In this section and the subsequent one, I compare the patterns found in RNDC to those found in several studies on Arabic intensifiers. Omar and Alotaibi (2017) similarly found that *marrah* was the most frequent intensifier in their SD data (44.66%; N=251/562) while *jiddan* (43.42%; N=244/562) came second. Alshaboul et al. (2022, p.6) found that the amplifier *ktīr* 'a lot' and all its variants modified 94.15% (N=547/581) of the intensified adjectives, while *jiddan* intensified only 5.85% (N=34/581) of the modified adjectives. The amplifier *ktīr* in AA holds a similar status to the booster *marrah* in ND. Almossa (2024) found that *marrah* in her data occupies 85.71% (N=372/434) of the amplification system, while *jiddan* occupies only 10.60% (N=46/434) (Table 4.13, Table 4.16).

The variation of the proportions of *jiddan* versus *marrah* (and *ktīr* in AA) can be explained, in part, in terms of the seriousness of topics in the data. We notice that that the frequency of *jiddan* in Omar and Alotaibi (2017) is almost identical to that of *marrah,* which could be because they used radio programmes as their dataset, as we previously mentioned in Chapter 2 , (Section 2.3.4.1)[78]. Thus, the data produced in this context is under a dual effect, leading to higher frequency of *jiddan*. In Chapter 6, I also explore the effect of social factors on the usage of these two forms which explain other possible factors that may contribute to their usage. In his well-known study, Bell (1982) analyses style shifting in the language of news on New Zealand radio stations. Bell (1982) confirms that style shifting in the language of media is at its highest level because there is pressure from the need for approval from the audience. At the same time, it is well known that Arabic speakers tend to shift their style towards a more formal one that is characterised by using features of CA whenever they are being observed and recorded (Al-Batal, 1994; Versteegh, 2014, p.133). Both the current study and Alshaboul et al. (2022) use sociolinguistic interviews; however, the proportion of *jiddan* in Alshaboul et al. (2022) is lower than the proportion in the current study. This could also be a result of the absence of serious and sensitive questions in their dyads (see Section 4.2.1). Further, we notice that in Almossa's (2024) data, there is a lower proportion of *jiddan* compared to the current data (10.30% vs. 23.62%). Almossa's data (see Chapter 2, Section 2.3.4.3) is a collection of self-recorded conversations between friends and family members without the presence of an interviewer. Therefore, the register is expected to be less formal,

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[78] These radio programmes represent what can be called *talk shows*, in which broadcasters are generally more laid back and listeners have participation opportunities. Omar and Alotaibi (2017) include data from presenters, guests and participants.

unlike the current data, which contains serious questions that typically trigger style shifting towards a more formal register and contains more features of CA. Moreover, the presence of the interviewer (though virtually) augments the effect of the observer's paradox (Labov, 1984a, p.14; 1985, p.209) that leads to shifting one's speech towards a formal style that contains more features of CA (see Chapter 3, Section 3.7).

Table 4.16 *jiddan* in Arabic Varieties versus the Most Common Amplifier

	Variety	Most Common Amplifier		*jiddan*
Current Study (RNDC)	Najdi Arabic	*marrah*	65.37%	23.62%
Almossa (2024)	Najdi Arabic	*marrah*	85.71%	10.60%
Alshaboul et al. (2022)	Ammani Arabic	*kṯīr*	94.15%	5.85%
Omar and Alotaibi (2017)	Saudi Arabic	*marrah*	44.66%	43.42%

The dominance of one or two amplifiers (*marrah* and *jiddan*) in the amplification system of ND is also observed in non-Arabic studies. Similar results have been observed by Ito and Tagliamonte (2003) in British English where *very* constituted 38.3% (N=364/950) of the adjective amplification system while *really* constituted 30.2% (N=287/950). In Norwegian, Stratton and Sundquist (2022), found that the amplifier *veldig* 'very' constituted 31% (N=264/854) of the adjective intensification system. This domination, however, can start to decline over time. Rise and fall of frequency over time along with the re-emergence of some amplifiers have all been observed in previous research on English intensifiers. For instance, Tagliamonte (2008) observed the re-emergence of *so* by younger speakers while Aijmer (2021) observed that *well* is re-emerging in present-day English after a period of diminished usage.

4.2.4.2 Distribution of Downtoners

As illustrated in Table 4.17, diminishers constitute 56.38% (N=53/94) of the moderation system which is more than half the tokens of downtoners. This is primarily because the diminisher *šwayy* 'a little' makes up 53.19% (N=50/94) of the total number of downtoners. The second most highly used downtoner is the compromiser *kiḏā* 'sort of' which constitutes 26.60% (N=25/94) of the total tokens of downtoners. As was observed in the usage of amplifiers, two forms of downtoners dominate the system of moderation.

Table 4.17 Distribution of Downtoners in RNDC

	Variant	Gloss	N	%
Minimisers	*ʔbadan/ʔbadd*	'at all'	6	6.38%
	Total minimisers		**6**	**6.38%**
Diminishers	*šwayy(ah)*	'a little'	50	53.19%
	b-šakil xafīf	'slightly, to a small extent'	1	1.06%
	ʔilā-ḥaddin-mā	'to some extent'	2	2.13%
	Total		**53**	**56.38%**
Compromisers	*nawʕan mā*	'kind of, sort of'	2	2.13%
	kiḏā	'kind of, sort of'	25	26.60%
	Total		**27**	**28.72%**
Approximators	*taqrīban*	'nearly'	4	4.26%
	šibh	'semi-'	4	4.26%
	Total		**8**	**8.51%**
Grand Total			94	100%

4.2.4.3 Distribution of Emphasisers

Table 4.18 illustrates that *ṣarāḥah* 'honestly' constitutes 47.77% (N=75/157) of the entire emphasising pool. The form *waḷḷah* 'truly' is the second most highly used emphasiser in RNDC (28.66%; N=45/157).

Even though these elements are modality markers, it should be noted that emphasisers in certain cases, when placed adjacent to elements such as adjectives or predicates, can have a limited scope restricted to modifying these elements (Quirk et al., 1985, p.583; Woidich, 2018, p.259). At the same time, Quirk et al. (1985, p.584) confirm that unlike degree modifiers (i.e., amplifiers and downtoners), we cannot confirm that their emphasising effect is directed towards adjectives even when used directly adjacent to them (Quirk et al., 1985, p.584). Woidich (2018, p.259), in his discussion of the intensifier *ṣaḥīḥ* 'truly' in EA, adds that this item, which is a pragmatic marker "expressing strong commitment of the speaker to the proposition", can still have this function, especially when placed sentence initially or medially. Thus, their effect scope may include the noun or all the sentence too. This is an important aspect of their function, which ought to be considered when assessing their suitability for variationist analysis, which delineates the variation envelope based on the function and the modified head. Thus, although identifying them as adjective intensifiers allows us to track their development using factors like the age of users, semantic content of adjective and adjective function, this approach falls short of tolerating the fluidity in their scope.

Table 4.18 Distribution of Emphasisers in RNDC

Variant	Gloss	N	%
(al-/b-)ṣarāḥah	'honestly'	75	47.77%
waḷḷah(ī)	'truly, I swear'	45	28.66%
ʔkīd	'surely'	9	5.73%
ṭabʕan	'of course'	8	5.10%
fiʕlan	'really, actually, in fact'	7	4.46%
ṣidig	'truly'	5	3.18%
al-ḥagīgah	'truly'	3	1.91%
bi(kull)ʔmānah/lil-ʔmānah	'honestly'	3	1.91%
bil-fiʕl	'actually'	1	0.64%
ḥarfiyyan	'literally'	1	0.64%
Total		**157**	**100%**

4.3 Intensifiers in ND and CA

In this section, I explore the forms found in CA and those exclusively used in ND[79]. I used two corpora: ArTenTen2018 (Belinkov et al., 2013)[80], which is composed of 4.6 billion words (texts in this corpus are collected from the internet) and reflects a contemporary usage of Arabic from various sources on the internet[81]; and the Arabic Timestamped Corpus (Bušta et al., 2017)[82], which is composed of 4.7+ billion words (texts in this corpus are collected from news articles). Thus, using both corpora provides a larger dataset to explore forms which may be uncommon. These corpora include more diverse contexts and registers of the language which is critical for the usage of intensifiers that tend to be context dependent. I used the advanced search option in Sketch Engine[83] (Kilgarriff et al., 2008; Kilgarriff et al., 2014) to filter the concordance lines according to the part-of-speech. Using this search ensures that adjectives occur either to the right or left of the intensifier within a single token (Appendices 6-7). In Appendices 6-7, I include examples of these searches from both corpora. The forms *bilmarrah*, *bišaklin kabīr*, *bišaklin faḏīʕ*, *lil-ġāyah*, *miʔah bil-miʔah*, *ʔbadan*, *bišaklin xafīf*, *ʔilā-ḥaddin-mā*, *b-ṣarāḥah*, *waḷḷah*, *bittaʔkīd*, *bil-fiʕl*, *bi-kull-ʔmānah/lil-ʔmānah* and *ṣidqan* only appeared in the ArTenTen18 Corpus and did not appear in the Timestamped Corpus. This may

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[79] By using the word exclusively, I mean not used in CA. Hence, these items may be used in other Arabic varieties too but this is not the focus of the current study.

[80] https://www.sketchengine.eu/artenten-arabic-corpus/?highlight=ArTenTen (Accessed, March 1, 2024).

[81] Since this corpus is based on various kinds of posts on the internet, there should be among those texts posts written by ND speakers.

[82] https://www.sketchengine.eu/timestamped-arabic-corpus/ (Accessed, March 1, 2024).

[83] http://www.sketchengine.eu (Accessed, March 1, 2024).

reflect the type of register since the Arabic Timestamped Corpus only contains news articles while ArTenTen2018 contains a wide range of texts that may be less formal and more speechlike such as blogposts, product reviews, comments and forum discussions[84]. Since ArTenTen2018 contains texts which may represent a speechlike form of Arabic vernaculars and not only CA, I verified if the intensifier appeared in a CA text to label it as a CA intensifier.

Two categories of intensifiers emerged based on this search. First, there is a category that is shared with CA and this can be subdivided into two groups. In one group of intensifiers, the form used in ND is identical to that used in CA. In Table 4.19 below, these are marked with the label *identical*. In the other group, there are some phonological variations between the forms in ND and CA and they are underlined in Table 4.19. The second category is intensifiers that do not appear in CA data in these corpora and in this case, they are labelled as *absent* in Table 4.19.

Table 4.19 The Distinction between Intensifiers in ND and CA

	Classical Arabic	Gloss	Najdi Arabic
Amplifiers	jiddan	'very'	Identical
	ʕlā ġayr al-ʕādah	'unusually'	Identical
	lil-ġāyah	'extremely'	Identical
	tamāman	'completely'	Identical
	kaṯīran	'a lot'	*kiṯīr*
	bišaklin kabīr	'to a large extent'	*b-šakil kibīr*
	bišaklin faḏīʕ	'terribly'	*b-šakil faḏīʕ*
	miʔah bil-miʔah	'100%'	*miyah-bil-miyah*
	bilmarrah	'very'	*marrah*
	Absent	'extremely'	b-ziyādah
	Absent	'exceedingly'	b-zōd
	Absent	'strongly'	gwwah
Downtoners	taqrīban	'nearly'	Identical
	šibh	'semi-'	Identical
	ʔilā-ḥaddin-mā	'to some extent'	Identical
	nawʕan mā	'kind of'	Identical
	bišaklin xafīf	'slightly, to a small extent'	*b-šakil xafīf*
	ʔbadan	'at all'	*ʔbadan/ʔbadd*
	Absent	'a little'	šwayy(ah)
	Absent	'sort of'	kiḏā

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[84] It should be clarified here that these less formal texts are not transcripts of actual speech but texts written by Arabic language speakers on the internet.

	Classical Arabic	Gloss	Najdi Arabic
Emphasisers	*ṭabʕan*	'of course'	Identical
	fiʕlan	'really, actually'	Identical
	bi-kull-ʔmānah/lil-ʔmānah[85]	'honestly'	Identical
	bil-fiʕl	'actually'	Identical
	ḥarfiyyan	'literally'	Identical
	bi-ṣarāḥah[86]	'honestly'	*b-ṣarāḥah/al-ṣarāḥah*
	waḷḷahi	'I swear'	*waḷḷah*
	bittaʔkīd	'surely'	*ʔkīd*
	ṣidqan	'truly'	*ṣidig*
	fī-al-ḥaqīqah[87]	'truly'	*al-ḥagīgah*

Although there is a relative agreement about the blurred lines between CA and spoken varieties of Arabic (see Chapter 1, Section 1.5), sketching a rough visualisation like that in Table 4.19 is helpful for further analysis of these forms. It helps in interpreting the patterns observed for these variables in relation to social and linguistic factors. This is because using a variant that is identically found in CA will probably be in a sociolinguistic sense interpreted differently from using a variant that is part of the spoken vernacular. This can be made consciously or unconsciously because people might not always be aware of the specific social meanings linked to linguistic variables since they are ingrained in language ideologies that are not explicitly taught but are acquired through socialisation (Bucholtz and Hall, 2005; Agha, 2007). For instance, this is especially critical when exploring the effect of education and degree of topic seriousness on the forms labelled as *identical* (see Chapters 6-7).

4.4 Forms of Intensifiers

The objective of this section is to enhance our understanding of the adjective intensification forms in ND by examining the syntactic structure and semantic content of these units and by utilising grammaticalisation theories (see Hopper and Traugott, 1993). Drawing on the grammaticalisation framework not only explains the mechanisms of adjective intensification in ND, but also reveals the historical and semantic aspects of

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[85] Unlike in ND, in CA -*kull* is not optional.

[86] The form *al-ṣarāḥah* is found only in ND not CA.

[87] Unlike in ND, in CA *fi-* is used with *al-ḥaqīqah.*

ND intensifiers. My focus in this section will be only on the two most common forms in each category: *marrah*, *jiddan*, *šwayy*, *kiḏā, ṣarāḥah* and *waḷḷah.* So, for these forms I examine their origins in the Arabic language and how they came to be exploited as intensifiers by examining their predicted grammaticalisation. According to Ingham (1994, p.57), intensifiers in ND represent dialectal developments that are absent from CA. According to Hopper and Traugott (1993, pp.1–2), intensifiers typically lose their semantic content as lexical items and become grammaticalised. They change from their previous status to functional devices in language. Intensifiers typically keep evolving over time, even after they have been established as intensifiers in a particular language (Bordet, 2015; König, 2017; Tagliamonte, 2008).

There is an important point to note when giving any background on intensification forms. The basis for information regarding the grammaticalisation of any form provided in this section is the alignment of the shreds of evidence we have about intensifiers in ND with the existing body of knowledge regarding grammaticalisation processes. The lack of historical spoken data of ND makes it nearly impossible to draw any conclusions from diachronic data. Because there are records of historical CA, unlike spoken varieties, efforts can be undertaken to trace the evolution of forms available for usage in CA and a project of this kind would be beneficial for future research, to complement the findings presented in this chapter. Yet, this is outside the purview of the present investigation.

4.4.1 marrah

In this section, I examine the form of the amplifier *marrah* and propose a hypothetical trajectory of its grammaticalisation. *bilmarrah* was recorded in the ND spoken in Hail city[88] by Abboud (1964, p.21) about 60 years ago. Abboud interpreted the word as 'completely' rather than 'very' as it is translated in the present data. According to Omar and Alotaibi (2017) in their SD data, the preposition *bi-* and the article *al-* or *bil-* are employed to introduce *marrah* and convey the notion of majority. Based on these fragments of information, we may thus hypothesise that the loss of *bil-* signalled a shift in its function from a maximiser to booster. Based on the available data, this trajectory

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[88] A city in Saudi Arabia located in the northern region of Najd area.

might be the case in ND in Riyadh. Since the progression of linguistic features in the grammaticalisation process can vary throughout Arabic varieties, *marrah* may not be the same in other Arabic varieties (Woidich, 1996). Further research is needed to explore this area and this requires intralinguistic comparisons.

As was already mentioned in Section 4.2.4.1, maximisers often eventually lose their ability to mark the highest point on a scale and become only able to elevate or mark a high point. There are no tokens of the variant *bilmarrah* for adjective amplification in RNDC. However, a 63-year-old participant used one token for verb amplification with the verb *Ɂxtalaf* 'it changed' (example 3).

3) *al-jawhar Ɂxtalaf **bil-marrah*** (F25)
   The essence changed ***completely***

The form *bilmarrah* can be further explored in other ND datasets in the future to explore possible explanations for the occurrence of this token. For instance, using an apparent-time approach, observing higher usage by older speakers would confirm the current speculation that *bilmarrah* transitioned into *marrah*. Further, future research can investigate the syntactic contexts modified by *bilmarrah* and this process is beneficial in revealing the "specialisation" (Hopper and Traugott, 1993, p.115) trajectory of its grammaticalisation where a device becomes restricted into narrower contexts.

The word *marrah* in the Arabic language is the numeral adverb 'once'. This device probably went through a process called "divergence" which involves a change in less-grammatical devices in language (Hopper and Traugott, 1993, p.115). In this process, the original device splits into two variants. One variant keeps its original function while the other advances in its grammaticalisation. Hence, the numeral adverb *marrah* is still used in ND while the other variant *bilmarrah* developed (example 4d). *bilmarrah* which preceded *marrah* could have been the one meaning 'all at once' or 'at one time' (i.e., doing two things at the same time) (example 4a)[89]. This function probably further developed to a maximiser (example 4b). Another function of this form is using it as a minimiser 'at all' with negative contexts (example 4c). The function of the maximiser then weakened into the booster *marrah* (Figure 4.3). This step was probably preceded

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[89] Because no tokens of this function appeared in the data, I collected these SD examples 4a,4b and 4c from ArTenTen2018 (Token numbers: 139893437, 424002075 and 639295872 respectively) using Sketch Engine.

by losing *bil-* from the maximiser. Thus, we can predict that *marrah* is a renewed form of *bilmarrah*[90].

Numeral Adverb 'once': *marrah*

'all at once': *bilmarrah*

Maximiser 'completely': *bilmarrah*

Maximiser 'completely': *marrah*

Booster 'very': *marrah*
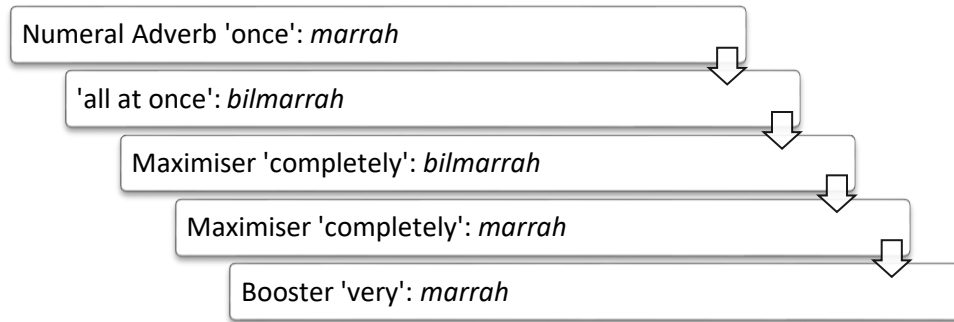
Figure 4.3 Proposed Grammaticalisation Phases of *marrah*

Interestingly, *bilmarrah*, as observed in Section 4.3, is found in CA in ArTenTen2018 as a maximiser and a minimiser (Appendix 6). This may be partly influenced by speakers of vernaculars where this variant is used such as ND and HD. At the same time, *bilmarrah* is also found in King Saud University Corpus of Classical Arabic (KSUCCA)[91] (Alrabiah et al., 2014) which contains 46 million words elicited from CA texts from pre-Islamic era to the end of the fourth Hijri century (i.e., roughly from the seventh to early eleventh century CE). The search returned only two tokens of the maximiser *bilmarrah* and one token of a minimiser (see Appendix 9). This means it is rare in the data; however, finding these few tokens is in itself a significant observation. Thus, the assumption that intensifiers are developments in the spoken varieties (Ingham, 1994, p.57; Omar and Alotaibi, 2017, p.225) must be challenged by further inspections of diachronic data of CA. Thus, researchers should be careful in drawing conclusions about the historical development of intensifiers because of the complex phases they undergo in their development. A similar case in the English language is the intensifier *canny* which was initially suspected to be an innovative form in Tyneside English by Buchstaller and Barnfield (2010). Subsequent research (Pearce, 2013, p.576; Childs, 2016, p.260; Bueno-Amaro, 2021, p.219), however, argued that *canny* had been used at least since the twentieth century and that the data in those studies in fact suggest that *canny* is a revived form and not completely new. Since the renewed form *marrah* is not found in CA, we can look at it as a local form used in ND (and perhaps other Arabic vernaculars)

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[90] As noted at the beginning of this section, this represents a hypothesised trajectory. While the available synchronic data suggests that the function of the maximiser *marrah* weakened into a booster, this process cannot be definitively confirmed without further diachronic evidence.

[91] https://www.sketchengine.eu/corpus-of-classical-arabic-ksucca/ (Accessed, March 1, 2024).

but not in CA. This is significant for understanding the development and the social meaning of this variable (see Chapter 6).

4)

a) gabḷ ʔašhur ʔttṣal bī wāḥd mn al-jmāʕah jā mn al-dīrah liḥuḍūr zawāj grībh w-gāl wddh yzūrnī b-al-bēt w-***bilmarrah*** yasʔal ʕan ʔasʕār al-ʔarāḍī b-al-manṭqah
months ago one of my relatives called me, he came from town to attend the wedding of his relative and said that he would like to visit me at home and ***at once*** (at the same time) ask about the prices of lands in the area

b) kānat ʔayyām ḥlwah ***bilmarrah***
These days were ***completely*** nice

c) kān ʔslūbhā maʕāhā mū ḥlū ***bilmarrah***
Her attitude with her wasn't nice ***at all***

d) lā bass ʔanā ʔatkallam ʔnnah gabḷ fatrah kān waḍḥ ***marrah*** yaʕnī lākn ʔlḥīn ʔaḥss ʔnnh šwayy šwayy (.) qall yaʕni (M0)
No but I mean it was ***very*** prevalent but now I feel that it gradually became less common

4.4.2 jiddan

As previously noted in the literature review (Chapter 2), Feodorov (2000) indicates that *jiddan* has reached a very advanced level in the grammaticalisation cline (example 5). Its original semantic meaning is derived from the root *jidd* which means 'force' or 'strain' in performing a physical action (Feodorov, 2000, p.2). This meaning extended to more abstract concepts to reflect seriousness and significance, which led to its use as an amplifier that is semantically empty. From a traditional grammatical perspective, this word represents a verbal noun in the accusative (i.e., the cognate object) that is used in the Arabic language to emphasise its neighbouring verb and is often derived from the same root as its verb. Sometimes, it is derived from a different root for a specific purpose, such as showing the manner, frequency or type of action (Nasif et al., 2008, p.93). *jiddan* is one member of a group of intensifiers and focus markers, including *fiʕlan* 'really', *tamāman* 'completely', *ṭabʕan* 'of course, surely, indeed' *and taqrīban* 'nearly', which are frozen in this case and are used in CA and modern vernaculars. While the case system is still applied to mark the end of words in CA, it is not used in most Arabic vernaculars (Versteegh, 2014, p.136). The preservation of the case in these intensifiers may be an effect of their high frequency. One of the effects of high frequency is the "conservation effect", which leads to preserving irregular forms, such as the

comparative adjective 'bad/worse' in the English language (Bybee et al., 1997, as cited in Hopper and Traugott, 1993, p.128). The grammaticalisation of these nouns represents the typical trajectory in which words from major categories, such as nouns, develop into minor categories, such as adverbs (i.e., intensifiers) (Hopper and Traugott, 1993, p. 107). Like *bilmarrah*, *jiddan* is also found in CA (Section 4.3). Tokens of the amplifier *jiddan* is also found in old CA in the corpus of KSUCCA (see Appendix 9) though the search returned a considerably high number of tokens (N=7,102) compared to only 2-3 tokens of *bilmarrah*. As we suggested in the discussion of *marrah*, future research must inspect this element using historical data like that of KSUCCA corpus. The findings may be beneficial for understanding their status in spoken varieties. The variation of the amplifier *jiddan* will be further analysed in Chapter 6. Finally, the previous proposed trajectory of the grammaticalisation of *jiddan* remains a hypothesis that requires further empirical validation through historical linguistic analysis.

5) al-fajir ykūn ***jiddan*** jamīl (M19)
   The morning is ***very*** beautiful

4.4.3 *šwayy*

In ND and other Arabic varieties, *šwayy* is used as a quantifier 'little' (example 6a). This includes its usage as 'shortly' to refer to a short amount of time (example 6b). It can also be duplicated to mean 'little by little, gradually' (example 6c) or 'calm down, take it easy, slowly' (example 6d). Before discussing the development of *šwayy* in which I align it with typical grammaticalisation trajectories described by Hopper and Traugott (1993), it must be noted that this remains a proposed trajectory that requires substantiation through historical research. Etymologically, in the Arabic language, *šwayy* is a diminutive form of the noun *šayy* 'thing'. Thus, its function as a quantifier probably developed from this diminutive variant of the noun. The grammaticalisation of *šwayy* represents a typical trajectory like that of *jiddan* in which major categories, such as nouns, grammaticalise to minor categories, such as adverbs, which constitute the grammatical class of quantifiers (see Hopper and Traugott, 1993, p.107). Quantifiers are common sources of downtoners, such as 'little' in the English language. The quantifier then went through a process of "divergence" (Hopper and Traugott, 1993, p.115) and its function as a quantifier is still maintained while another variant advanced as a diminisher (example

6e). It should be noted that in the data, the morpheme -ah can be attached to *šwayy* (*šwayyah*). Ingham (1994) also notes that -at, as in *šwayyat*, is also used in ND.

6)
a) w-ʔāxḏ ***šwayy*** salaṭāt (F17)
    and I take ***little/some*** salads

b) lā lā šf tjīk ʔijābah dblumāsiyyah baʕd ***šwayy*** (M23)
    No No listen a diplomatic answer will come ***shortly***

c) bdāl mā yʕṭīk al-ʔiksiswārāt al-bāgiyah ḥaggat al-šayy ally ʔaxaḏth fa yaʕnī yasḥabūn rijlk ***šwayy šwayy*** (M16)
    Instead of giving you the remaining accessories for the item you purchased, so they (the online store) pull your feet ***little by little***

d) bass yā nisāʔnā ***šwayy šwayy*** haha zalagtū b-zyādah yaʕnī (M25)
    But, our ladies, ***take it easy***, haha, you went too far, I mean

e) bass hī naḏrat al-nās ʔlly kānat ***šwayy*** mnġalqah (F23)
    But it's the perspective of people that was a ***little*** closed-minded

4.4.4 *kiḏā*

The downtoner *kiḏā* in ND is similar to *(ha)kaḏā* in CA. This is a compound function word that consists of three parts *ha-ka-ḏā* (Omar, 2008). The particle *ha-* is an attention elicitor, *ka-* is used for making analogy and -ḏā is a demonstrative (Omar, 2008). Thus, *hakaḏā* means 'like this, in this way', and *kiḏā* in ND also has the same function. Ryding (2005, pp.281–282) confirms that *hakaḏā* is a demonstrative pronoun which means 'thus, and so, in such a way'. When using the downtoner *kiḏā* there is no analogy between two entities. The downtoner *kiḏā* is not used in a true comparison context but to represent "informational vagueness" (see Voghera and Collu, 2017, p.379). It is through the absence of the second part of the comparison that a sense of vagueness is created. Compromisers can be considered "cautious, metalinguistic assessments of degrees expressing quantitative restrictions" (König, 2017, p.17). Thus, the speaker adds *kiḏā* before the adjective to signal their cautious assessment of degree and thus bring about a restriction and a slight scaling-down effect on the modified adjective (example 7). König (2017) confirms that intensifying is based on the cognitive process of comparison, which is reflected in many cases in the form used for intensification. Thus, many demonstratives are found to be used for this intensification purpose, which is the

case for *kiḏā* (König, 2017). Further diachronic research is of course necessary to substantiate this proposed grammaticalisation trajectory of the downtoner *kiḏā*.

7) ʕādī law ḥadīqah bass ḥadīqah maṯalan tkūn b-ṭābʕ mxtilif ***kiḏā*** (F13)
    It's okay if it's just a park, but a park with ***a sort of*** different vibe, for example

4.4.5 ṣarāḥah

The emphasiser *(al-/b-)ṣarāḥah* is an indefinite noun meaning 'honesty' (example 8). It can be definite when the article *al-* 'the' is added or preceded by the preposition *b-* 'with'. It is relatively common in ND and many other Arabic vernaculars, such as EA (see Abou Shaady, 1995). As explained by Bolinger (1972, p.93), "They are terms that originally expressed some relationship between what is said and the declarativeness of saying it, or the certainty or emphasis or truth attached to it". This function is clearly reflected in their semantic content, which makes them some of the least grammaticalised intensifiers based on the criteria of semantic emptiness explained by Bolinger (1972).

8) wagt al-murājaʕah wagt ʔiʕdād al-ʔasʔilah ***ṣarāḥah*** mutʕib (F25)
     the time of revision the time of exam questions' preparation is ***honestly*** exhausting

4.4.6 waḷḷah

waḷḷah is a common linguistic device that Muslim speakers apply in their daily conversations (example 9). Alghmaiz (2018, pp.60–61) confirms that "native Arabic speakers tend to swear to *Allah* 'God' in order to lay more emphasis on their utterance". The oath expression *waḷḷah* is a prepositional phrase that consists of two units (Mughazy, 2003). The first part is *wa* 'by', which is a prefix preposition referred to in Arabic as *wāw al-qasam* 'Oath *wa-*'. The second part is the noun *Aḷḷah* 'God'. Allah is the name of God in the Arabic language. The function of *waḷḷah* as an emphasiser is expressed by swearing, which is a signal that the speaker is committed to the proposition because of its reference to God.

9) ʔīh marrah mānb ṣāḥyah ***waḷḷah***
     yeah I'm really not sane ***waḷḷah***

Researchers reported that *waḷḷah* has functions beyond its role as an oath marker, including the addition of intensity and emphasis to the adjacent unit (Mughazy, 2003; Alasmari, 2013; Basendouh, 2019). Gregore (2015, p.266) believes that this "reinforcing and authenticating" element can be used in different syntactic constructions to perform the same function. In non-Arabic research, linguists acknowledge the intensification effect that swearing and profanity expressions add to the proposition. Benzinger (1971, pp.15–16) asserts that forms such as *God* and *Hell* can function as intensifiers.

4.4.7 Further Observations

Before concluding this section, as observed in Table 4.2.4, the format *b-šakil* + adjective is employed in three forms to produce intensifiers. The preposition *b-* 'in' and the noun *ʃakil* 'form, way' collocate with adjectives like *kibīr* 'big', *faḏīʕ* 'terrible' and *xafīf* 'light' to create an intensifier with a function derived from the accompanying adjective. This format is also used in CA (see Ryding, 2005, p.287) and EA (see Abou Shaady, 1995, p.282). Other dummy nouns may be used similarly such as *darajah* 'degree' and *ṭarīqah* 'method'. One last point to comment on in discussing the forms of intensification in the data is the striking similarity between some forms in CA and the forms used in the English language. I suspect forms like *ʔilā-ḥaddin-mā* 'to some extent' and *nawʕan mā* 'sort of/kind of', which are word-for-word translations of their English counterparts, are a result of cross-linguistic influence. These could be a result of "calquing", which is a process of borrowing and translation that Arab bilinguals, especially in the media, often apply to generate novel expressions (Mahmoud 2013). According to Mahmoud (2013) this process has been used as a source of new expressions, vocabulary and styles in CA. This supports the possibility that the previous intensifiers came to be used in the speech of ND speakers from the English language. It also suggests that there may be more incoming forms in the future from this source.

4.5 Conclusion

In this chapter, it was found that the proportion of intensified adjectives in RNDC seems relatively low compared to the proportion in other languages. Amplifiers are used in RNDC more than downtoners, while maximisers are found in lower proportions compared to boosters, as expected. The co-occurrence of intensifiers does not appear

to be common, while the proportion of iterated intensifiers is relatively high, especially for boosters. There are 30 forms of intensifiers overall, and within each sub-category of intensifiers, two forms seem to dominate the system. Exploring individual forms in the system reveals valuable insights into their etymology and grammaticalisation.

As seen in the chapter, there were several methodological challenges in comparing the findings in RNDC with those of similar studies. Datasets containing semi-scripted content, like Omar and Alotaibi's (2017), included higher occurrences of the CA variable *jiddan*, while Almossa's (2024) data contained fewer occurrences of *jiddan* due to the informal context of the recordings. Hence, when studying variations of DPFs and comparing findings across different datasets, one must carefully consider the nature of the datasets at hand. These observations highlight the challenges researchers of Arabic varieties face in eliciting what is considered good representative data. Furthermore, because the scope of studies in the literature varies (e.g., focusing on amplifiers only or on both amplifiers and downtoners), cross-linguistic comparisons were not always achievable.

As we observed, amplifiers are used more frequently compared to downtoners which is why the following chapters will be directed towards amplifiers. In Chapter 5, I explore both amplifiers and downtoners to understand their overall variation patterns with some relevant references to *šwayy* and *kiḏā*. In Chapters 6 and 7, I focus more on the usage of the two common amplifiers in RNDC, *marrah* and *jiddan*.

Chapter 5 Amplifiers and Downtoners

Distributional and Multivariate Analyses

5.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the results and discussion of the distributional analysis and multivariate analysis of amplifiers and downtoners. In this chapter, amplifiers are treated as one unit and downtoners as another to provide an overall understanding of the major patterns in the data. The social factors examined are: gender, age and education while the linguistic factors are: the function, polarity, emotional value, semantic category of adjectives and the seriousness of discussion topics. I will first explain the social factors then the linguistic factors, as, for amplifiers, the social factors appear to be the most significant in conditioning their usage. The subsequent chapters will be focused on the most frequent boosters *marrah* and *jiddan*. Emphasisers are excluded from variationist analysis (see Section. 5.2).

5.2 Emphasisers

As explained in Chapter 4, Section 4.2.4.3, unlike degree modifiers (i.e., amplifiers and downtoners), we cannot be sure that the effect scope of emphasisers is limited to the adjective adjacent to them. For this reason, and because the context of the variation in the current investigation is restricted to adjectives, emphasisers were removed from further analysis. So, my variationist analysis will be restricted to degree modifiers only (i.e., amplifiers like *marrah* 'very' and downtoners like *šwayy* 'a bit'; see Chapter 2, Section 2.2.1.1). Tokens of emphasisers were changed to a null-variant and in case of co-intensification, the repeated adjective modified by an emphasiser was removed. This, however, should not be taken as an indication of their insignificance. In the English language for instance, the "modal-to-intensifier" shift is a fruitful source of degree intensifiers like *very* which originally meant 'truly' or 'genuinely' (Partington, 1993, p.181). However, applying the variable rule and restricting their variational context to modifying a single unit, when we know that their functional scope is fluid, is not the

most suitable approach. A more fruitful approach might be to analyse their function in all syntactic contexts without restriction. This approach will allow for observing the contextual preferences of these devices using apparent-time approach. We can then track the development of any device to an intensifier. Hence, there is a need for future research that explores emphasisers in RNDC.

5.3 Distributional Analysis: Social Factors

5.3.1 Intensification System

Table 5.1 and Figure 5.1 illustrate that overall, female speakers use intensifiers in 12.49% (N=259/2074) of their adjectives while male speakers use them in 10.03% of their adjectives (N=144/1436) (χ^2=5.05e+00, df=1, N=3510, p-value=0.0246)[92]. Female speakers use amplifiers in 9.79% of their adjectives (N=203/2074) while male speakers use them in 7.38% of their adjectives (N=106/1436) (χ^2=6.16e+00, df=1, N=3416, p-value=0.0131)[93].

Table 5.1 Distribution of Intensification and Non-intensification by Gender in RNDC

	Female		Male	
	N	**%**	**N**	**%**
Amplifier	203	9.79%	106	7.38%
Downtoner	56	2.70%	38	2.65%
Total intensifiers	259	12.49%	144	10.03%
Null-variant	1815	87.51%	1292	89.97%
Total	2074	100.00%	1436	100.00%

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[92] This test (see Chapter 3, Section 1.13) and all other chi-square tests of *intensifiers*, examine the association between intensifiers (i.e., amplifiers and downtoners combined) versus the null-variant.

[93] This test, and all other tests of *amplifiers*, examine the association between amplifiers (combined together) versus the null-variant while downtoners are excluded.
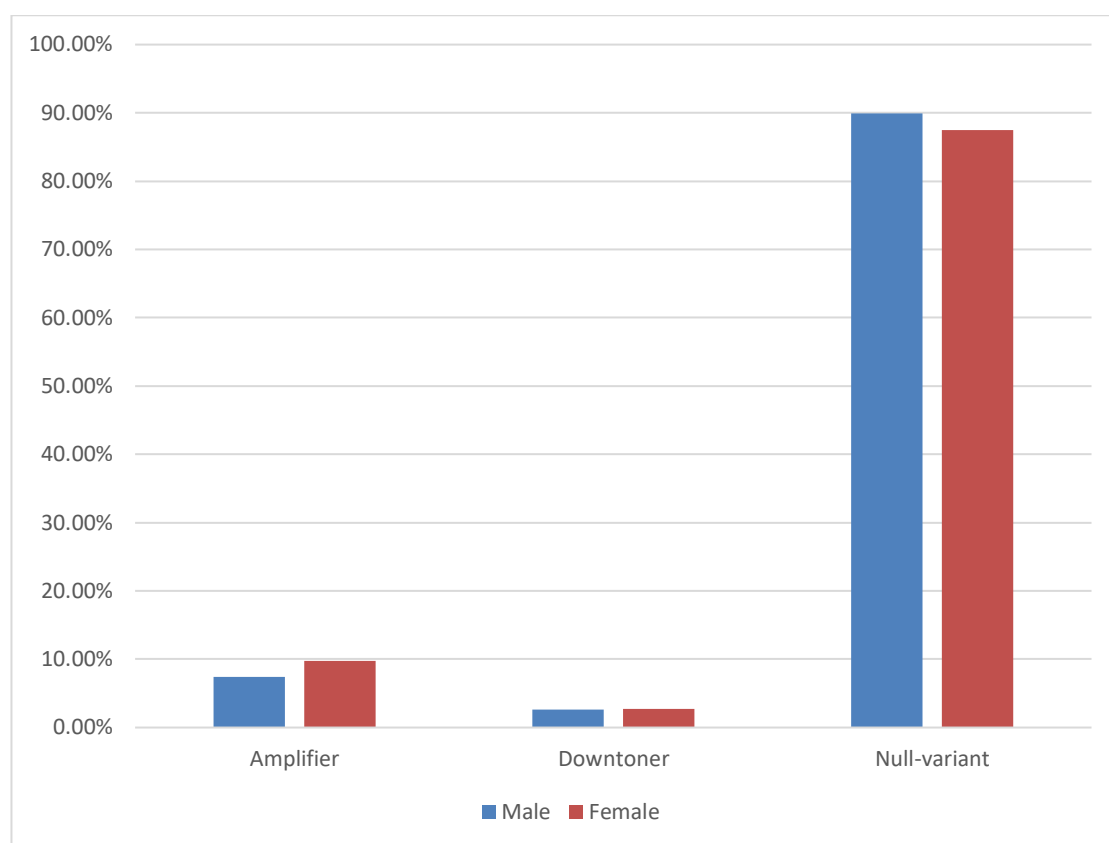
Figure 5.1 Proportion of Intensifiers for Male and Female Speakers in RNDC

The previous observation parallels the findings of many studies that investigated the effect of gender on the use of amplifiers, which point towards an interlinguistic and intralinguistic trend. Researchers have observed a similar tendency in Indo-European languages such as varieties of English (Fuchs, 2017, 2020; Stenström, 1999; Tagliamonte and Roberts, 2005, *inter alia*), German (Stratton, 2020) and Oslo Norwegian (Stratton and Sundquist, 2022). It also corroborates findings from studies of amplifiers in Arabic vernaculars (e.g., Omar and Alotaibi , 2017; Almossa, 2024). In addition, in RNDC, the proportions of downtoner usage among male and female speakers are comparable. Female speakers use downtoners in 2.70% of their adjectives (N=56/2074) while male speakers use them in 2.65% (N=38/1436) of their adjectives (χ^2=5.04e-02, df=1, N=3201, p-value=0.8224)[94]. This finding (although statistically insignificant) contrasts the results of D'Arcy (2015) and Stratton (2020) who both found that male speakers used adjective downtoners more frequently. As observed above, the difference between male and female speakers in their usage of amplifiers was greater than their usage of downtoners.

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[94] This chi-square test and all other chi-square tests of *downtoners*, examine the association between downtoners (combined together) versus the null-variant while amplifiers are excluded.

For female speakers, unintensified adjectives constitute 87.51% (N=1815/2074) of the system (Figure 5.1) while for male speakers, unintensified adjectives constitute 89.97% (N=1292/1436) of their system. These percentages are calculated based on the total number of adjectives used by each gender (i.e., the data accounts for differences in the total volume of adjectives). Thus, the adjective intensification practices by female and male speakers in RNDC are not very different in proportional terms. However, what is distinct for each system is the overall size of intensification; that is, females show a higher tendency than males to intensify adjectives in RNDC. Further, as will be explained below and Chapter 6, the difference between the usage of the genders is likely more about forms of intensifiers used rather than overall frequencies. The higher usage of amplifiers by female speakers is further discussed in Section 1.6.1 below. The discussion will shed more light on the traditional context in Riyadh which probably have contributed to the distinct linguistic styles for genders in Saudi Arabia and situate the findings within similar research found in the literature. The discussion will also highlight how third-wave variationist research departs from older approaches in the analysis of linguistic variation that is related to the gender of the speaker.

In terms of the age of speakers, as illustrated in Table 5.2, overall, young speakers use intensifiers in 16.85% (N=170/1009) of their adjectives while middle-aged and older speakers use them in 10.17% (N=150/1475) and 8.09% (N=83/1026) of their adjectives, respectively (χ^2=4.27e+01, df=2, N=3510, p-value<0.001). Interestingly, the higher frequency by younger speakers applies to both amplifiers and downtoners.

Table 5.2 Distribution of Intensification and Non-intensification by Age in RNDC

	Young		Middle-aged		Old	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
Amplifiers	136	13.48%	119	8.07%	54	5.26%
Downtoners	34	3.37%	31	2.10%	29	2.83%
Total Intensifiers	170	16.85%	150	10.17%	83	8.09%
Null-Variant	839	83.15%	1325	89.83%	943	91.91%
Total	1009	100%	1475	100%	1026	100%

If we look at the three age groups in RNDC, we see that downtoners constitute 3.37% (N=34/1009), 2.10% (N=31/1475) and 2.83% (N=29/1026) of the whole intensification system of the three age groups from younger to older participants (Table 5.2). Amplifiers, on the other hand, constitute 13.48% (N=136/1009), 8.07%

(N=119/1475) and 5.26% (N=54/1026) from younger to older participants. There seems to be a greater stratification in the usage of amplifiers (χ^2=4.56e+01, df=2, N=3416, p-value<0.001) compared to downtoners (χ^2=4.83e+00, df=2, N=3201, p-value=0.0893). This finding parallels the effect of gender where the difference between male and female speakers was larger in their usage of amplifiers. This leads us to conclude that amplifiers may be more sensitive to the age and gender of the speaker than downtoners in ND.

The higher usage of amplifiers by younger speakers overall may be part of the stylistic practices of younger speakers where often younger individuals strive to enhance and maintain their peer-group involvement (Eckert, 2003). Hence, using amplifiers can be viewed as a method to assert and express their identity within their peer-group which is critical given the competitive environment created within groups of young people and their aspiration for recognition there (Eckert, 2003). In ND, this corroborates the finding that overall, younger speakers utilised amplifiers more frequently (see Almossa, 2024). Additionally, D'Arcy (2015, p.461) found in her ONZE corpus of the English language that the frequency of the usage of intensifiers (i.e., amplifiers and downtoners) rises as the age of the speaker decreases.

Inspecting the system of the three age groups and specifically the proportion of amplifiers and downtoners, one interesting observation is the difference in proportion between the usage of amplifiers and downtoners. From younger to older, the difference is 10.11%, 5.97% and 2.43%. This means that the tendency of young speakers to amplify adjectives is four times higher than their tendency to moderate adjectives. For middle-aged speakers and older speakers, it is 3.84 and 1.85 times higher respectively. These tendencies could be a reflection of the communication needs of each generation. As we explained before, the higher tendency to amplify adjectives by the younger generation could be due to their higher tendency to use hyperbolic expressions to show solidarity with their peers and adhere to the norms of their group. The higher tendency by older speakers to downscale adjectives could be a result of the linguistic adjustments individuals make as they navigate the different social contexts they experience as they grow older (Chambers, 2003, p.203; Labov, 2001, pp.4, 101, 438; Tagliamonte, 2016, p.53). Their linguistic practices can reflect, for instance, a desire to maintain social relations with family, friends, and in their professional life by showing politeness through the use of hedges and a conservative style that discourages the use of amplifiers

or exaggerations in general (Chambers, 2003, p.203; Labov, 2001, pp.4, 101, 438; Tagliamonte, 2016, p.53).

In terms of the educational level of speakers, as illustrated in Table 5.3, looking at the proportions of intensifiers uncovers an underlying similarity. Within the intensification system of each group, the proportions of intensifiers used to modify adjectives by both educational levels are almost identical (χ^2=3.08e-05, df=1, N=3510, p-value=0.9956). Amplifiers in the intensification system of high and low educational levels constitute 8.83% (N=216/2447) and 8.75% (N=93/1063) (χ^2=4.77e-03, df=1, N=3416, p-value=0.9449), respectively, while downtoners constitute 2.66% (N=65/2447) and 2.73% (N=29/1063) (χ^2=1.38e-02, df=1, N=3201, p-value=0.9066), respectively. The null-variant constitutes 88.52% for both the high educational level group (N=2166/2447) and the low educational level group (N=941/1063). This result parallels the effect of gender where this social factor influenced the size of the intensification system but not the proportions of categories within the intensification system. However, while the effect of the gender of the speaker is more obvious on the usage of amplifiers, there is no large difference between the two educational groups in their employment of amplifiers.

Table 5.3 Distribution of Intensification and Non-intensification by Education in RNDC

	High		Low	
	N	%	N	%
Amplifier	216	8.83%	93	8.75%
Downtoner	65	2.66%	29	2.73%
Total intensifiers	281	11.48%	122	11.48%
Null-variant	2166	88.52%	941	88.52%
Total	2447	100%	1063	100%

5.3.2 Amplifiers

To give an overview of the usage of specific forms by each gender, in Table 5.4 I present the forms along with their proportions for each gender. In terms of the distribution of amplifiers across the genders, as illustrated in Table 5.4, there are amplifiers that are produced more by females like *marrah* and *tamaman* while for others like *jiddan* and *miyah-bil-miyah,* more tokens are recorded by male speakers. Yet, the low numbers of the forms (except *marrah* and *jiddan*) in the system, cannot really inform us about the

patterns or potential exclusiveness of these forms in terms of their usage by each gender.

Table 5.4 Distribution of Forms Used for Adjective Amplification by Gender in RNDC

	Male		Female	
	N	%	N	%
b-šakil faḏīʕ	0	0%	1	0.49%
b-šakil kibīr	3	2.83%	0	0%
b-zōd	1	0.94%	0	0%
b-ziyādah	1	0.94%	3	1.48%
tamaman	3	2.83%	6	2.96%
jiddan	55	51.89%	18	8.87%
ʕlā ġayr al-ʕādah	1	0.94%	0	0%
kṯīr	2	1.89%	4	1.97%
gwwah	0	0%	1	0.49%
lil-ġāyah	1	0.94%	0	0%
marrah	34	32.08%	168	82.76%
miyah-bil-miyah	5	4.72%	2	0.99%
Total	106	100%	203	100%

We can get further insights about the amplification system of male and female speakers by looking at each system separately (Table 5.4). The booster *marrah* dominates the female amplification system. It constitutes 82.76% (N=168/203) of their system. *Jiddan* constitutes 8.87% (N=18/203) of amplifiers while *tamaman* forms only 2.96% (N=6/203) of the system. The remaining amplifiers constitute 5.42% (N=11/203) of the whole amplification pool. By contrast, for males, *jiddan* constitutes more than half the tokens of all amplifiers (50.89%; N=55/106). The amplifier *marrah* constitutes 32.08% (N=34/106) of amplifiers while *miyah-bil-miyah* constitutes 4.72% (N=5/106) of the system. The amplifiers *b-šakil kibīr* and *tamaman* both constitute 2.83% (N=3/106) of the amplification system while the remaining forms constitute less than 6% (N=6/106) of the system. Almossa (2024) also found in ND that *marrah* occupied a higher proportion (91.52%; N=313/342) of the adjective amplification system of females while for males it comprised 56.73% (N=59/104) of their system (Table 5.5). The booster *jiddan* was similarly found occupying a higher proportion in the system of male speakers (30.77% vs. 4.09%; N=32 vs. 14).

Table 5.5 Distribution of Adjective Amplification Forms by Gender in Almossa (2024)

	Male		Female	
	N	%	N	%
marrah	59	56.73%	313	91.52%
jiddan	32	30.77%	14	4.09%
Other	13	12.50%	15	4.39%
Total	104	100%	342	100%

Yet, in Almossa's data, in the systems of both men and women, *marrah* occupies a larger proportion of the overall tokens for both genders. This difference may be due to the informal nature of the data collected via conversation which reduces the effect of the observer's paradox. The current data also contains serious questions (e.g., racism and religion subjects in public education) which may trigger a highly formal register. Further notes on the usage of *marrah* and *jiddan* will be given in detail in the following chapters.

To give an overview of the usage of specific forms by each age group, I present here a visualisation of the forms along with their proportions for each group (Table 5.6). *marrah* dominates the system of young speakers (83.09%; N=113/136) while in the system of middle-aged (52.94%; N=63/119) and older (48.15%; N=26/54) speakers, *marrah* comprises smaller proportions. The amplifier *jiddan*, on the other hand, occupies higher proportions in the systems of middle-aged (36.13%; N=43/119) and older speakers (35.19%; N=19/54) while for younger speakers, this booster only constitutes 8.09% (N=11/136) of their adjective amplification system.

Table 5.6 Amplification System of Young, Middle-aged and Older Speakers in RNDC

	Young		Middle		Old	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
lil-ġāyah	0	0%	1	0.84%	0	0%
gwwah	0	0%	1	0.84%	0	0%
b-šakil faḏīʕ	0	0%	1	0.84%	0	0%
ʕlā ġayr al-ʕādah	0	0%	1	0.84%	0	0%
b-zōd	1	0.74%	0	0%	0	0%
b-šakil kibīr	1	0.74%	1	0.84%	1	1.85%
b-ziyādah	2	1.47%	0	0%	2	3.70%
miyah-bil-miyah	4	2.94%	2	1.68%	1	1.85%
kṯīr	0	0%	3	2.52%	3	5.56%
tamaman	4	2.94%	3	2.52%	2	3.70%
jiddan	11	8.09%	43	36.13%	19	35.19%
marrah	113	83.09%	63	52.94%	26	48.15%
Total	136	100.00%	119	100.00%	54	100.00%

In ND, Almossa (2024) found that *marrah* occupies a slightly higher proportion in the system of younger speakers (89.74%; N=210/234) compared to middle-aged speakers (84.81%; N=134/158) (Table 5.7). It occupies about half the system of older speakers (51.85%; N=28/54). Although there is a wide difference between the proportion of amplifiers in the system of middle-aged speakers in Almossa's and that of the current study, the overall pattern is similar (i.e., higher proportions overall are recorded for the younger speakers). Similar to our observations of amplifiers and downtoners with speakers' gender, it is difficult to generalise our observations about other forms in the system, except for *marrah* and *jiddan*, since the highest number of tokens for any other variant is four—for the maximisers *miyah-bil-miyah* '100%' *and tamāman* 'completely'.

Table 5.7 Amplification System of Young, Middle and Old Speakers in Almossa (2024)

	Young		Middle-aged		Old	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
marrah	210	89.74%	134	84.81%	28	51.85%
jiddan	10	4.27%	20	12.66%	16	29.63%
other	14	5.98%	4	2.53%	10	18.52%
Total	234	100%	158	100%	54	100%

As illustrated in Table 5.8, there is a difference between the forms used for adjective amplification by the participants with higher and lower levels of education. The amplification system of degree-holders is more diverse than that of participants with lower levels of education. Speakers with low educational backgrounds only used five forms of amplifiers while highly educated speakers used a total of twelve forms. Yet, because the tokens are very low, there is a need for a larger dataset to gain more insights about this observation. The booster *marrah* dominates the amplification system of speakers with lower levels of education (84.95%; N=79/93). For degree-holders, *marrah* constitutes 56.94% (N=123/216) of their system. Contrastingly, the booster *jiddan* dominates more than a quarter of the amplification pool for degree-holders (30.56%; N=66/216), while it only constitutes 7.53% (N=7/93) of the amplification pool for low educational backgrounds. Further observations about the intersection of education with the gender and age of the speaker will be provided in Chapter 6 in the analysis of the specific amplification forms in the system.

Table 5.8 Distribution of Forms Used for Adjective Amplification by Education in RNDC[95]

	High		Low	
	N	%	N	%
ʕlā ġayr al-ʕādah	1	0.46%	0	0%
b-zōd	1	0.46%	0	0%
b-šakil faḏ̣īʕ	1	0.46%	0	0%
lil-ġāyah	1	0.46%	0	0%
gwwah	1	0.46%	0	0%
b-šakil kibīr	3	1.39%	0	0%
b-ziyādah	1	0.46%	3	3.23%
kṯīr	5	2.31%	1	1.08%
miyah-bil-miyah	7	3.24%	0	0%
tamāman	6	2.78%	3	3.23%
jiddan	66	30.56%	7	7.53%
marrah	123	56.94%	79	84.95%
Total	216	100%	93	100%

5.3.3 Downtoners

Most forms in the moderation system are found in low frequencies, which makes drawing conclusions or generalisations an unreliable process. Studies of intensifiers especially downtoners would benefit tremendously from large language corpora of ND when they become available. This is because variationist studies of DPFs are challenged by the lower occurrences of some variants. This, however, does not imply the insignificance of the least occurring forms but does make it difficult to study them quantitatively. While statistical analysis is essential in sociolinguistics, in variationist studies researchers also interpret the results qualitatively (Johnstone, 2000, pp.34–37) which underscores the significance of qualitative analysis. Hence, lower frequency items might be better suited for qualitative analysis to make sure they are not overlooked. Although overall downtoners are used in lower frequencies, the downtoners *šwayy(ah)* and *kiḏā* seem to be the two dominating forms in the systems of all social sub-groups, which is why I focus on them in this analysis.

When we look at the systems of each gender separately, we see that the diminisher *šwayy* dominates more than half the downtoning system of female speakers (58.93%; N=33/56) (Table 5.9). The form *kiḏā*, on the other hand, constitutes more than

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[95] The data is not balanced in terms of specific educational levels (e.g., illiterate, primary and intermediate school) (see Appendix E), as indicated in Chapter 3, Section 3.6.2. This is why a breakdown of the usage of amplifiers based on these specific educational levels reflects the number of speakers in that specific group. Hence, the observations within these sub-categories might be influenced by the uneven distribution of the participants. This makes it challenging to draw definitive conclusions about the patterns observed within these specific educational levels and for this reason, I only focus on the umbrella categories of *high* and *low*.

a quarter of the tokens of downtoners for females (26.79%; N=15/56). Similar proportions are also observed in the downscaling system of male speakers with *šwayy* occupying 44.74% (N=17/38) and *kiḏā* occupying 26.32% (N=10/38) of the system.

Table 5.9 Distribution of Forms Used for Adjective Moderation by Gender in RNDC

	Male		Female	
	N	%	N	%
Ɂbadan/Ɂbadd	2	5.26%	4	7.14%
b-šakil xafīf	0	0.00%	1	1.79%
taqrīban	3	7.89%	1	1.79%
šwayy(ah)	17	44.74%	33	58.93%
šibh	3	7.89%	1	1.79%
Ɂilā-ḥaddin-mā	1	2.63%	1	1.79%
kiḏā	10	26.32%	15	26.79%
nawʕan mā	2	5.26%	0	0.00%
Total	38	100%	56	100%

In terms of the usage of these forms by the different age groups, as illustrated in Table 5.10, overall, *šwayy* occupies a larger proportion in the system of older speakers followed by middle-aged and younger speakers. It constitutes 58.62% (N=17/29) of the moderation system of older speakers while the proportions 54.84% (N=17/31) and 47.06% (N=16/34) were observed as part of the moderation system of middle-aged and younger speakers respectively. When we look at the compromiser *kiḏā,* on the other hand, we notice that it occupies a larger proportion in the system of younger speakers followed by middle-aged and older speakers. It constitutes 35.29% (N=12/34) of the young speakers' moderation system and only 25.81% (N=8/31) and 17.24% (N=5/29) for middle-aged and older speakers respectively.

Table 5.10 Distribution of Forms Used for Adjective Moderation by Age in RNDC

	Young		Middle		Old	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
Ɂbadan/Ɂbadd	3	8.82%	2	6.45%	1	3.45%
Ɂilā-ḥaddin-mā	0	0%	0	0%	2	6.90%
b-šakil xafīf	1	2.94%	0	0%	0	0%
taqrīban	2	5.88%	1	3.23%	1	3.45%
Šibh	0	0%	1	3.23%	3	10.34%
šwayy(ah)	16	47.06%	17	54.84%	17	58.62%
kiḏā	12	35.29%	8	25.81%	5	17.24%
nawʕan mā	0	0%	2	6.45%	0	0%
Total	34	100%	31	100%	29	100%

In terms of the effect of the educational level of speakers, the diminisher *šwayy* dominates more than half of the moderation system of degree holders (53.85%; N=35/65) and speakers with lower levels of education (51.72%; N=15/29) (Table 5.11). The compromiser *kiḏā* is also one of the common downtoners and it constitutes more than a quarter of the moderation system of degree holders (26.15%; N=17/65) and lower education groups (27.59%; N=8/29). Thus, it appears that the two common forms in ND occupy about the same proportions in the system of speakers of both educational levels. In summary, while adjective amplifiers show significant stratification across the different social categories, adjective downtoners show less variation across the three social groups in RNDC.

Table 5.11 Distribution of Forms Used for Adjective Moderation by Education in RNDC

	High		Low	
	N	%	N	%
Ɂbadan/Ɂbadd	4	6.15%	2	6.90%
Ɂilā-ḥaddin-mā	1	1.54%	1	3.45%
kiḏā	17	26.15%	8	27.59%
nawʕan mā	2	3.08%	0	0%
šibh	4	6.15%	0	0%
šwayy(ah)	35	53.85%	15	51.72%
taqrīban	2	3.08%	2	6.90%
b-šakil xafīf	0	0%	1	3.45%
Total	65	100.%	29	100%

5.4 Distributional Analysis: Linguistic Factors

5.4.1 Semantic Category of Adjective

As noted before, the semantic content of adjectives is divided according to Dixon's (2004, pp.3-5) categorisation to explore the diffusion of intensifiers into their semantic environments, which is seen as a measurement of their grammaticalisation (Ito and Tagliamonte, 2003). Before presenting the results of the distribution, it must be noted that in the data, there are certain semantic categories that are more common than others (Chapter 3, Section 3.12.2). Yet, the proportions here are calculated within each

adjective type to eliminate skewing the results by the total tokens of adjectives in the data (Table 5.12)[96].

Among adjective types, *similarity* adjectives exhibit the highest proportion of amplifier use (17.57%; N=26/148) followed by *difficulty* (12.5%; N=25/200) and *value* adjectives (11.62%; N=97/835). For downtoners, *colour* adjectives have the highest proportion of downtoner use (12.5%; N=3/24) followed by *other* (6.8%; N=10/147) and *difficulty* adjectives (6.0%; N=12/200).

Table 5.12 Frequency of of Intensifiers within Semantic Categories in RNDC

Adjective Type	Amplifier		Downtoner		Null-variant		Total	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Age	4	1.45%	4	1.45%	267	97.09%	275	100%
Colour	1	4.17%	3	**12.5%**	20	83.33%	24	100%
Difficulty	25	**12.5%**	12	**6%**	163	81.5%	200	100%
Dimension	22	11.11%	5	2.53%	171	86.36%	198	100%
Human propensity	51	8.21%	16	2.58%	554	89.21%	621	100%
Other	9	6.12%	10	**6.8%**	128	87.07%	147	100%
Physical property	19	8.88%	6	2.8%	189	88.32%	214	100%
Position	4	10.53%	1	2.63%	33	86.84%	38	100%
Qualification	18	4.7%	8	2.09%	357	93.21%	383	100%
Quantification	33	7.86%	5	1.19%	382	90.95%	420	100%
Similarity	26	**17.57%**	5	3.38%	117	79.05%	148	100%
Speed	0	0%	0	0%	7	100%	7	100%
Value	97	**11.62%**	19	2.28%	719	86.11%	835	100%
Total	309	8.8%	94	2.68%	3107	88.52%	3510	100%

5.4.1.1 Emotional Value

We already noted that in RNDC, the number of emotional adjectives in general is very low compared to non-emotional ones (2.08% vs. 97.92%; N=73 vs. 3435). As illustrated in Table 5.13, among non-emotional adjectives, amplifiers are used in 8.87% (N=305/3437) of these adjectives while downtoners are utilised in 2.68% (N=92/3437) of them. Within emotional adjectives, the proportion of amplifiers is slightly lower than in non-emotional adjectives (5.48%; N=4/73) while downtoners account for only 2.74% (N=2/73) of adjectives in this category which indicates a similar tendency of downtoners to mitigate non-emotional expressions. Due to the very low numbers of emotional

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[96] Chi-square test results were not reported for analyses where the table contained cells with fewer than five tokens, as the statistics are unreliable in such cases (Erhardt, 2023).

adjectives, detailed results for individual intensifiers will not be presented. In addition, within the multivariate analysis, adjective emotionality is categorised under the semantic category of adjectives.

Table 5.13 Distribution of Intensification and Non-intensification by Adjective Emotional Value in RNDC

	Amplifier		Downtoner		Null-variant		Total	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Non-emotional	305	8.87%	92	2.68%	3040	88.45%	3437	100%
Emotional	4	5.48%	2	2.74%	67	91.78%	73	100%
Total	309	8.8%	94	2.68%	3107	88.52%	3510	100%

5.4.2 Adjective Syntactic Function

A chi-square test reveals that the function of the adjective is statistically significant for the use of intensifiers (χ^2=2.63e+01, df=1, N=3510, p-value<0.001). Table 5.14 illustrates how different categories of intensifiers collocate with syntactic functions. Both amplifiers and downtoners are found to be modifying a larger proportion of predicative adjectives. Amplifiers collocated more with predicative adjectives (67.64%; N=209/309) compared to attributive adjectives (32.36%; N=100/309) (χ^2=1.81e+01, df=1, N=3416, p-value<0.001). Similarly, Almossa (2024) found that intensifiers collocated more frequently with predicative adjectives (82.7%; N=578/699) compared to attributive adjectives (17.3%; N=121/699). Alshaboul et al. (2022) found that in AA, amplifiers collocated more with predicative adjectives (53.5%; N=311/581) compared to attributive adjectives (46.5%; N=270/581). Downtoners also collocated more with predicative adjectives (70.21%; N=66/94) compared to attributive adjectives (29.79%; N=28/94) (χ^2=9.74e+00, df=1, N=3201, p-value=0.0018).

Table 5.14 Distribution of Intensification and Non-intensification Across Adjective Syntactic Function in RNDC

	Amplifier		Downtoner		Null-variant		Total	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Attributive	100	32.36%	28	29.79%	1397	44.96%	1525	43.45%
Predicative	209	67.64%	66	70.21%	1710	55.04%	1985	56.55%
Total	309	100%	94	100%	3107	100%	3510	100%

Table 5.15 illustrates the proportional distribution of these categories within each adjective syntactic function. Within attributive adjectives, amplifiers are used with 6.56% (N=100/1525) of this syntactic position, while downtoners are only used

with 1.84% (N=28/1525) of these adjectives. Similarly, for predicative adjectives, intensification is slightly more common in this category compared to attributive adjectives. Amplifiers are used with 10.53% (N=209/1985) and downtoners are utilised with 3.32% (N=66/1985) of cases.

Table 5.15 Proportional Distribution of Intensification and Non-intensification within Adjective Syntactic Functions in RNDC

Category	Amplifier		Downtoner		Null-variant		Total	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Attributive	100	6.56%	28	1.84%	1397	91.61%	1525	100%
Predicative	209	10.53%	66	3.32%	1710	86.15%	1985	100%
Total	309	8.8%	94	2.68%	3107	88.52%	3510	100%

5.4.3 Seriousness of Topics

As illustrated in Table 5.15, in serious discussions, amplifiers modified 8.73% (N=196/2246) of the adjectives while downtoners modified 2.27% (N=51/2246) of the adjectives used in this context. Similarly, in non-serious discussions, amplifiers modified 8.94% (N=113/1264) of the adjectives while downtoners modified 3.40% (N=43/1264) of the adjectives used in this context. Hence, the proportions of sub-categories within each context are comparable. A chi-square test reveals that the seriousness of topics was found to be significant only for downtoners (χ^2=4.03e+00, df=1, N=3201, p-value=0.045) but not for amplifiers (χ^2=1.01e-01, df=1, N=3416, p-value=0.7507). The finding that the seriousness of topics was not found to be statistically significant for amplifiers contradicts the hypothesis based on previous research (e.g., Littlemore and Fielden-Burns, 2023).

Table 5.16 Distribution of Intensification and Non-intensification by Seriousness of Topics in RNDC

	Serious		Non-Serious	
	N	%	N	%
Amplifier	196	8.73%	113	8.94%
Downtoner	51	2.27%	43	3.40%
Null-variant	1999	89.00%	1108	87.66%
Total	2246	100%	1264	100%

5.4.4 Adjective Polarity

Table 5.17 presents the proportional distribution of intensification (amplifiers and downtoners) and the null-variant across adjective polarity. The effect of adjective polarity was not found to be statistically significant on the use of intensifiers (χ^2=3.33, df=2, N=3510, p-value=0.190). Amplifiers are more frequently used with positive adjectives (9.73%) (N=110/1130), followed by negative adjectives (8.65%) (N=53/613) and are least frequent with neutral adjectives (8.26%) (N=146/1767) (χ^2=1.61, df=2, N=3416, p-value=0.447). Contrastingly, downtoners, are used most frequently with negative adjectives (4.89%) (N=30/613), followed by neutral adjectives (2.38%) (N=42/1767) and positive adjectives (1.95%) (N=22/1130), respectively (χ^2=14.37, df=2, N=3201, p-value=0.001). This corroborates the claim that downtoners are often used to mitigate the negative meaning of adjectives (Paradis, 2000).

Table 5.17 Distribution of Intensification and Non-intensification by Adjective Polarity in RNDC

	Amplifier		Downtoner		Null-variant		Total	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Neutral	146	8.26%	42	2.38%	1579	89.36%	1767	100%
Negative	53	8.65%	30	4.89%	530	86.46%	613	100%
Positive	110	9.73%	22	1.95%	998	88.32%	1130	100%
Total	309	8.8%	94	2.68%	3107	88.52%	3510	100%

5.5 Multivariate Analysis

In the following section, the results of the multivariate analysis of the two categories of intensifiers are presented. Qualitative and quantitative analyses of the two frequent amplifiers are presented in Chapters 6 and 7. Multivariate analysis of the categories was conducted to observe the overall behavior of each category across the chosen factors. Mixed-effects logistic regressions are conducted to measure the significance of the parameters influencing the usage of intensifiers.

Regressions are conducted in Rbrul. The results in Rbrul are explained by several values. The deviance is the number that measures the fit of the data compared to the expected model (Clark, 2010). In other words, it is a representation of how much the actual data diverges from the predictions of the model (Clark, 2010). Therefore, the lower the number, the better the fit of the model, while the greater the number, the less accurate the findings. Df is the degree of freedom and it relates to the independent

variables or parameters in the regression model (Pandey and Bright, 2008, p.123). Df increases as the number of estimation parameters in the model increases (Pandey and Bright, 2008, p.123). R2 explains how much of the variation is explained by the model (Clark, 2010). Thus, the higher the number, the better the model. Factor weights (FW) range from 0-1 and when the number is above 0.5 there is a favouring effect between the variable and the factor (Johnson, 2009; Clark, 2010). This effect increases as the number gets closer to 1 and a factor weight below 0.5 is an indication of a disfavouring effect (Johnson, 2009; Clark, 2010). When the factor weight is 0.5, it means that there is no effect (Johnson, 2009). Log-odds are "raw co-efficients for the regression model" (Clark, 2010, p.7). They range from negative to positive infinity and the higher it is, the stronger the effect (Clark, 2010, p.7). When the number is above 0 there is a favouring effect of the application value, while if there is a negative value, then there is a disfavouring effect. Rbrul also tests the statistical significance of each predictor and presents the results in p-values. The p-value is a probability measure used to determine the likelihood that the observed variations are a result of random chance (Tagliamonte, 2006, p.168). If the p-value is lower than 0.05 (which is the threshold commonly used in many fields), then the null-hypothesis is rejected (Tagliamonte, 2006, p.168). This means that the observed differences are unlikely to be a result of random statistical fluctuations.

According to Tagliamonte (2012, p.122), there are three indicators to understand the results of the variable rule program which she refers to as "the three lines of evidence". First, one needs to consider the "statistical significance" (i.e., p-value <0.05) and identify the significant and nonsignificant factors. Second, the factors with the greatest effect must be highlighted along with the factors with the least contribution. Third, it is essential to arrange the factors in a hierarchal order in terms of their significance from the highest to the lowest effect. These three points allow the results to be compared across different studies (Tagliamonte 2012, p.122). Therefore, the following analysis will adhere to these three lines. In all the models below, the factors are presented from the most significant to the least significant.

In the analyses below, I first run a preliminary model to assess the significance of all factors together. I then remove those that are not found to be statistically

significant[97] or pose issues for certain reasons (see Section 5.5.1). This approach follows Tagliamonte's (2012, p.135) recommendation that "statistical models will not produce optimal results if they contain too many factor groups and too many factors". Containing several factors and interactions, along with an unbalanced dataset, can challenge statistical models (Tagliamonte 2012, p. 136). Hence, to enhance model interpretability, I adopt this approach.

5.5.1 Amplifiers

The model below presents a mixed-effects logistic regression with amplifiers as the application value against the null-variant (Table 5.18). Downtoners are excluded to comply with the principle of accountability (see Chapter 3, Section 3.10) since there is no functional compatibility between downtoners and amplifiers. All amplifiers are coded together as the dependent variable. The social factors are the gender, age and educational background of participants. Speaker and adjective were added as random factors.

In an earlier stage of the analysis, I included the following linguistic factors: the seriousness of the topic, adjective polarity and adjective semantic category (see Appendix 10). These were incorporated due to their hypothesised influence on adjective intensification (see Chapter 3, Section 3.12). The seriousness of the topic (p-value=0.894) and adjective polarity (p=0.18) were not statistically significant in the model. Therefore, I excluded them as they did not show a significant effect on the variation of amplifiers in this analysis. In terms of adjective semantic category, several subcategories proved problematic either because they had no variation (e.g., *speed*) or because they show collinearity with one or more factors in the model (e.g., *age*, *colour*, *position*, *emotion*[98] and *qualification*). For example, the *qualification* category is only used in predicative adjectives which means that this category always predicts a predicative function. This contributed to a misalignment between the proportions of the subcategories and their factor weights. This challenge is probably due to the low proportion of amplifiers in RNDC. Hence, instead of removing these semantic categories

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[97] When factors are not significant in the preliminary model, I remove them and do not further investigate interactions of these removed factors.

[98] The emotional value of the adjective was recoded under the factor semantic category since it constitutes a sub-category of *human propensity* (Tagliamonte, 2008, p.386).

which will risk losing a considerable proportion of the variation of amplifiers, I decided to remove it from the final model (Table 5.18).

The most significant parameter affecting the variation of amplifiers is the function of the modified adjective (p-value=0.000214). Amplifiers are slightly favoured with predicative adjectives (FW=0.57) and disfavoured with attributive adjectives (FW=0.43). The second significant factor is the age of the speaker (p-value=0.000259). Young speakers favour the use of amplifiers (FW=0.68), while middle-aged and older speakers disfavour them (FW=0.42 and 0.38, respectively). The third significant factor is the gender of the speaker (p-value=0.00317). Female speakers favour the usage of amplifiers (FW=0.59), while male speakers disfavour it (FW=0.40). The fourth significant factor is the educational level of the speaker (p-value=0.00541). University-educated speakers favour the use of amplifiers (FW=0.60), while speakers with lower educational levels disfavour it (FW=0.39).

Table 5.18 Effect of the Social and Linguistic Factors on the Use of Amplifiers in RNDC

Total N	3416		Grand Proportion	0.0905
Deviance	1886.192		R2 total	0.386
Df	8			
Factors	Logodds	N	Proportion of the application value	Factor Weight
Adjective Function	P-value	0.000214		
Predicative	0.281	1919	0.109	0.57
Attributive	-0.281	1497	0.0668	0.43
Age	P-value	0.000259		
Young	0.766	975	0.139	0.683
Middle-aged	-0.307	1444	0.0824	0.424
Old	-0.459	997	0.0542	0.387
Gender	P-value	0.00317		
Female	0.367	2018	0.101	0.591
Male	-0.367	1398	0.0758	0.409
Education	P-value	0.00541		
High	0.416	2382	0.0907	0.603
Low	-0.416	1034	0.0899	0.397
Adjective	Random	Std. Dev	1.149	
Speaker	Random	Std. Dev	0.582	

Rbrul detected a significant interaction between the age and gender (p-value=1.06e-03) (Figure 5.2). While young and old female speakers use amplifiers more frequently than male speakers, middle-aged male speakers use amplifiers more frequently than middle-aged females.

	Young	Middle	Old
■ Male	8.30%	9.70%	4.30%
■ Female	19.80%	7.50%	6.20%
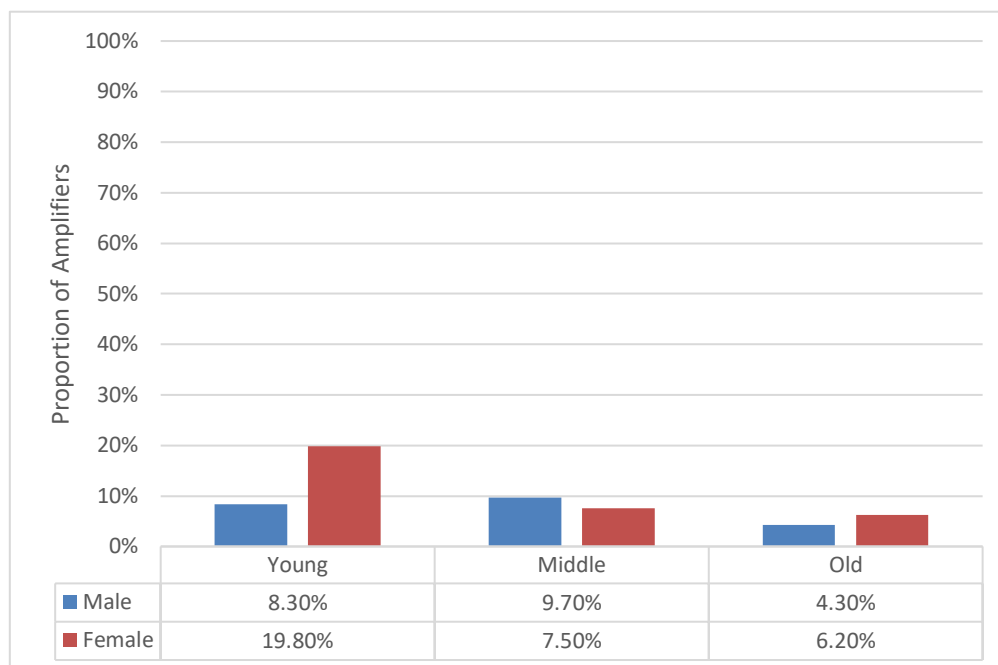
Figure 5.2 The Use of amplifiers by Age and Gender in RNDC[99]

Another significant interaction found in this model is between gender and education (p-value=0.0199) (Figure 5.3). Female speakers with low education showed the highest frequency of amplifiers usage (11.90%). Therefore, their usage was higher than that of male speakers from the same educational level. However, for speakers with higher educational levels, the frequencies were almost identical (9.10% for males vs. 9.00% for females). The higher usage of amplifiers by female speakers with lower educational levels could be a result of traditional gender roles which socialise women to use more expressive language (Lakoff, 1975; Fuchs, 2017; Fuchs, 2020). Expressive language is linked to traditional gender roles since they typically place women in social positions where they are expected to foster interpersonal relationships through the usage of socially affiliative or emotionally laden language (Labov, 1972, p.304; Williams and Best, 1982, p.237; Carli, 1990; Wester et al., 2002; Cameron, 2010, pp.89, 146–148).

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[99] In this interaction (and all other interactions detected in the multivariate analysis in this chapter), cross-tabulations present the proportion of the variable within the context of variation, including the zero variant.
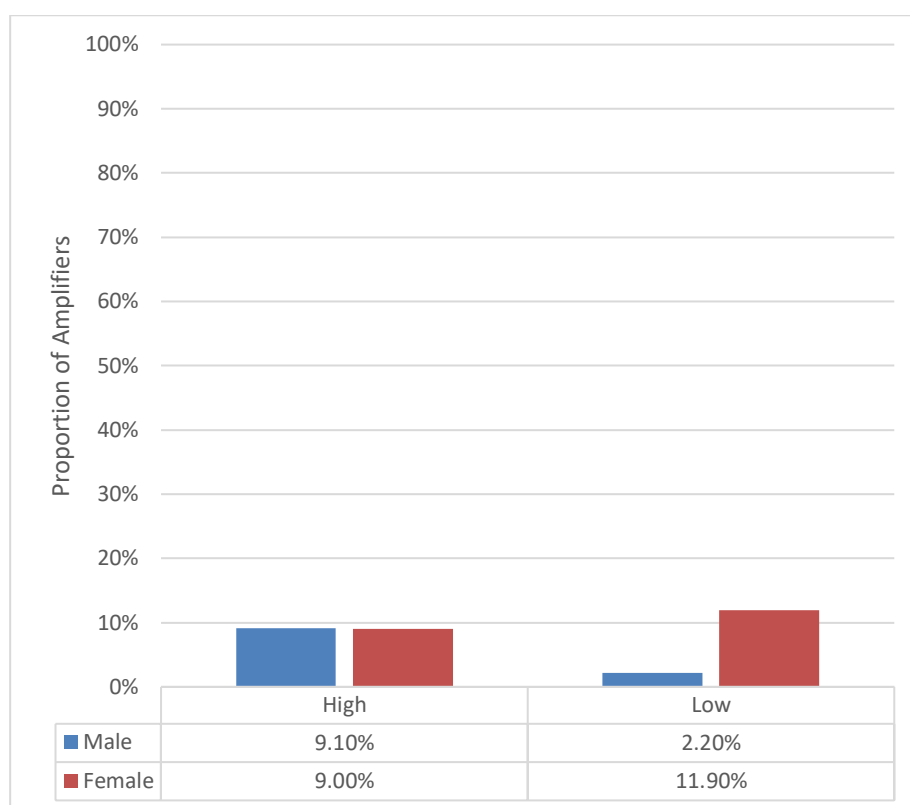
Figure 5.3 The Use of Amplifiers by Gender and Education in RNDC

	High	Low
■ Male	9.10%	2.20%
■ Female	9.00%	11.90%

5.5.2 Downtoners

The model below presents a mixed-effects logistic regression with downtoners as the application value against the null-variant (Table 5.19). Only speaker is added as a random effect factor, but adjective is not[100]. All downtoners were coded together as the application value. Amplifiers were excluded in line with the principle of accountability because their function is not in direct competition with that of downtoners. The semantic category and the social factors of age, gender and education were not found to be significant.

In an earlier stage of the analysis, I ran a preliminary model with all the linguistic and social factors except the semantic category due to the challenge this factor posed on the modelling (see Section 5.5.1 above) (see Appendix 11). These were incorporated due to their hypothesised influence on adjective intensification (see Chapter 3, Section

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[100] I removed *adjective* as a random factor because adding it led to issues in the convergence of the model due to high variance (std.dev=8.398). Because of the limited size of RNDC and the low number of tokens of the downtoners overall in the dataset, the number of adjectives modified by these devices is restricted. Hence, adding adjective as a random factor in this model is inappropriate because in this dataset, adjectives collocating with downtoners does not appear to be random. Removing this factor provides a more stable model and a better reflection of the variation that is linked to the social and linguistic factors (for further details see Bates et al., 2015a; Bates et al., 2015b).

3.12). The age (p-value=0.0954), gender (p-value=0.757) and education (p-value=0.28) were not found to be statistically significant, so I removed them from the final model.

In the final model, three factors were found to be significant in conditioning the employment of downtoners. The most significant parameter is adjective polarity (p-value=0.00159). Downtoners are favoured with negative adjectives (FW=0.63) and disfavoured with neutral (FW=0.47) and positive adjectives (FW=0.38). This finding is in line with the claim that downtoners are often used to mitigate the meaning of negative adjectives like *difficult* and *tired* (Paradis, 2000).

The second significant factor is the function of the adjective (p-value=0.00701). Downtoners are favoured with predicative adjectives (FW=0.57) and disfavoured with attributive adjectives (FW=0.42). Downtoners seem to be overall more sensitive to linguistic factors while amplifiers, as seen in section 5.5.1, are sensitive to social factors. Both amplifiers and downtoners are often used in relatively lower frequencies, which is one of the conditions contributing to the social markedness of linguistic forms (Hall-Lew et al., 2021, p.8). However, the pragmatic function of downtoners, which is downplaying the quality of the adjective, probably makes them less noticeable, while amplifiers are used to add intensity and to amplify the meaning, which makes them more noticeable and deviate from the expectations of the listener (Campbell-Kibler, 2007; Hall-Lew et al., 2021, p.8; Beltrama and Casasanto, 2021, p.85). Amplifiers are also subject to fashion (Bordet, 2015; Hopper and Traugott, 1993, p. 122; König, 2017) which can make these devices more noticeable and socially marked compared to downtoners.

The third significant parameter is the seriousness of topics in the discussion (p-value=0.0237). Downtoners are slightly favoured in discussions of non-serious topics (FW=0.56) and disfavoured in discussions of serious topics (FW=0.43). This finding contradicts the findings in previous research. Littlemore and Fielden-Burns (2023) studied downtoners and amplifiers as part of vague language[101] in the speech of English L2 speakers in Sweden and found that the sensitivity and the seriousness of the topics in the formal register propel an increased usage of those features. Similarly, Zhang (2013) also found that amplifiers and downtoners were used more frequently in sensitive topics (asylum seekers) compared to less sensitive topics (weekend activities) by Australian students. This was because they function as cushions or face saving tools

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[101] According to Zhang (2011, p.573), "VL features strategic elasticity, which can be stretched and negotiated to suit the moment-to-moment communicative needs."

while negotiating the speaker's opinion (Zhang, 2013; Littlemore and Fielden-Burns, 2023). At the same time, Biber and Conrad (2005), suggest that hedges are typical of registers with more "interactiveness" and involvement like spontaneous speech, while fewer tokens will be observed in registers with higher informational exposition and careful production of language. Although the data in the current study belong to the first type in Biber and Conrad's (2005) observation, speakers during the discussion of serious questions were probably more cautious in their production, especially when discussing sensitive topics like religious subjects. The discussion likely involved more informational focus compared to the non-serious discussions. However, we might be able to support this observation by conducting a more comprehensive investigation of downtoners and hedges in the data since expressions of face-saving and courtesy are deemed significant in communications for Arabs (Feghali, 1997, p.358).

Table 5.19 Effect of the Social and Linguistic Factors on the Use of Downtoners in RNDC

Total N			3201	
Deviance			817.669	
Df			6	
Grand Proportion			0.0294	
R2 total			0.149	
Factors	**Logodds**	**N**	**Proportion of the application value**	**Factor Weight**
Adjective Polarity	**P-value**	0.00159		
Negative	0.57	560	0.0536	0.639
Neutral	-0.105	1620	0.0259	0.474
Positive	-0.465	1021	0.0215	0.386
Adjective Function	**P-value**	0.00701		
Predicative	0.316	1777	0.0377	0.578
Attributive	-0.316	1424	0.019	0.422
Topic Seriousness	**P-value**	0.0237		
Non-serious	0.246	1151	0.0374	0.561
Serious	-0.246	2050	0.0249	0.439
Speaker	Random	**Std.dev**	0.546	

5.6 Discussion

5.6.1 Women Using More Amplifiers

In this study, female speakers are observed to use amplifiers more frequently than men. This finding is not unexpected. In fact, it seems to be a cross-linguistic phenomenon that is found in studies from various cultures (Amir et al., 2012; Sardabi and Afghari, 2015; Rasekh and Saeb, 2015; Hilte et al., 2016; Fuchs, 2017; Omar and Alotaibi, 2017; Stratton, 2020; Alshaboul et al., 2022; Stratton and Sundquist, 2022; Almossa, 2024, *inter alia*). In the English language, linguists have long observed the inclination of women to use intensification such as Stoffel (1901, p.101), who asserts that "ladies are notoriously fond of hyperbole". Similarly, Jespersen (1922, p.250) postulates that it is due to "the fondness of women for hyperbole" that they will likely be the influencers of change with regard to amplifiers. Further, literature on emotionality in language is in relative agreement that women tend to show greater emotional expressivity compared to men (Lutz, 1990; Fischer, 1993).

The tendency of women to use amplifiers is typically found as part of the general discussion of the linguistic differences between male and female speakers. These discussions are made traditionally within three approaches: deficit, dominance and difference (Schilling, 2011, p.220). The deficit approach which is attributed mainly to Jespersen (1922) holds the idea that the linguistic system of women is weaker than that of men and that this weakness originates from their biological structure and their inferior societal status (Schilling, 2011, p.220). The dominance approach (e.g., Lakoff, 1975; West, 1984; Zimmerman and West, 1975) analyses the linguistic difference between men and women as a result of the "powerless" and subordinate role of women in society compared to men's superior status (Schilling, 2011, p.220). The dominance approach triggered researchers, such as Deborah Tannen who can be considered the proponent of this approach (i.e., the difference approach), to focus on gender and language in terms of societal difference (Schilling, 2011, p.225). The difference approach is based on the premise that the linguistic systems of men and women are distinct, but it does not evaluate one of them as the norm against which the other is perceived negatively (Schilling, 2011, p.225). Rather, these differences originate from varying cultures of males and females. The difference approach is more in line with the third-wave variationist approach, which avoids considering gender as an essentialist variable

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per se[102](Podesva and Kajino, 2014; Levon, 2021). Rather, it attempts to explain such differences in light of the cultural context of genders in a given community (Eckert, 2012; Levon, 2021).

To explain the higher usage of amplifiers by female speakers we need to shed further light on gender practices within the Saudi community (Chapter 1, Section 1.8.2). In the Saudi community, traditional gender norms are still very much prominent. Gender segregation was and still is rather common in many government institutions like schools and universities (Alhazmi, 2022). Further, the Saudi society is to an extent a conservative society where relations between males and females are often limited to formal interactions in public places like hospitals, restaurants and shopping centres. Informal relations between genders such as friendships and relations outside marriage are traditionally not welcomed. Females would have their own women-only relationships and gatherings while men would have their own as well. It should be acknowledged, however, that there have been slight changes in recent years in the conservative policies of Saudi society, such as relaxing gender-segregation rules in many governmental and private institutions and empowering women by increasing their career opportunities and advancing their rights.

The segregation between the genders in Saudi Arabia can be conceptualised within *the social network framework* developed by Milroy (1980, 2002). According to Milroy (1980, p.174) social networks are defined as "informal social relationships contracted by an individual" or "an individual's social network is straightforwardly the aggregate of relationships contracted with others" (Milroy, 2002, p.549). Social networks can be used as "an analytic tool" to explain the informal social mechanisms that reinforce language varieties and also to uncover reasons behind the maintenance of certain linguistic practices within communities that experience forces in favor of change (Milroy, 2002, p.549). Although the link between language and gender is not an absolute one, this link is very much consistent in communities where gender and networks highly align with each other (Milroy, 1980, p.160). Thus, in a segregated community like the Saudi community, traditional feminine linguistic styles, which include higher affective stances such as amplifiers, are likely to be prevalent.

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[102] However, some critics (e.g., Bucholtz and Hall, 2005; Mullany, 2010; Bucholtz and Hall, 2010) have argued that this view is somewhat simplistic and does not fully recognise the power balances and inequality in society which influence these language differences and their impact.

How the social network influences one's linguistic choices is explained by third-wave variationists. Third-wave variationist research explains that members in social networks are not "passively responding to their place in the social order "but are active agents (Eckert, 2012, pp.97–98; Eckert and Podesva, 2021, p.28). Eckert and Podesva (2021, p.28) draw on Judith Butler's "theory of performativity" (Butler, 1988) to explain how social practices emerge in communities. Social practices develop as a result of the mutual adoption of similar responses by individuals within similar positions in the social order. Those responses from members within parallel structures reinforce existing structures (Eckert and Podesva, 2021, p.28). What Butler's theory does is underscore the interplay between structure and agency in establishing gendered identities (Butler, 1988). Social networks situate members in specific contexts where they repeatedly engage in specific behaviours over time (Eckert and Podesva, 2021, p.28). Style is emphasised as a principal mechanism of performativity (Eckert, 2012, pp.97–98; Eckert and Podesva, 2021, p.28). It is used to highlight existing and emerging diversity within the community (Eckert, 2012, pp.97–98; Eckert and Podesva, 2021, p.28). Stylistic choices consist of small personal transformations and this process is an ongoing one which may be consciously foregrounded at times, while at other times it occurs unconsciously. Those stylistic choices pertain to stances reflecting the desired persona at the time of usage (Eckert, 2012, pp.97–98; Eckert and Podesva, 2021, p.28). Most of these stances index gender identity indirectly although some may be linked to gender distinctly. Stylistic elements do not function in isolation, but the practice involves combining meaningful elements together to create a meaning beyond the meaning of single variables (Eckert, 2012, pp.97–98; Eckert and Podesva, 2021, p.28). Thus, the segregated social networks in Saudi Arabia situate each gender within same-gender networks where they mutually reinforce traditional gender roles (Feghali, 1997, p.348) including linguistic practices. For this reason, in Saudi Arabia linguistic styles for male and female speakers are likely to be distinct, especially for older generations, in some aspects and it is plausible that intensification would be one of these aspects.

Affective stances[103] specifically are vital elements in building gender identities (Podesva and Kajino, 2014, p.117). The affective stances of politeness, expressivity and

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[103] Biber and Finegan (1989, p.93) define "stance" as the "the lexical and grammatical expression of attitudes, feelings, judgements or commitment concerning the propositional content of a message". Affective stances specifically are how speakers position themselves along an emotional scale in relation to the object of evaluation, the point of view of the addressee and/or even

sociability have been traditionally categorised as elements of feminine style (Lakoff, 1975, pp.74, 54–55; Holmes, 2013, p.330). Such ideologies illuminate our explanation of linguistic behaviour (Podesva, 2007, p.497). Those stances are established by using linguistic variables (Moore and Podesva, 2009, p.448; Eckert and Podesva, 2021, p.29), which may include phonological or non-phonological variables like DPFs including amplifiers. Hence, because of the conservativeness and the prevalence of gender segregation in the Saudi community and the implication of this separation on the distinctiveness of gender roles and styles we would therefore expect to observe traditional patterns of affective stances. This means female speakers would be expected to produce more affective stances. In the current study, this is translated by the considerably higher usage of amplifiers overall by female speakers compared to male speakers.

To further explain the effect of traditional gender roles on the usage of amplifiers, the following paragraphs review the results from three studies: Carli (1990), Fuchs (2017) and Fuchs (2020). Before reviewing them, it is worth noting that these studies provide data from the late twentieth and the early twenty-first centuries, during which gender norms and the status of women observed tremendous changes in Western societies. This period is characterised by a cultural shift from relatively rigid gender roles to egalitarian attitudes and convergence of gender roles both in the labour force and family structures and an increase in female empowerment (Inglehart and Norris, 2003).

In her study, Carli (1990) tested the effect of single-gender dyads as compared to mixed-gender dyads on the use of amplifiers in interactions. The study was conducted with undergraduate students at an American university. Carli (1990) found that in single-gender dyads, women used more intensifiers than men while in mixed-gender dyads no difference was detected between them. Carli (1990) argues against the suggestion of Lakoff (1975) that amplifiers are features of tentative language used by women along with other features like hedges and tag questions that are often marked as less powerful. She postulates that these devices are reflections of women's "emotional expressiveness and sociability" which function as an invitation for their interlocutors to continue speaking (Carli, 1990, p.942). Traditionally, women were often associated with

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themselves and their point of view (Stoica, 2022). In communications, speakers express their affective stances through the display and deployment of emotions (Stoica, 2022). Thus, this type of stancetaking indexes the feelings of the speaker about a certain proposition.

social and emotional interactions that foster social relations, while men, on the other hand, tend to engage in interactions that lack emotional and relational aspects (Carli 1990). Hence, this study is interpretable within the difference framework discussed above. While these features were justified due to "intrinsic" characteristics within each gender, Carli's (1990) argument refutes this suggestion since the results of her study are dependent on the gender of the interlocutor. According to Carli (1990), the gender of the interlocutor functions as an influencer of the "gender-linked schemas" at play during interaction. A stereotype commonly circulated about women is that they surpass men in their social and expressive abilities (Broverman et al., 1972; Williams and Best, 1982, pp.237–245). Hence, in women-only conversations, it is anticipated that there will be a high degree of expressive behavior while in men-only conversations, it can be anticipated that there will be a lower degree of social and expressive linguistic features. These expectations, as argued by Carli, lead to the adoption of such behaviours when with same-gender interlocutors. On the other hand, in mixed-gender conversations, Carli argues that the ambiguity of the rules governing this type of exchange leads speakers to adopt a behaviour of the opposite gender since they have a better knowledge of it. According to Carli (1990, p. 943), the domination of gender-segregated interactions in American culture across life stages may be the reason behind the explicit social expectations in same-gender interactions.

Fuchs (2020), analysing the *International Corpus of English*, compared the effect of social accommodation on the usage of amplifiers by Indian and British speakers. He found that while both Indian and British women used more intensifiers than men in informal discourse, Indian women used amplifiers less than Indian men in formal discourse, but the effect of formality was neutralised for British women. For Indian women, formal discourse called for more modesty and restriction of amplifiers to comply with the expectations of society. For British women, there was no need for such alteration to their way of speaking. Another finding in Fuchs (2020) is that only Indian women reduced their usage of amplifiers and converged with Indian men, while a mixed-gender setting did not make any difference to that of British women. Thus, in societies where more fine-grained distinct roles of men and women exist, perhaps that is one factor that influences the large difference between the frequency of amplifiers used by males and females. So, while Carli (1990) explains this shift in the employment of amplifiers as a result of ambiguity of the speech rules governing mixed-

dyads, Fuchs (2020) found another layer of social meaning to this adjustment within the Indian context. This might also be true for Carli's data, given that it was probably collected in the late 1980s. This is because in the 1980s, gender roles in the West likely paralleled the twenty-first century gender norms in the Indian community. Hence, these distinct gender roles translated into distinct linguistic styles and compliance from women with societal expectations of maintaining modesty in interactions with men. In an earlier study, Fuchs (2017) observed the employment of amplifiers in the Spoken BNC1994DS and Spoken BNC2014S[104] to see if the gender difference between men and women still exists. He noticed that in both corpora, women of all ages and social classes used more intensifiers than men. Yet, this difference between genders decreased over time in middle-class speakers.

As seen above, results of these studies relatively corroborate each other. "Sex-based networks" (Milroy, 1980, p.163) seem to have been prevalent in societies for a long time, and this, as Carli (1990) explained, carved linguistic stereotypes about feminine and masculine styles and kept them intact for a long time. Hence, data that represent more traditional gendered networks like Carli's (1990) data, the data of 1994 in Fuchs' (2017) study and Indian data in Fuchs' (2020) study, seem to follow a consistent pattern with a large difference between men and women in the usage of amplifiers in women-only conversations and a lower difference in mixed-gender conversations. This is perhaps the reason behind the high usage of amplifiers by female speakers in the current study since gender roles in Riyadh likely reflect the settings in the previous studies with traditional gendered networks.

Fuchs (2017) found that middle-class data of 2014 and British data in Fuchs (2020) represent a less traditional structure of networks in society. This disjunction from the traditional structure of social networks probably contributed to linguistic changes in their usage of amplifiers. As a result, we see that the difference between men and women in their usage of amplifiers is generally lower and mixed-gender conversations did not have any effect on the frequency of amplifiers used by females.

From the previous discussion, we can also predict that the higher frequency of amplifiers by ND female speakers will likely be different in mixed-gender interviews. If female participants in the current study were interviewed by a male interviewer or with

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[104] This acronym refers to the *Spoken British National Corpus 1994 Demographically-Sampled* dataset while the second acronym refers to the *Spoken British National Corpus 2014 Sampled* dataset (http://www.natcorp.ox.ac.uk).

male participants, it is predicted that their usage of amplifiers will considerably drop. Similar to Indian women in Fuchs (2020), there will probably be a lack of alignment between the speakers in these settings. Female speakers might have a feeling of discomfort in mixed-gender interactions, which will lead them to adjust their style to include lower affective expressions, including amplifiers. Carli (1990) and Fuchs (2020) both consider the effect of the gender of the interlocutor for ascertaining triggers behind the observed tendencies in the usage of amplifiers. Again, traditional heterosexual gender norms seem to influence specific patterns in both studies, as well as in the current data. An overall trend is the decrease of amplifiers in mixed-gender conversations compared to female-only conversations.

Female speakers' exploitation of unamplification with male speakers as opposed to amplification can be viewed as an interactional strategy. Because women in these societies are expected to show modesty when speaking with men, their usage of lower intensifiers may be part of a shift to a modest style, which is marked by fewer affective stances, including amplifiers. A modest style is characterised by maintaining linguistic distance through reduced subjectivity and affective stances such as emotional markers. Therefore, this shift can be viewed as an interactional step towards distancing themselves from their addressee and showing disengagement. Because amplifiers are expressions of affective stances that show expressiveness, high involvement, and sociability with interactants (Carli, 1990; Andersen, 2001, p.76; Brown and Tagliamonte, 2012; Holmes, 2013, p.308), we can predict that their utilisation by women may generally depend on the level of comfort with their interlocutors. This, accordingly, depends on ideological factors like the acceptable distance between the genders in a given community. Notwithstanding, this means that this interactional function of unamplification may be utilised in any interaction too, regardless of the speaker's gender, if there is low alignment between interlocutors leading to disengagement. This will lead to using a style that lacks affective stances as a result of any factor, regardless of gender, or perhaps the choice of specific variables that align with the formality level between interlocutors (see Chapter 6, Section 6.4.2).

Women in the Saudi community are typically socialised to maintain their modesty and deference in the presence of non-familial men. So, as we explained previously, not using amplifiers will likely help in creating distance or a detachment between them and their male interlocutors, which aligns with the modest persona. Song

(2019)'s findings support the previous proposition as she explored the reasons behind the unsatisfactory levels of participation in English classes by Saudi females while studying abroad. Many of these females justified their lower levels of socialisation with male classmates, especially with Saudi men, because of their fear of being judged. This is because of the social expectation and the ideal and preferable construction of womanhood by Saudi society, which encourages women to have characteristics like shyness, deference and modesty. In Song's (2019, p.414) study, women from the Najd area were the least comfortable to speak with male classmates compared to other Saudi females from the eastern and western regions. This finding is expected since in Saudi Arabia, people in the Najd area are known for being conservative, religiously and culturally (AlOboudi, 2015), compared to other regions where there were more chances of contact between the cultures, such as the region of Hijaz and the eastern region. This is slowly changing as the community in Najd undergoes increased contact with the outer world. The effect of the gender of the interlocutor on the usage of amplifiers by ND speakers needs to be confirmed and explored in future research.

Another relevant aspect is that since higher engagement is expressed by using amplification, then there should be methods for testing the level of participants' involvement in interactions. For instance, the current study uses the seriousness of the subject as an attempt to raise participants' engagement and increase affective stances, including intensifiers. Yet, for amplifiers, this was not a significant factor and the gender and age of speakers were more significant in the multivariate analysis. Thus, to advance our understanding of factors contributing to the usage of amplifiers as sociolinguistic variables, it may be more informative to not restrict the analysis to discourse and speech as sources of inference[105].

Finally, consideration of the critical factors beyond gender that may condition our usage of the language is part of what variationists in the third wave have been propagating. A principle in third-wave variationist research is that language variation is used as an instrument to construct social identities (Levon, 2021, p.38) and that we must "avoid assuming an essentialized connection" (Podesva and Kajino, 2014, p.118)

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[105] Podesva (2018), for instance, studied the correlation between stances of disengagement and creaky voice in the English language. Podesva (2018) implemented three types of modalities. The first modality is feedback from participants to rate their level of comfort and enjoyment; the second modality was through rating the lexical/semantic content of words into low/negative based on valence, arousal, dominance, and sentiment; and the third modality was the observation of body movements and smiling, which meant that a lower rate of both signals higher frequency of the variable. The results in this study accentuate the need to explore other constituents of human linguistic behaviour, especially for affective stances like amplifiers, in order to uncover the factors involved in their utilisation.

between the gender identity of the speaker and their usage of linguistic features. This view departs from the classic variationist "correlational approach," which holds the premise that the linguistic practices of individuals are determined by their gender identity (Levon, 2021, p.38). Thus, their goal was to identify linguistic features that define each category using correlational methods that are established by means of observed frequencies. Yet, the frequency of linguistic variables assists in examining their trajectory through the community (Moore and Podesva, 2009, p.479; Podesva, 2007). Therefore, these correlations, based on larger numbers of speakers, are critical in understanding the values and ideologies upon which the community operates and, as a result, assist in understanding the social forces driving linguistic change (Podesva, 2007, p.482). This is important because research has found that many linguistic features are stereotypically associated with certain genders (at least in certain cultures) (Levon, 2021, p.37). Yet, following a "surface-level correlation" approach often makes the outcome of the analysis incomplete and misleading because of the complex nature of the link between language and gender (Levon, 2021, p.37). Variationist literature within the Saudi context is limited and further studies are essential to explore stylistic distinctiveness that may also be involved in these social dynamics. There are important questions that emerged from investigating amplifiers in RNDC that ought to be answered in future research, such as: what other linguistic variables in ND are traditionally linked to females? And how can we explain those differences based on the social circumstances in Saudi Arabia? Some of these aspects are further explored in Chapter 8.

5.7 Conclusion

This chapter presented the results of the distributional analysis and multivariate analysis of adjective amplifiers and downtoners. In the distributional analysis, both genders used amplifiers more frequently than downtoners and female speakers used amplifiers more than male speakers. In terms of the age of speakers, we saw that younger speakers used intensifiers (i.e., both amplifiers and downtoners) more frequently, although the difference between age groups in their usage of amplifiers is larger. In terms of education, the frequency of intensifiers among speakers with high and low educational

levels were comparable. Out of the three social factors, only age and gender were found to be statistically significant.

In terms of the linguistic factors, amplifiers were more frequently modifying adjectives expressing *similarity, difficulty* and *value*. Downtoners, on the other hand, were more frequently modifying adjectives expressing *colour, other* and *difficulty*. Both amplifiers and downtoners were more frequent in the modification of predicative adjectives. Both amplifiers and downtoners showed comparable usage across serious and non-serious discussions, though downtoners were used slightly more frequently in non-serious topics. Amplifiers collocated more frequently with positive adjectives while downtoners collocated more with negative adjectives. In terms of adjective emotionality, amplifiers and downtoners collocated more frequently with non-emotional adjectives.

In the multivariate analysis of amplifiers, the polarity of adjectives and the seriousness of topics were not found to be statistically significant, while all the remaining factors were statistically significant. For amplifiers, the most significant factor was the function of the adjective; amplifiers were favoured with predicative adjectives. The second most significant factor was the age of the speaker, with younger speakers favouring the usage of amplifiers while the older groups disfavoured it. Females and individuals with higher education favoured the usage of amplifiers, while males and speakers with low education disfavoured the usage of amplifiers.

In the multivariate analysis of downtoners, only three factors were found to be statistically significant and all of them were linguistic factors: adjective polarity, adjective function and seriousness of topics. Downtoners were favoured with negative and predicative adjectives and in non-serious topics.

In the following chapters, I focus on the two most common amplifiers in RNDC: *marrah* and *jiddan*. More attention is given to amplifiers because of their higher frequency in the data compared to downtoners. As we observed in Section 5.3 and 5.5, they also appear to be more socially sensitive, which makes them ideal for further sociolinguistic analysis (see Labov, 1972, pp. 8–10). Frequent variables are more suitable for variationist investigation (Labov, 1972, pp.8–10). Inspecting individual variants will help untangle further aspects related to the cultural and linguistic context specific to individual variants.

Chapter 6 *marrah* and *jiddan*

Distributional Analysis and Multivariate Analysis

6.1 Introduction

In this chapter I present the results and discussion of the distributional analysis and multivariate analysis of the boosters *marrah* and *jiddan.* The social factors are gender, age and education. The linguistic factors are seriousness of topic, semantic category, polarity and function of adjectives and position of amplifiers. In the analysis, *marrah* and *jiddan* are compared. As observed in Chapter 4, there are other amplifiers in the system in RNDC. However, these other forms are put aside in this chapter due to their very low frequency which does not allow for a thorough quantitative analysis. Hence, although I focus on the two forms *marrah* and *jiddan*, they are not the only forms available in the system but choosing them for further variationist analysis is motivated by their higher frequency. Analysing *marrah* and *jiddan* in parallel aids in understanding the intricates of their variation in RNDC, as they are the two most frequent constituents of the adjective amplification system and alternating between them is likely to carry a social implication. This is because these two devices are members within one system of adjective amplification which means the distribution of one member, which is influenced by several factors, will probably influence the distribution of the other member.

6.2 Distributional Analysis

6.2.1 Gender

An interesting result is the difference between genders in their proportional use of *marrah* and *jiddan* (Table 6.1, Figure 6.1). Among male speakers, *jiddan* is more frequently utilised (61.80%; N=55/89) compared to *marrah* (38.20%; N=34/89). In contrast, female speakers utilised *marrah* more frequently for adjective amplification (90.32%; N=168/186) compared to *jiddan* (9.68%; N=18/186).

Table 6.1 The Effect of Gender on the Use of *marrah* and *jiddan* in RNDC

	marrah		*jiddan*		Total	
	N	**%**	**N**	**%**	**N**	**%**
Male	34	38.20%	55	61.80%	89	100%
Female	168	90.32%	18	9.68%	186	100%
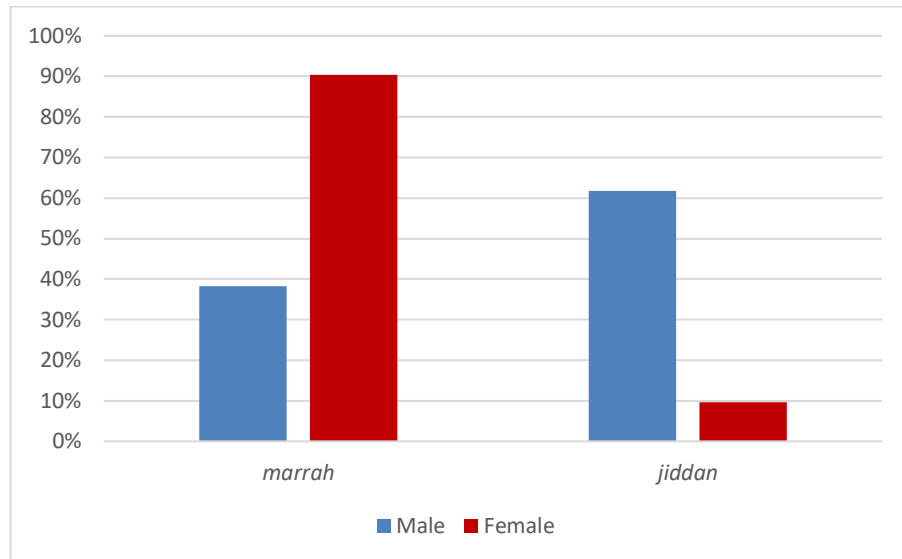
Figure 6.1 The Effect of Gender on the Use of *marrah* and *jiddan* in RNDC

This pattern aligns with the findings of Almossa (2024), as illustrated in Table 6.2, where she found that female speakers used *marrah* for adjective amplification more frequently (95.72%; N=313/327). However, in her data, male speakers showed a more balanced distribution of *marrah* and *jiddan* (64.84% vs. 35.16%, respectively). This pattern differs from the findings in AA where Alshaboul et al. (2022) found that both female and male speakers used *jiddan* much less frequently compared to the vernacular variant. A chi-square test shows that gender is statistically significant for the usage of *marrah* (χ^2=50.50, df=1, N=3416, p-value<0.001)[106] and *jiddan* (χ^2=35.11, df=1, N=3416, p-value<0.001)[107].

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[106] In this chi-square test (and other similar tests conducted on *marrah*), *marrah* was tested against all tokens of other amplifiers and the null-variant while tokens of downtoners were removed following the principle of accountability since they are not functionally equivalent.

[107] In this chi-square test (and other similar tests conducted on *jiddan*), *jiddan* was tested against all tokens of other amplifiers and the null-variant while tokens of downtoners were removed following the principle of accountability since they are not functionally equivalent.

Table 6.2 The Effect of Gender on the Use of *marrah* and *jiddan* in Almossa (2024)

	marrah		*jiddan*		Total	
	N	**%**	**N**	**%**	**N**	**%**
Male	59	64.84%	32	35.16%	91	100%
Female	313	95.72%	14	4.28%	327	100%

6.2.2 Age

There is a contrast in the effect of age as a social factor on the usage of the amplifiers *jiddan* and *marrah* (χ^2=82.29, df= 2, N=3416, p-value<0.001) (Table 6.3, Figure 6.2). Young speakers used *marrah* more frequently (91.13%; N=113/124) compared to middle-aged (59.43%; N=63/106) and older speakers (57.78%; N=26/45). All the three age groups used *marrah* more than *jiddan,* but the older age groups showed comparable proportions unlike younger speakers who predominantly utilised *marrah*.

Table 6.3 Effect of Age on the Use of *marrah* and *jiddan* in RNDC

	marrah		*jiddan*		Total	
	N	**%**	**N**	**%**	**N**	**%**
Young	113	91.13%	11	8.87%	124	100%
Middle-aged	63	59.43%	43	40.57%	106	100%
Old	26	57.78%	19	42.22%	45	100%
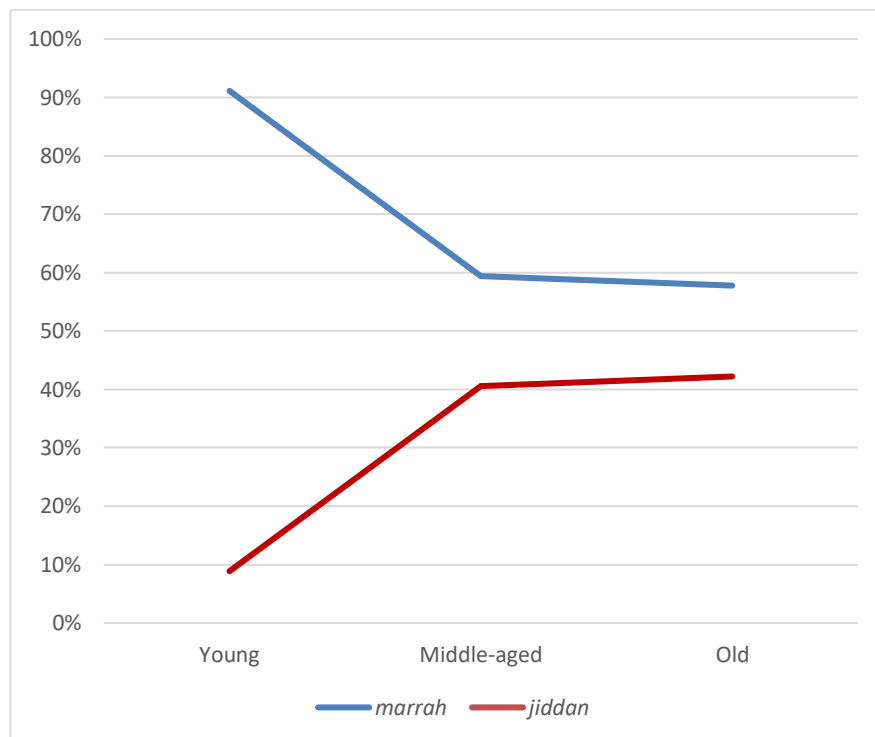
Figure 6.2 Effect of Age on the Use of *marrah* and *jiddan* in RNDC

This finding corroborates the results in Almossa (2024) (Table 6.4). Almossa also found that young speakers of ND used *marrah* more frequently (95.45%; N=210/220), compared to middle-aged (87.01%; N=134/154) and older speakers (63.64%; N=28/44). The finding that *marrah* is produced more frequently by younger speakers corresponds with the significant contribution of young speakers, who have been highlighted in the literature as playing focal roles in linguistic innovation and change (Tagliamonte, 2016, p.3).

Table 6.4 Effect of Age on the Use of *marrah* and *jiddan* in Almossa (2024)

	marrah		*jiddan*		Total	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
Young	210	95.45%	10	4.55%	220	100%
Middle-aged	134	87.01%	20	12.99%	154	100%
Old	28	63.64%	16	36.36%	44	100%

Contrastingly, older speakers used *jiddan* more frequently (42.22%; N=19/45) followed by middle-aged speakers (40.57%; N=43/106) while younger speakers *jiddan* showed the least frequency (8.87%; N=11/124) (χ^2=9.88, df=2, N=3416, p-value=0.007). This observation parallels the pattern observed in Almossa (2024). In her study, older speakers showed the highest frequency (36.36%; N=16/44) followed by middle-aged speakers (12.99%; N=20/154) while younger speakers showed the least frequency (4.55%; N=10/220).

The similarity between the results in RNDC and Almossa (2024) in the distribution of *marrah* and *jiddan* across age and gender is interesting. This suggests that the interview approach is valid and does accurately capture overall usage of linguistic forms. The similarity is observed despite the approach in RNDC where recordings were obtained via interviewers rather than being self-recorded which is the approach in Almossa (2024). The observed difference in the usage of male speakers could be a result of the higher formality in interviews as compared to self-recorded audios which reduces the effect of the observer paradox.

6.2.3 Age and Gender

To understand the effect of both age and gender on the usage of the amplifiers *marrah* and *jiddan*, cross-tabulations of age and gender are presented below.

6.2.3.1 marrah

A cross-tabulation of age and gender reveals that among all age groups, females showed a higher frequency of *marrah* compared to males of the same age group (Table 6.5). The highest proportional difference between genders is between older speakers as older females are responsible for producing all the proportion of *marrah* which are produced by older individuals in RNDC. The difference between younger speakers is the smallest as young male speakers produced 26.55% (N=30/113) of the proportion of *marrah* utilised by younger individuals in RNDC.

Table 6.5 The Usage of *marrah* by Age and Gender in RNDC

Age/Gender	Male		Female		Total	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
Young	30	26.55%	83	73.45%	113	100%
Middle	4	6.35%	59	93.65%	63	100%
Old	0	0.00%	26	100%	26	100%

A similar pattern was observed in Almossa (2024) (Table 6.6). In her data, it is female speakers of all the age groups who used *marrah* more frequently compared to their male cohort. Similarly, the largest proportional difference is observed among older speakers since females produced almost all the proportion of *marrah* (96.43%; N=27/28) that older speakers in the data used. Further, the smallest proportional difference is observed among younger speakers since young male speakers are responsible for 22.86% (N=48/210) of *marrah* that younger speakers used in RNDC.

Table 6.6 the usage of *marrah* by Age and Gender in Almossa (2024)

Age/Gender	Male		Female		Total	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
Young	48	22.86%	162	77.14%	210	100%
Middle-aged	10	7.46%	124	92.54%	134	100%
Old	1	3.57%	27	96.43%	28	100%

6.2.3.2 jiddan

A cross-tabulation of age and gender reveals that among all age groups, male speakers showed a higher frequency of *jiddan* compared to females of the same age group (Table 6.7). The largest proportional difference between genders is between middle-aged

speakers (81.40% vs. 18.60%) followed by older speakers (73.68% vs. 26.32%). The difference between younger speakers is the smallest as young male speakers produced 54.55% (N=6/11) of the proportion of *jiddan* utilised by younger individuals in RNDC. A chi-square test reveals that the effect of these two factors is significant on the usage of *jiddan* (χ^2=80.07, df=5, N=3416, p-value<0.001). Male speakers' usage of *jiddan* resembles an age-grading pattern. Age-grading refers to the change in the linguistic behaviour of individuals as they grow older, while the linguistic usage of the community as a whole does not change; thus, it does not involve a long-term shift in linguistic behaviour across subsequent generations (Labov, 1999, p.84). At the same time, the synchronic identification of age-grading change is challenging and not always straightforward, suggesting that further research is needed to support the current findings especially with female speakers showing a different pattern (Labov, 1999, pp.60, 73, 94–96; Tagliamonte, 2016, p.53).

Table 6.7 The Usage of *jiddan* by Age and Gender in RNDC

Age/Gender	Male		Female		Total	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
Young	6	54.55%	5	45.45%	11	100%
Middle-aged	35	81.40%	8	18.60%	43	100%
Old	14	73.68%	5	26.32%	19	100%

In Almossa's (2024) data (Table 6.8), the pattern is similar to the pattern observed in RNDC for the two younger age groups while for older speakers, female speakers showed a higher frequency (62.50%; N=10/16). Unlike the findings in RNDC, the largest proportional difference between genders is between younger speakers as male speakers were responsible for all the production of *jiddan* by this age group.

Table 6.8 The Usage of *jiddan* by Age and Gender in Almossa (2024)

Age/Gender	Male		Female		Total	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
Young	10	100%	0	0%	10	100%
Middle-aged	16	80%	4	20%	20	100%
Old	6	37.50%	10	62.50%	16	100%

6.2.4 Education

Speakers with high and low educational levels both used *marrah* more frequently compared to *jiddan* (Table 6.9, Figure 6.5). However, speakers with lower educational levels showed a very low frequency in their usage of *jiddan* (8.14%; N=7/86) compared to those with higher educational levels (34.92%; N=66/189). A chi-square test reveals that this factor is statistically significant for *marrah* (χ^2=7.51, df=1, N=3416, p-value=0.006) and *jiddan* (χ^2=14.13, df=1, N=3416, p-value<0.001).

Table 6.9 The Effect of Education on the Use of *marrah* and *jiddan* in RNDC

	marrah		*jiddan*		Total	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
High	123	65.08%	66	34.92%	189	100%
Low	79	91.86%	7	8.14%	86	100%
Total	202	100.00%	73	100.00%		
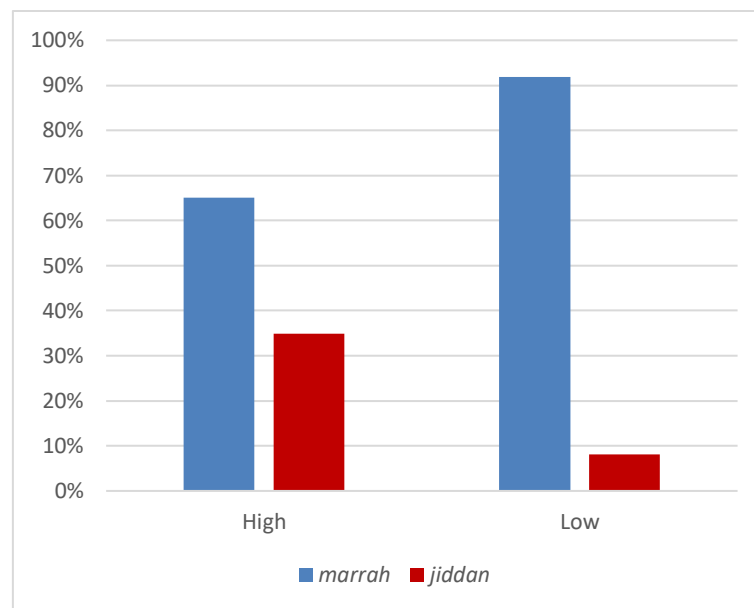
Figure 6.3 The Effect of Education on the Use of *marrah* and *jiddan* in RNDC

The finding that the highest frequency of *jiddan* is produced by speakers with high educational levels is in line with the hypothesis formulated in this study, which predicts that speakers with high educational levels will use the variants that are shared with CA, including the amplifier *jiddan* more frequently. We can also observe in Table 6.10 that

the proportions of *marrah* (χ²=0.40, df=1, N=2382, p-value=0.525)[108] and *jiddan* (χ²=0.12, df=1, N=2382, p-value=0.724)[109] produced by speakers with undergraduate degrees and postgraduate degrees are relatively similar.

Table 6.10 The Use of *marrah* and *jiddan* by Degree Holders in RNDC

	marrah		*jiddan*		Total	
Educational Level	**N**	**%**	**N**	**%**	**N**	**%**
Undergraduate	63	64.95%	34	35.05%	97	100%
Postgraduate	60	65.22%	32	34.78%	92	100%

A closer look at the recorded tokens of *jiddan* reveals that all tokens are produced by degree-holders or people currently in education (studying at university or school). The only exception is two tokens[110] produced by one middle-aged and one older male speaker (Speakers M13 and M19, see Appendix H). Both speakers used *jiddan* in non-serious discussions, against what is expected. The usage of *jiddan* by the two least educated amongst the speakers who used *jiddan* can support two aspects: first, that usage of CA features does not necessarily require a high command of CA. Because amplifiers (and DPFs in general) are more salient than phonological and morpho-syntactic variants (Dines, 1980, p.16), it may be easier for speakers of all educational backgrounds to notice it and use it if they are exposed to it through any source, such as using it in professional communication in workplaces or acquiring it through mass media. Other factors may have had a stronger influence on those speakers, like the formality of the interview (Hary, 1996). Further, the social meaning of this form may have played a role too, especially for aspirers or social climbers who might use the variant due to its social value (Chambers, 2003, p.101). This is because, in the construction of style, speakers draw on common ideologies that are meaningful to them and their interlocutors (Drager et al., 2021).

The results in the previous paragraph means that there may be other factors involved in the employment of *jiddan* by speakers M13 and M19. Those two speakers

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[108] In this chi-square test, I removed the data from speakers with lower educational levels. *marrah* was tested against all tokens of other amplifiers and the null-variant while tokens of downtoners were removed following the principle of accountability since they are not functionally equivalent.

[109] In this chi-square test, I removed the data from speakers with lower educational levels. *jiddan* was tested against all tokens of other amplifiers and the null-variant while tokens of downtoners were removed following the principle of accountability since they are not functionally equivalent.

[110] Speakers F26, F11, F4 and M8 were labelled as 'low' since the coding was based on obtained degrees while those speakers are currently studying and not yet obtained their degrees. All the remaining speakers with low levels of education did not use *jiddan*.

both hold an intermediate school certificate and both worked in the military sector where usually university education is not required for employment. Typically, unless these are higher ranking personnels (which is not the case here), these jobs do not occupy a high prestige in the society. Whether this is conscious or unconscious, their usage of *jiddan* might be an attempt to index a high educational level. This can also be explained by drawing on linguistic capital where speakers use the forms associated with authority and prestige to align themselves with the social category that typically use it (Trudgill, 1974, p.94). Further explanation of this aspect will be explained in Chapter 7. These observations highlight the significance of individual level analysis of this variable which is what I present in the subsequent chapter.

6.2.5 Gender and Education

A cross-tabulation of education and gender is presented below.

6.2.5.1 marrah

As illustrated in Table 6.11, among degree-holders and non-degree holders, it is female speakers who use *marrah* more frequently. However, the difference between female and male speakers is higher among non-degree holders as female speakers are responsible for almost all the proportion of *marrah* (96.20%; N=76/79) produced by this social category. The proportional difference between genders among degree-holders is smaller (74.80% vs. 25.20%). This may indicate that male speakers with higher education have exposure to more diverse social networks, including female-based networks. They may also be, as a result of this, more accepting of adopting a variable that might be perceived as a typical feminine feature. This underscores the critical role male speakers with higher education might play in breaking the gender-based linguistic patterns and in the diffusion of linguistic changes.

Table 6.11 The Usage of *marrah* by Education and Gender in RNDC

	Female		Male		Total	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
High	92	74.80%	31	25.20%	123	100%
Low	76	96.20%	3	3.80%	79	100%

6.2.5.2 jiddan

Among speakers with high education, male speakers account for the majority of *jiddan* usage (78.79%; N=52/66) (Table 6.12). In contrast, speakers with lower levels of education showed a more balanced distribution in their employment of *jiddan* with female speakers using it more frequently than male speakers (57.14% vs, 42.86%; N=4 vs. 3). As explained before in Section 6.2.4, all speakers who used *jiddan* and labelled as low education are currently enrolled in education, except speakers M13 and M19. This may explain the slightly higher frequency by female speakers (i.e., F4, F11 and F26) as they are all currently enrolled in education while for male speakers only speaker M8 is currently in education while speakers M13 and M19 are not.

Table 6.12 The Usage of *jiddan* by Education and Gender in RNDC

	Female		Male		Total	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
High	14	21.21%	52	78.79%	66	100%
Low	4	57.14%	3	42.86%	7	100%

Figure 6.4 illustrates the usage of the two amplifiers *marrah* and *jiddan* by gender and education which is provided in Table 6.11 and Table 6.12. We notice that for the high education group, the difference between male and female speakers in their usage of *marrah* (49.6%) and *jiddan* (57.58%) is similar with males using *jiddan* more frequently and females using *marrah* more frequently. For the low education group, the difference between genders in the usage of *marrah* is more pronounced (92.4%) which means that lower education female group highly favour this booster. In contrast, the gender-based difference in *jiddan* usage is much smaller (14.28%) which suggests a more balanced distribution of this amplifier across both groups.

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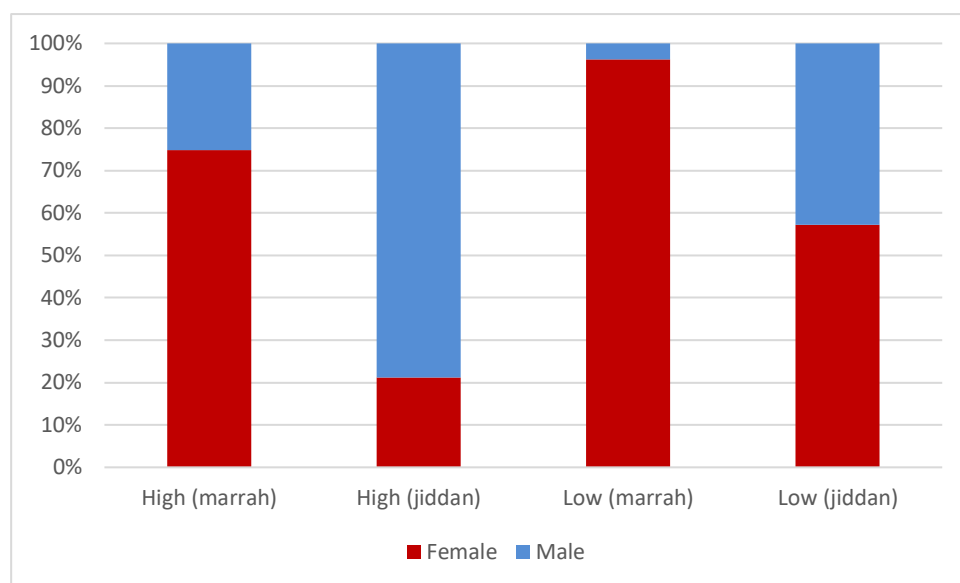
Figure 6.4 The Usage of the Two Amplifiers *marrah* and *jiddan* by Education and Gender

6.2.6 Semantic Category of Adjective

6.2.6.1 marrah

The highest proportion of the use of *marrah* is employed to intensify adjectives of the *value* type (example 1a) (31.68%; N=64/202) (Table 6.13, Figure 6.5). This percentage is followed by adjectives expressing *human propensity* (13.86%; N=28/202) and *quantity,* respectively (11.39%; N=23/202) (see examples 1b and 1c). The semantic category was found to be statistically significant in the conditioning of *marrah*. Almossa (2024, p.231) observed that *marrah* collocated more with adjectives of *value*, followed by *propensity* adjectives.

1)
a) ʔīh ʔīh ***marrah jamīl*** mašaḷḷāh tabārak-aḷḷāh (F26)
    Yeah yeah ***very beautiful*** God bless
b) w-kllhum mašaḷḷāh ***muʔaddabīn marrah*** (F9)
    And they are all ***very polite*** God bless
c) ʔlli marrah marrah grībīn yṣīrūn ʕadad ***maḥdūd marrah*** (F9)
    Those who are very very close are ***very limited*** in number

Table 6.13 Distribution of *marrah* and *jiddan* by Semantic Category in RNDC

	marrah		*jiddan*	
	N	**%**	**N**	**%**
Age	4	1.98%	0	0%
Colour	1	0.50%	0	0%
Difficulty	19	9.41%	6	8.22%
Dimension	13	6.44%	8	10.96%
Human propensity	28	13.86%	11	15.07%
Other	6	2.97%	1	1.37%
Physical property	17	8.42%	2	2.74%
Position	4	1.98%	0	0%
Qualification	12	5.94%	2	2.74%
Quantification	23	11.39%	9	12.33%
Similarity	11	5.45%	5	6.85%
Value	64	31.68%	29	39.73%
Total	202	100.00%	73	100.00%
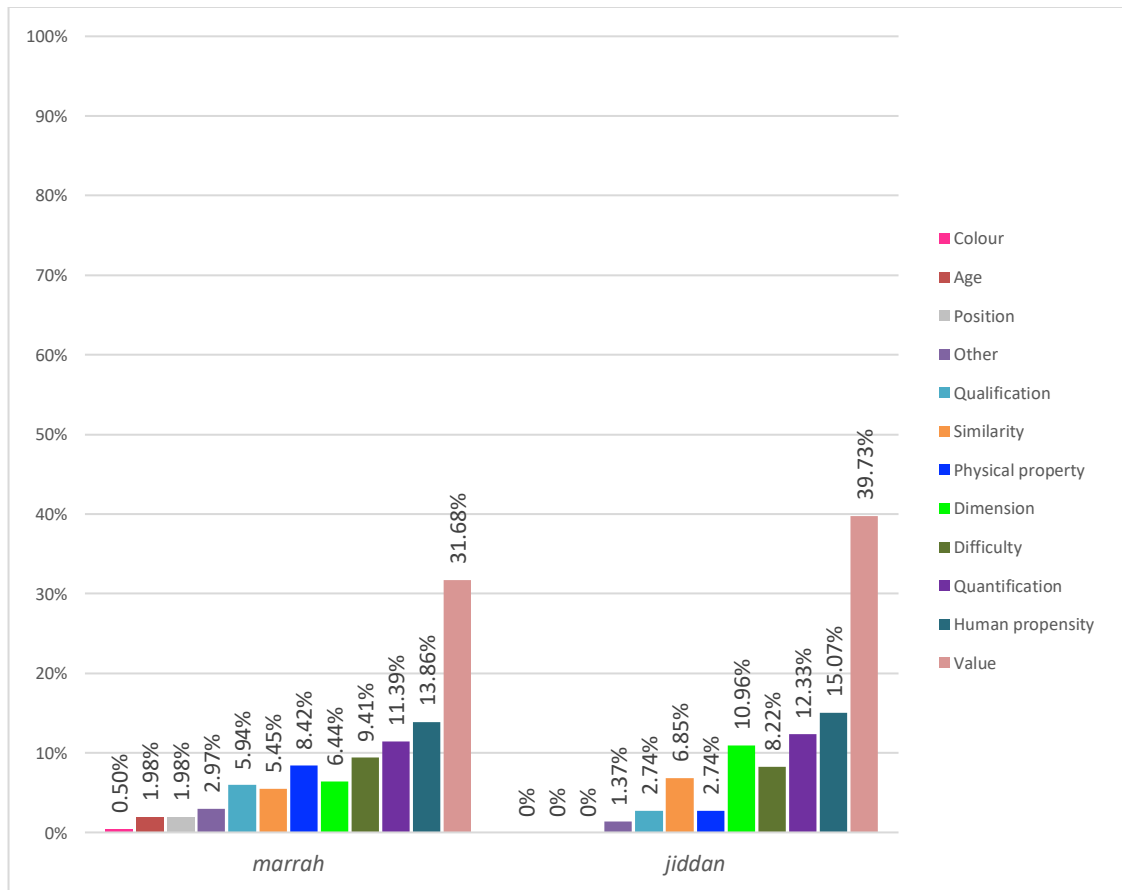
Figure 6.5 Distribution of *marrah* and *jiddan* by Semantic Category in RNDC

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6.2.6.2 *jiddan*

The booster *jiddan* is similar to *marrah* in the three highest modified types of adjectives (Table 6.13, Figure 6.5). Like the booster *marrah*, more tokens of *jiddan* are observed modifying adjectives expressing *value* (39.73%; N=29/73) than any other semantic group, such as in example 2a. The semantic category was found to be statistically significant in the use of *jiddan*. Alshaboul et al. (2022) also found that the highest proportion of *jiddan* modified adjectives of *value* (13.7%; N=23/34). Similarly, the second highest modified types were adjectives expressing *human propensity* (15.07%; N=11/73) and *quantity* (12.33%; N=9/73), like examples 2b and 2c, respectively. Almossa (2024, p.231), in ND, however, found that *jiddan* collocated more frequently with adjectives of *value* (48%; N=22/46), followed by adjectives under the label *other* (20%; N=9/46) and *propensity* (10%; N=5/46).

2)
a) yaʕnī alfajr ykūn ***jiddan jamīl*** alʕaṣr maṯalan (.) munāsib maṯalan badrī littasawwq maṯalan (M19)
   The early morning is ***very nice*** the afternoon for instance (.) is suitable for instance early to go shopping for instance
b) maʕ ʔnnhā ***muḥtaramah jiddan*** w-ʔummahā muḥtaramah w-yaʕnī (F5)
   Even though she is ***very respectful*** and her mother is respectful
c) ʔanā (.) šaxṣiyyan ʔaḥiss ʔinnah yiʕtmid ʕalā ʕawāmil ***kiṯīrah jiddan jiddan jiddan*** (M24)
   I (.) personally think that it depends on ***very very very numerous*** factors

One of the plausible factors which may contribute to the high frequency of intensifiers is their advanced level of grammaticalisation (Bolinger, 1972). When intensifiers become increasingly used in many contexts; their expansion may lead to taking over the contexts that were preserved for certain intensifiers (Bolinger, 1972, p.18; Paradis, 2008, p.338). This may be taken as an indication that forms such as *marrah* and *jiddan* have progressed far into the cline of grammaticalisation. Almossa (2024, p.230) similarly suspected this progressed level based on the collocational pattern of *marrah* with the different semantic types. Since obtaining diachronic data for ND is challenging, what is available to us is to speculate and infer through linking their functions and contexts in the given data to knowledge of Arabic language and ND and

trajectories that intensifiers in other languages underwent in their way to their grammaticalised status.

Table 6.14 shows the proportional distribution within each semantic category, rather than across the total occurrences of *marrah* and *jiddan*. The percentages in this table reflect how much of each category is intensified by *marrah* versus *jiddan*. Among adjective semantic types, *age* (100%; N=4/4), *colour* (100%; N=1/1) and *position* (100%; N=4/4) adjectives exhibit the highest proportion of *marrah* use followed by *physical property* (89.47%; N=17/19) and *other* adjectives (85.71%; N=6/7). For *jiddan*, *dimension* adjectives have the highest proportion of this booster use (38.10%; N=8/21) followed by *similarity* (31.25%; N=5/16) and *human propensity* adjectives (28.21%; N=11/39).

Table 6.14 Frequency of *marrah* versus *jiddan* within Semantic Categories in RNDC

	marrah		jiddan		Total	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
Age	4	100.00%	0	0.00%	4	0.36%
Colour	1	100.00%	0	0.00%	1	0.09%
Difficulty	19	76.00%	6	24.00%	25	2.27%
Dimension	13	61.90%	8	38.10%	21	1.91%
Human propensity	28	71.79%	11	28.21%	39	3.55%
Other	6	85.71%	1	14.29%	7	0.64%
Physical property	17	89.47%	2	10.53%	19	1.73%
Position	4	100.00%	0	0.00%	4	0.36%
Qualification	12	85.71%	2	14.29%	14	1.27%
Quantification	23	71.88%	9	28.12%	32	2.91%
Similarity	11	68.75%	5	31.25%	16	1.45%
Value	64	68.82%	29	31.18%	93	8.45%

6.2.7 The Effect of Age and Semantic Category

Previous studies have utilised the semantic category of adjective to measure how far intensifiers have gone in their diffusion. For this reason, a cross-tabulation of age and gender is used to reflect different points in time. For this purpose, the age of speakers is presented in decades. Using a fine-grained division of age here helps in capturing the generational pattern of incrementation by using the present data as a reflection of the past (Labov, 1999, p.62; Tagliamonte and D'Arcy, 2009, p.61).

6.2.7.1 Marrah

Figure 6.6 illustrates the distribution of *marrah* usage across the semantic types for each age group. Older age groups (50s and 60s) show a relatively limited or concentrated distribution of the booster *marrah.* For this group of speakers, *marrah* primarily collocates with adjectives of *value*, *difficulty* and *human propensity*. Younger age groups (18-19, 20s and 30s) exabit a more distributed usage of *marrah* across wider semantic types (e.g., *dimension*, *similarity*, *qualification*, and *quantification*). Adjectives of *value* are the most frequently modified by *marrah* across all age groups.
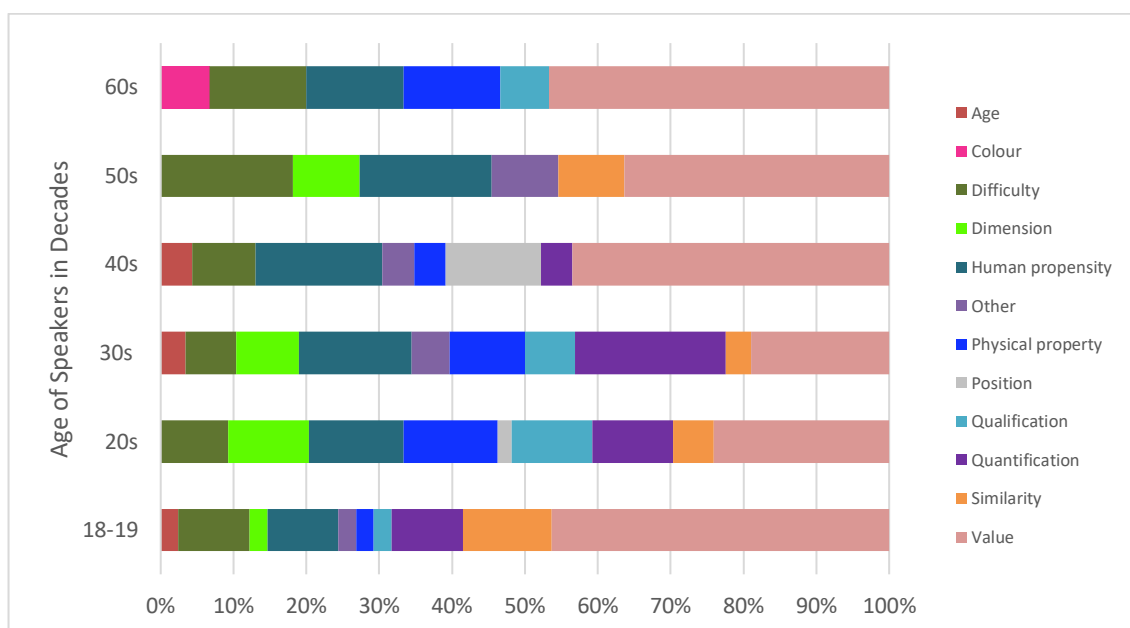
Figure 6.6 Distribution of *marrah* Usage Across Semantic Categories by Age Group

Based on Figure 6.6, it can be observed that *marrah* is used to intensify more adjective categories by the younger age groups while older speakers used it with a limited number of semantic types. Thus, *marrah* seems to be undergoing a semantic expansion. This can be used as an indication of the ongoing development of *marrah* in the grammaticalisation cline. The pattern of change here along with the observed increase in frequency across the age groups (see Section 6.2.2) is similar to the pattern of change observed in previous variational studies of intensifiers. Ito and Tagliamonte (2003), for instance, found that the diffusion of *really* into wider semantic environments precedes the rise in its frequency. Similarly, D'Arcy (2015) observed for *really* that the overall increase in its frequency occurred after the semantic expansion, where the overall frequency was limited. This means that the incrementation process for intensifiers can

reveal information about their grammaticalisation status. However, more data is, of course, needed to confirm this observation for *marrah* in ND.

6.2.7.2 *jiddan*

While there appears to be an expansion in the semantic contexts where the booster *marrah* is used, the usage of *jiddan* shows a different trend, with an increase in the number of semantic contexts over the decades (30s–40s) (Figure 6.7). Specifically, speakers in their 30s and 40s use *jiddan* in five and six semantic categories, respectively, whereas those in their 20s, 50s, and 60s modify adjectives in only four categories. The narrowest range of contexts is observed among the youngest speakers (18–19), who modify just two categories, and the oldest speakers (70s), who use *jiddan* in only one category (*value*). This apparent-time pattern suggests two possibilities. It could be that younger and older speakers are relying on other forms within their adjective intensification system, which aligns with the observed preference for *marrah* among younger speakers. It may also suggest that these age groups generally use amplifiers less frequently for adjective modification.
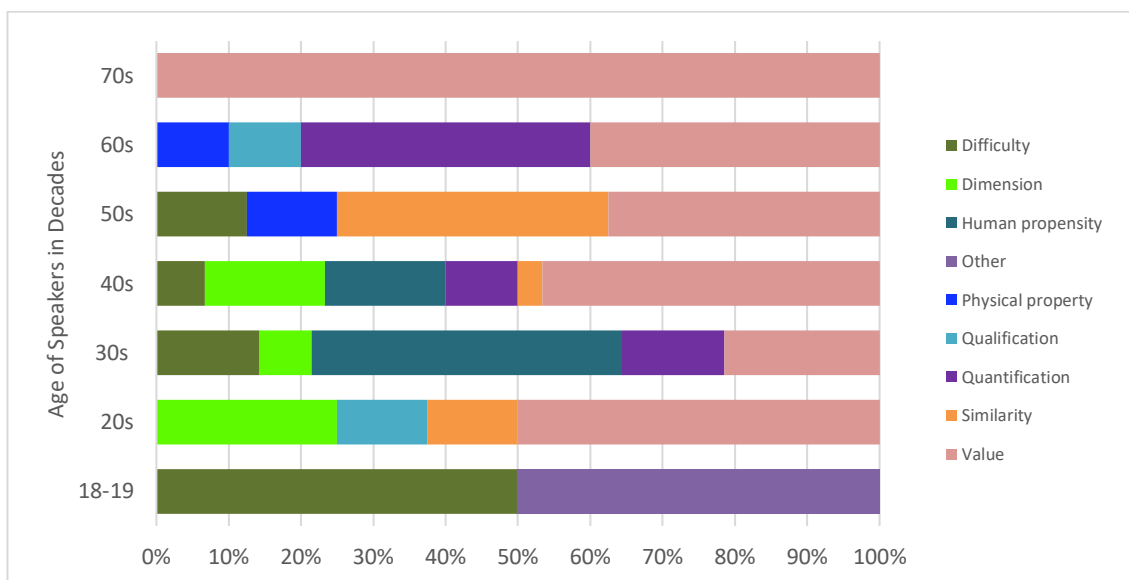
Figure 6.7 Distribution of *jiddan* Usage Across Semantic Categories by Age Group

6.2.8 Gender, Age and Semantic Category

In this section, I examine the effect of age, gender and the semantic category on the usage of *marrah* and *jiddan*. A pattern that can be observed from Figure 6.8 and Figure 6.9 is that age groups who use the booster *marrah* in wide contexts, their usage of *jiddan* is more restricted. For example, young speakers particularly females use *marrah* in a broader range of semantic types compared to older age groups (Figure 6.8). In addition, in Figure 6.9 we see that young female speakers employed *jiddan* in narrow contexts. Middle-aged speakers, on the other hand, used *jiddan* in wider semantic contexts compared to other age groups while their usage of *marrah* is very restricted. An opposite pattern is observed for middle-aged females that use *marrah* is a wide range of contexts compared to their limited usage of *jiddan* in narrow semantic types. Further, older males, did not use *marrah* in any context but employed *jiddan* in several contexts. Overall, male speakers used *jiddan* in more semantic contexts compared to their usage of *marrah* while female speakers used *marrah* more widely compared to *jiddan.* The only exception here is young male speakers who seem to show a pattern similar to that of females (i.e., using *marrah* in more contexts).
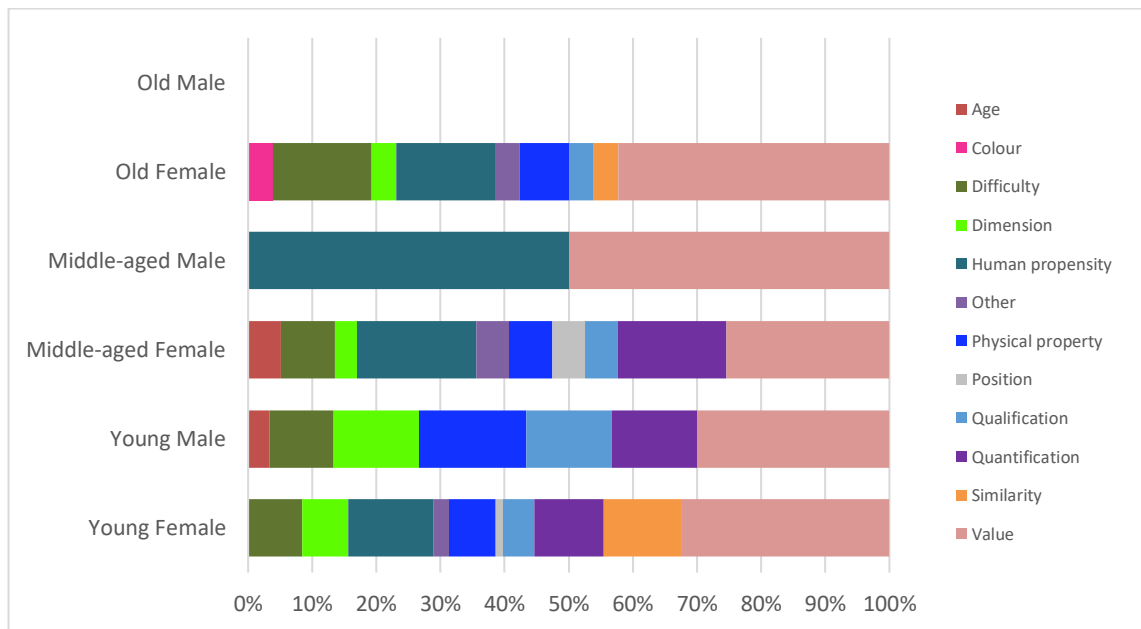
Figure 6.8 Distribution of *marrah* Usage Across Semantic Categories by Age and Gender
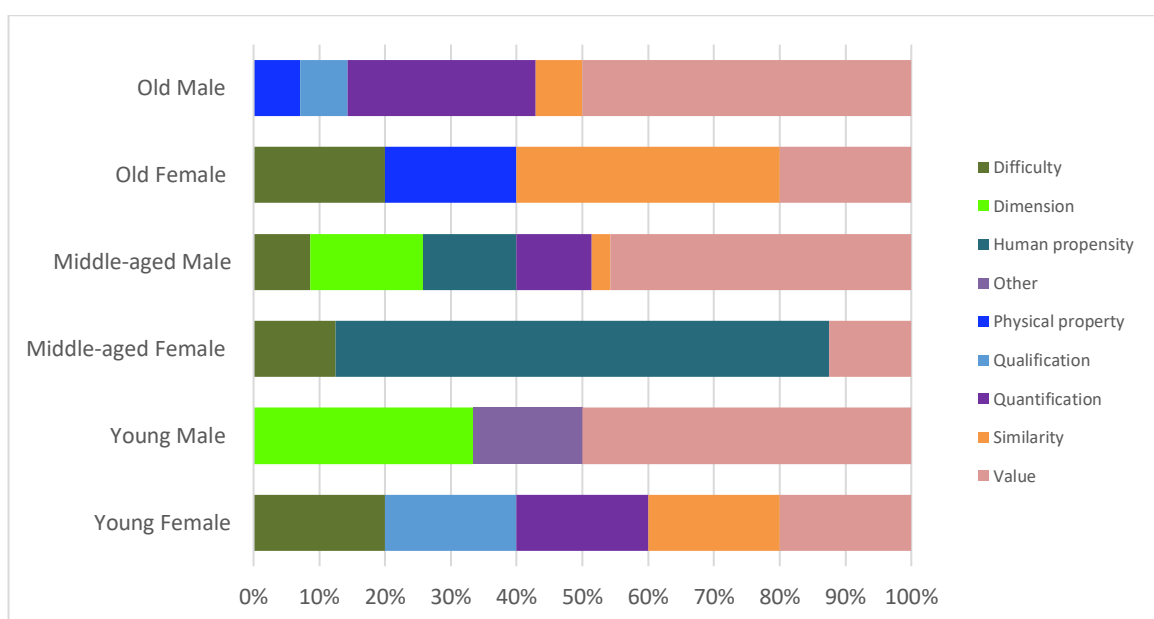
Figure 6.9 Distribution of *jiddan* Usage Across Semantic Categories by Age and Gender

We already know that the amplification system of female *jiddan* users shows a domination of *marrah* on their system (see Chapter 5, Section 5.3.2). Hence, the low number of modified contexts by *jiddan* compared to male users and a high number of modified contexts by *marrah* compared to male users are important observations. This is because such patterns suggest that *marrah* in the adjective amplification system of women is taking over contexts that were used for *jiddan*. It also suggests that the segregated social structure in Riyadh may have contributed to a more advanced grammaticalisation of *marrah* for female speakers compared to male speakers. The dismantling of the segregated structure which is taking place in Saudi Arabia may have also contributed to the expanded semantic contexts of *marrah* in the speech of young male speakers. Moreover, we know that intensifiers rapidly change and that any increase or decrease in one element affects the whole system (Ito and Tagliamonte, 2003). Hence, this does not mean that *jiddan* is completely replaced by *marrah* but can be seen as an indication of reduction in its contexts when an alternative form like *marrah* is highly present in the system.

6.2.9 Adjective Syntactic Function

For *marrah,* adjective syntactic function was statistically significant (χ^2=19.26, df=1, N=3416, p<0.001), but it was not found to be statistically significant for *jiddan* (χ^2=0.01, df=1, N=3416, p-value=0.903). Both boosters *marrah* and *jiddan* collocate more with

predicative adjectives (Table 6.16). Nonetheless, the proportion of *marrah* modifying predicative adjectives (71.29%; N=144/202) (example 3a) is higher than that of *jiddan* (example 3b) (54.79%; N=40/73). Thus, only 28% (N=58/202) of the total proportion of *marrah* collocates with attributive adjectives (example 3c). On the other hand, attributive adjectives constitute 45.21% (N=33/73) of the total adjectives modified by *jiddan* (example 3d). Similarly, Almossa (2024, p.228) found that *marrah* (80%; N=301/372) and *jiddan* (63%; N=29/46) collocated more frequently with predicative adjectives. Almossa also found in her ND data that *jiddan* modified more attributive adjectives compared to *marrah* (37% vs. 19%). This higher collocation with attributive adjectives by *jiddan* may be an effect of the seriousness of topics where the higher formality involved in discussing these topics is often associated with higher usage of attributive adjectives (Biber and Conrad, 2005, p.518). Yet, this interaction between adjective function and topic seriousness was not found to be statistically significant (χ^2=7.48, df=3, N=3416, p-value=0.058).

3)
a) w-yaʕnī ʔṣlan yaʕnī ʔġlab al-banāt kānat darajāthum **marrah hābṭah** (F13)
    And actually the grades of most of the girls were **very low**
b) yaʕnī alfajr ykūn **jiddan jamīl** alʕaṣr maṯalan (.) munāsib maṯalan badrī littasawwq maṯalan (M19)
    The early morning is **very nice** the afternoon for instance (.) is suitable for instance early to go shopping for instance
c) ʕaṯā ʕīd alfiṭir ṭaʕam **marrah ḥlū** ṣarāḥah (F26)
    It gave Eid Al-Fitr a **very nice** vibe
d) ṣaʕb ʔixtibār **jiddan ṣaʕb** ʕalā ʕaqliyyat (.) yaʕnī xallnā ngūl ṭfl fī (.) ʕmrh ṯnaʕšar sanah fī sādis ʔibtidāʔī (M24)
    Difficult a **very difficult** exam for the mentality (.) of let's say a child in (.) who is twelve years old in the sixth grade

Table 6.15 Distribution of *marrah* and *jiddan* by Adjective Function in RNDC

	marrah		*jiddan*	
	N	**%**	**N**	**%**
Attributive	58	28.71%	33	45.21%
Predicative	144	71.29%	40	54.79%
Total	202	100%	73	100%

Table 6.16 illustrates the proportional distribution of the boosters *marrah* and *jiddan* within each adjective syntactic function. Within attributive adjectives, *marrah* is

used with 63.74% (N=58/91) of this syntactic position, while *jiddan* is used with 36.26% (N=33/91) of these adjectives. Within predicative adjectives, *marrah* is used with 78.26% (N=144/184) and *jiddan* is utilised with 21.74% (N=40/184) of cases.

Table 6.16 Proportional Distribution of *marrah* and *jiddan* within Adjective Syntactic Functions in RNDC

	marrah		*jiddan*		Total	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
Attributive	58	63.74	33	36.26	91	100%
Predicative	144	78.26	40	21.74	184	100%

6.2.10 The Effect of Age and Adjective Function

As illustrated in Figure 6.10, the booster *marrah* is used more frequently in the amplification of attributive adjectives by the younger and older speakers while middle-aged speakers used it more frequently with predicative adjectives (χ^2=95.57, df=6, N=3416, p-value<0.001). On the other hand, older and younger speakers use *jiddan* more frequently in the amplification of predicative adjectives while middle-aged speakers used it more frequently to modify attributive adjectives.

The patterns observed with *marrah* and *jiddan* do not comply with what had been previously assumed to be the default developmental trajectory in previous studies on English intensifiers where intensifiers shift from collocating only with attributive adjectives to collocating with an increased proportion of predicative adjectives. Hence, these studies would interpret a high occurrence with predicative adjectives as evidence for the stability of intensifiers and the advanced level it had reached in its grammaticalisation. This is intriguing because *jiddan* is among the well-established amplifiers in the Arabic language as noted in Chapter 2, Section 2.3.3, so one would expect to find evidence of stability. What needs to be examined is the basis for those assumed trajectories. As previously mentioned in Chapter 1 Section 1.8.7, research on English intensifiers interpret the developmental shift of intensifiers from modifying attributive adjectives to modifying predicative adjectives as an indication of the developed stage they had reached within the grammaticalisation cline (Ito and Tagliamonte, 2003). Nonetheless, this evidence, which is based on English intensifiers, may not apply to ND since only a few intensifiers were originally adjectives (e.g., *ktīr*). In addition, it is challenging to track their development in spoken varieties to test the applicability of this criteria as a sign of their development. In fact, there may be other

factors that need to be considered to uncover the delexicalisation of intensifiers in ND specifically or in the Arabic language in general such as the position of the intensifier. This, however, does not eliminate the significance of testing this factor as a potential conditioning element that plays a linguistic role in the employment of adjective intensifiers.
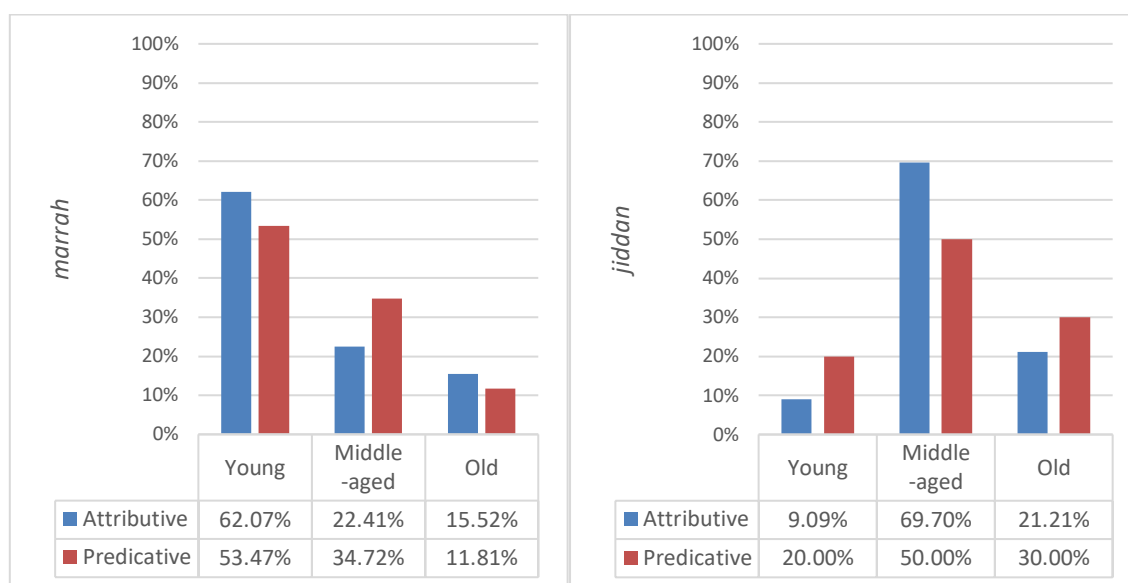
Figure 6.10 Proportional Distribution of *marrah* and *jiddan* by Age and Adjective Function in RNDC

6.2.11 Seriousness of Topics

As depicted in Table 6.17, in RNDC, the proportion of *marrah* in discussions of light-hearted topics (79.05%; N=83/105) is higher than the proportion in serious topics (70%; N=119/170). For *jiddan,* the proportion produced in discussions of serious topics (30%; N=51/170) is higher than non-serious topics (20.95%; N=22/105). Although the proportional difference is slight, higher preference for *marrah* in non-serious topics aligns with the expectation that the vernacular form will be used in light-hearted discussion (see Chapter 1, Section 1.8.4). In addition, higher usage of *jiddan* in serious topics can be taken as evidence for a higher usage of CA features in those topics which is in line with what is hypothesised in Chapter 1, Section 1.8.4. The seriousness of topics was not found to be statistically significant for *marrah* (χ^2=2.43, df=1, N=3416, p-value=0.119) or *jiddan* (χ^2=0.79, df=1, N=3416, p-value=0.375). This null finding of the topic seriousness factor for the two most frequent amplifiers makes us question the

anticipated effect of this factor on the production of amplifiers. This finding could be an indication that perhaps the seriousness of the discussion is less influential on the usage of these forms. This could also suggest that there are other more important factors at play like being part of someone's idiolect or stylistic choices which could also be influenced by social factors and attitudes. These aspects are further discussed in the discussion of the current chapter, Chapter 7 and Chapter 8.

Table 6.17 Proportional Distribution of *marrah* and *jiddan* by Seriousness of Topics in RNDC

	marrah		*jiddan*		Total	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
Non-serious	83	79.05%	22	20.95%	105	100%
Serious	119	70.00%	51	30.00%	170	100%

6.2.12 Adjective Polarity

What is common among the amplifiers *marrah* and *jiddan* is that the lowest proportions of both of them collocated with negative adjectives (examples 4a and 4b) (Table 6.18; Figure 6.11). A higher proportion of *marrah* modified neutral adjectives (47.03%; N=95/202) (example 4e) than positive adjectives (34.65%; N=70/202) (example 4c). Unlike *marrah*, a higher proportion of *jiddan* collocated with positive adjectives (42.47%; N=31/73) (example 4d) than neutral adjectives (39.73%; N=29/73) (example 4f). Adjective polarity was found to be statistically significant for *marrah* (χ^2=2147.03, df=1, N=3416, p-value<0.001) and *jiddan* (χ^2=738.79, df=1, N=3416, p-value<0.001).

4)

a) w-yaʕnī ʔṣlan yaʕnī ʔġlab albanāt kānat darajāthum ***marrah hābṭah*** (F13)
    And actually the grades of most of the girls were ***very low***

b) ṣaʕb ʔixtibār ***jiddan ṣaʕb*** ʕalā ʕaqliyyat (.) yaʕnī xallnā ngūl ṭfl fī (.) ʕmrh ṯnaʕšar sanah fī sādis ʔibtidāʔī (M24)
    Difficult a ***very difficult*** exam for the mentality (.) of let's say a child in (.) who is twelve years old in the sixth grade

c) ʔīh ʔīh ***marrah jamīl*** mašaḷḷāh tabārak-aḷḷāh (F26)
    Yeah yeah ***very beautiful*** God bless

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d) yaʕnī alfajr ykūn **jiddan jamīl** alʕaṣr maṯalan (.) munāsib maṯalan badrī littasawwq maṯalan (M19)

The early morning is **very nice** the afternoon for instance (.) is suitable for instance early to go shopping for instance

e) ʔlli marrah marrah grībīn yṣīrūn ʕadad **maḥdūd marrah** (F9)

Those who are very very close are **very limited** in number

f) ʔanā (.) šaxṣiyyan ʔaḥiss ʔinnah yiʕtmid ʕalā ʕawāmil **kiṯīrah jiddan jiddan jiddan** (M24)

I (.) personally think that it depends on **very very very numerous** factors

Table 6.18 Distribution of *marrah* and *jiddan* by Adjective Polarity in RNDC

	marrah		*jiddan*	
	N	%	N	%
Neutral	95	47.03%	29	39.73%
Negative	37	18.32%	13	17.81%
Positive	70	34.65%	31	42.47%
Total	202	100.00%	73	100.00%
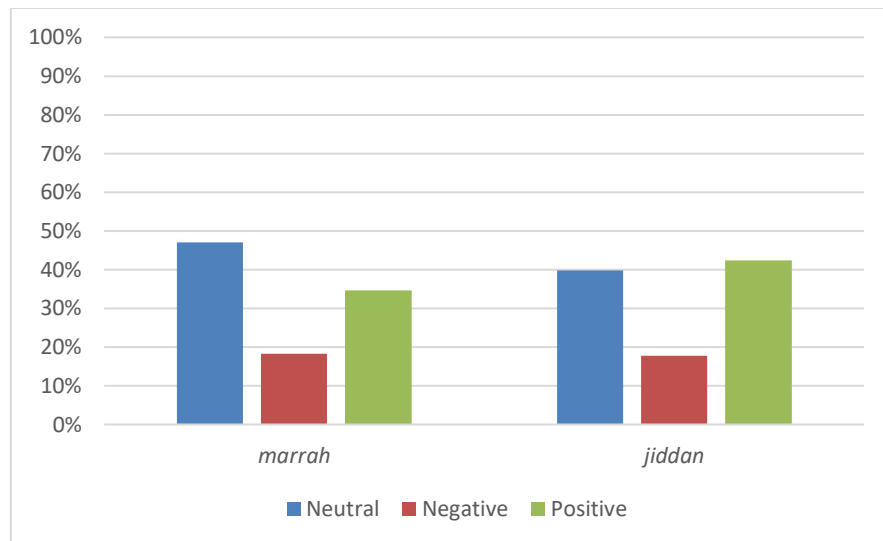
Figure 6.11 Distribution of *marrah* and *jiddan* by Adjective Polarity in RNDC

While Table 6.18 and Figure 6.11 illustrates how much of the total *marrah* or *jiddan* usage falls into each polarity category, Figure 6.12 presents how each polarity category is distributed between *marrah* and *jiddan*. There appears to be a relatively even distribution of the three categories across *marrah* and *jiddan*. Neutral adjectives (76.61%) collocate more with *marrah* followed by negative (74%) and positive adjectives

(69.31%). Contrarily, positive adjectives (30.69%) collocate more with *jiddan* followed by negative (26.00%) and positive adjectives (23.39%).
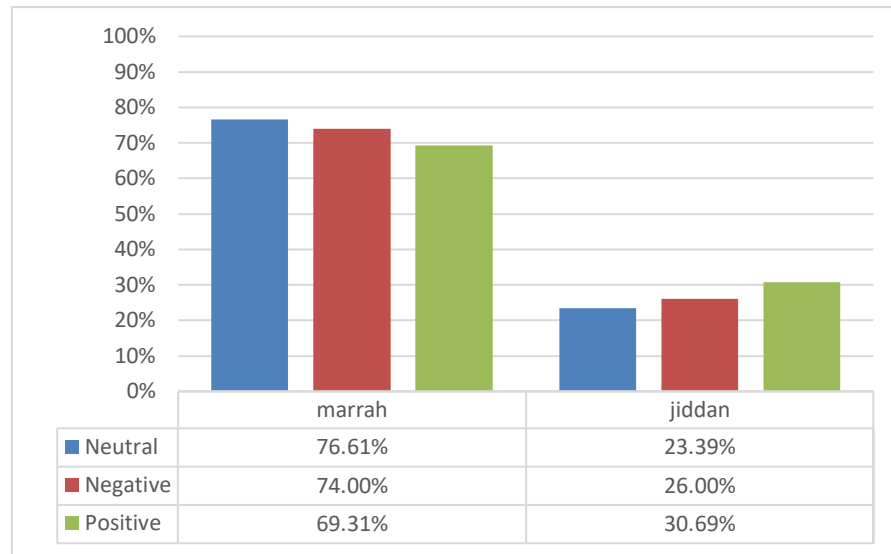
Figure 6.12 Proportional Distribution of Adjective Polarity for *marrah* and *jiddan*

6.2.13 Position

As illustrated in Table 6.19, the boosters *marrah* and *jiddan,* can all be located before or after the intensified adjective. The majority of tokens of the booster *marrah* are located in a pre-adjectival position (62.38%; N=126/202) while 37.13% (N=75/202) of the tokens are located after the adjectival head. Unlike the booster *marrah*, Table 6.19 reveals that the majority of tokens of *jiddan* (71.23%; N=52/73) are used in a post-adjectival location. More than a quarter of *jiddan* tokens (27.40%; N=20/73) pre-modified adjectives. Only one token of *marrah* (0.50%) and *jiddan* (1.37%) are found in a pre- and post-adjectival position at the same time (examples 5a and 5b). A similar pattern was recorded by Almossa (2024, p.229). In her ND data, *marrah* was preferred in a pre-adjectival position (57%; N=212/372), while *jiddan* was favoured in a post-adjectival position (87%; N=40/46).

Table 6.19 Distribution of *marrah* and *jiddan* by Position in RNDC

	Post-adjectival		Pre-adjectival		Pre- and Post-adjectival	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
marrah	75	37.13%	126	62.38%	1	0.50%
jiddan	52	71.23%	20	27.40%	1	1.37%

(χ^2=24.58, df=1, N=273, p-value<0.001)[111]

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[111] In this chi-square test, I excluded two pre- and post-adjectival tokens (i.e., third column in this table).

5)

a) yaʕnī wajadt (.) tadrīs yaʕnī dirāsat al-luġah al-ʕarabiyyah **marrah** ṣaʕbah **marrah** (F4)

   I mean I found (.) teaching I mean studying the Arabic language **very** difficult **very**

b) ʔanā b- al-ʕaks ʔašūf ʔnnah (.) **jiddan jiddan** muhimm (.) **jiddan** w- b- al-ʕaks ʔanā ʔašūf ʔnnah ḥall ʔazmah (M15)

   I contrarily think it is (.) **very very** important (.) **very** and contrarily I think that it solved a problem

While Table 6.19 illustrates how much of the total *marrah* or *jiddan* usage is located before or after the adjective, Figure 6.13 presents how position is distributed between *marrah* and *jiddan*. Pre-adjectival position is predominantly occupied by *marrah* (86.30%). In terms of post-adjectival position, the proportions are more balanced although *marrah* occupied a higher proportion (59.06% vs. 40.94%).

	marrah	jiddan
Post-adjectival	59.06%	40.94%
Pre-adjectival	86.30%	13.70%
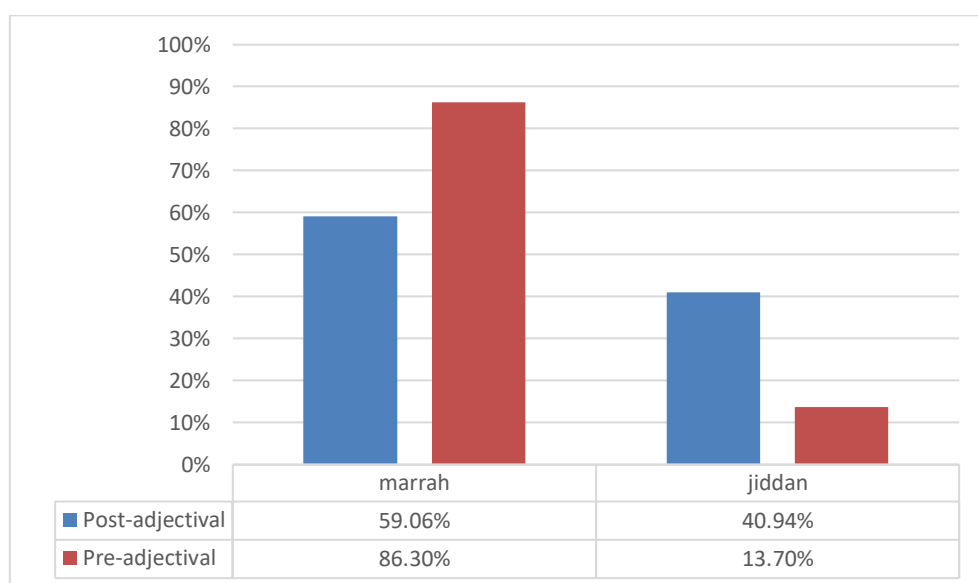
Figure 6.13 Proportional Distribution of Intensifier Position for *marrah* and *jiddan*[112]

6.2.14 Effect of Age and Position

As position was found to be significant for the boosters *marrah* and *jiddan*, a cross-tabulation with age was conducted to see if there are any indications of change in positioning these amplifiers.

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[112] One token of pre- and post-adjectival position was removed.

6.2.14.1 marrah

A cross-tabulation of age and position of *marrah* around the adjective revealed a significant difference between the preference for locating *marrah* based on the age of the speaker. Older speakers preferred to use it in a post-adjectival position while middle-aged and younger speakers preferred to place it in a pre-adjectival position (Table 6.20, Figure 6.14). This preference increased as the age of the speaker decreased. This means that the observed trajectory of change includes the relocation to a pre-adjectival position instead of the traditional location after the adjective (see Almossa, 2024, p.229). This finding is important because, in apparent-time, females appear to be leading the change towards an increased use of *marrah*. Thus, this change seems to be governed by another linguistic readjustment. Further research will need to confirm this observation on wider ND data and other SDs.

Table 6.20 Effect of Age and Position on the Use of *marrah* in RNDC

	Post-adjectival		Pre-adjectival		Pre-and Post-adjectival		Total	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Young	28	24.78%	84	74.34%	1	0.88%	113	100%
Middle-aged	26	41.27%	37	58.73%	0	0.00%	63	100%
Old	21	80.77%	5	19.23%	0	0.00%	26	100%
Total	75	37.13%	126	62.38%	1	0.50%	202	100%

(χ^2=28.67, df=2, N=201, p-value<0.001)[113]
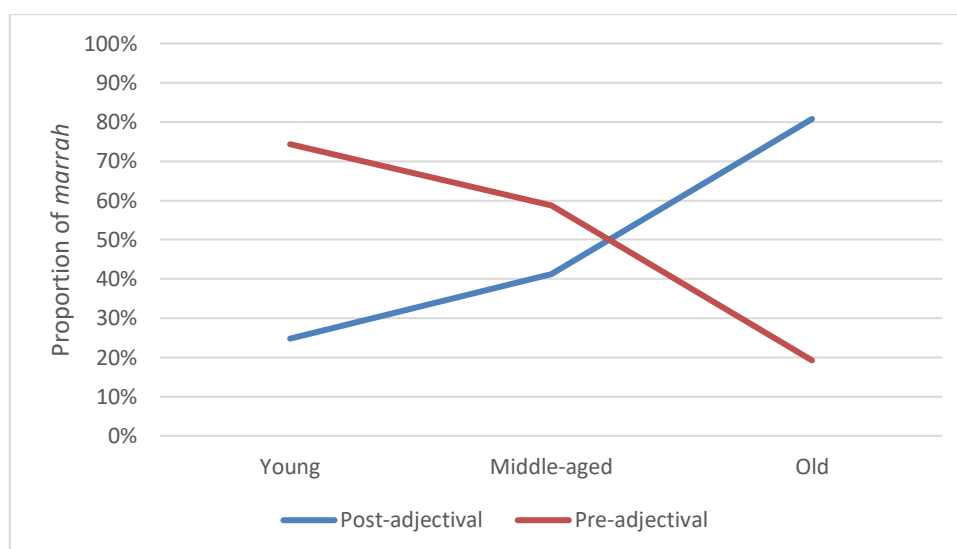
Figure 6.14 Effect of Age and Position on the Use of *marrah* in RNDC

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[113] In this chi-square test, I excluded two pre- and post-adjectival tokens (i.e., third column in this table).

While Table 6.20 illustrates for each age group, where their use of *marrah* is most likely to be located, Figure 6.15 presents the relative frequency of *marrah* in different positions for each age group. Pre-adjectival position is predominantly occupied by younger speakers' *marrah* usage (66.67%) followed by middle-aged speakers (29.37%) while older speakers make the least use of this position. In terms of post-adjectival position, the proportions are more balanced across the age groups, although it is more likely to be occupied by usage of younger speakers (37.33%) compared to middle-aged (34.67%) and older speakers (28%). This can suggest that while younger speakers prefer the pre-adjectival position, the post-adjectival position seems to remain relatively stable across all age groups.

	Young	Middle-aged	Old
Post-adjectival	37.33%	34.67%	28.00%
Pre-adjectival	66.67%	29.37%	3.97%
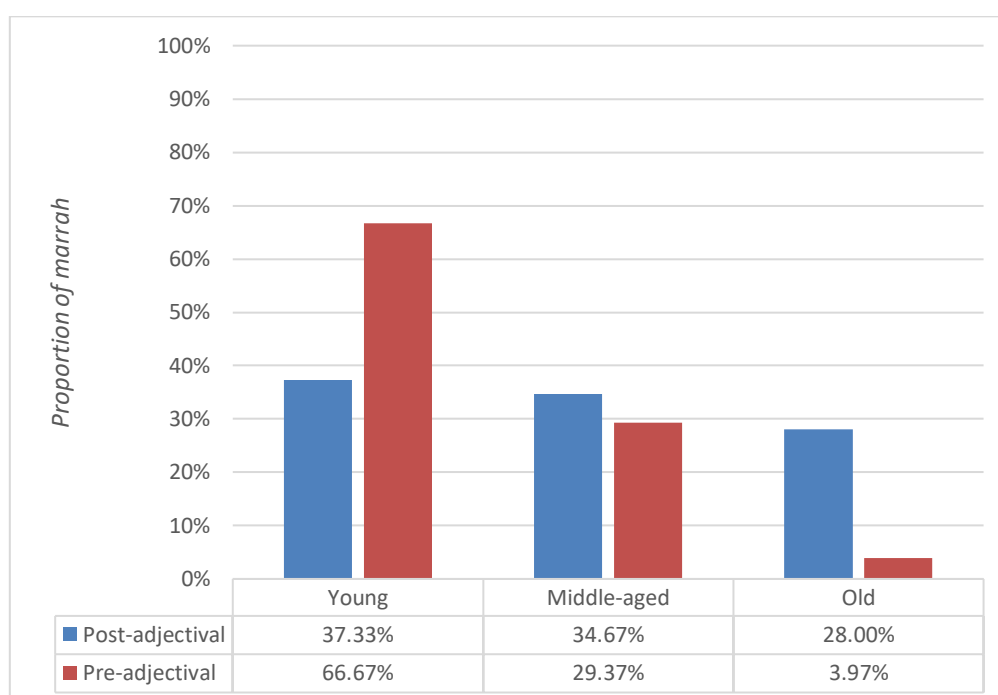
Figure 6.15 Proportional Distribution of *marrah* Across Syntactic Positions by Age Group

6.2.14.2 *jiddan*

The distribution by position for *jiddan* shares the same generational pattern as *marrah* (Table 6.21; Figure 6.16). This means that as the speaker's age increases, *jiddan* is more frequently observed in the post-adjectival position. Younger speakers, on the other hand, tend to use *jiddan* more frequently in the pre-adjectival position. For *jiddan*, as a form that is shared with CA, its usage by ND speakers is probably influenced by its post-adjectival position in CA. Observing the same pattern for the two frequent amplifiers

highlights the potential significance of this trend, not only for these two forms but more generally for the whole adjective intensification system.

Table 6.21 Effect of Age and Position on the use of *jiddan* in RNDC

	Post-adjectival		Pre-adjectival		Pre- and post-adjectival		Total	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Young	6	54.55%	5	45.45%	0	0.00%	11	100%
Middle-aged	31	72.09%	11	25.58%	1	2.33%	43	100%
Old	15	78.95%	4	21.05%	0	0.00%	19	100%
Total	52	71.23%	20	27.40%	1	1.37%	73	100%
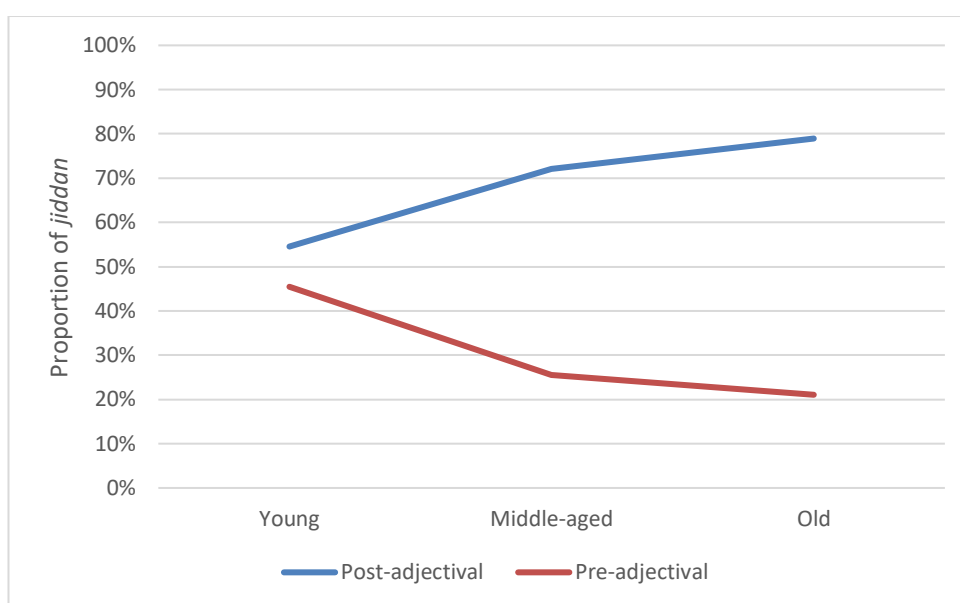
Figure 6.16 Effect of Age and Position on the Use of *jiddan* in RNDC

While Table 6.21 illustrates for each age group, where their use of *jiddan* is most likely to be located, Figure 6.17 presents the relative frequency of *jiddan* in different positions for each age group. Post-adjectival and pre-adjectival positions are both predominantly occupied by middle-aged speakers' usage of *jiddan* (59.62% and 55%, respectively) although for this age group, *jiddan* is more likely to occur post-adjectivally. This pattern is also observed in the usage of older speakers where post-adjectival position (28.85%) exceeds pre-adjectival position (20%). In contrast, younger speakers showed the lowest frequency of post-adjectival usage of *jiddan* (11.54%). Yet, their use of *jiddan* pre-adjectivally (25%) is slightly higher than that of older speakers (20%).
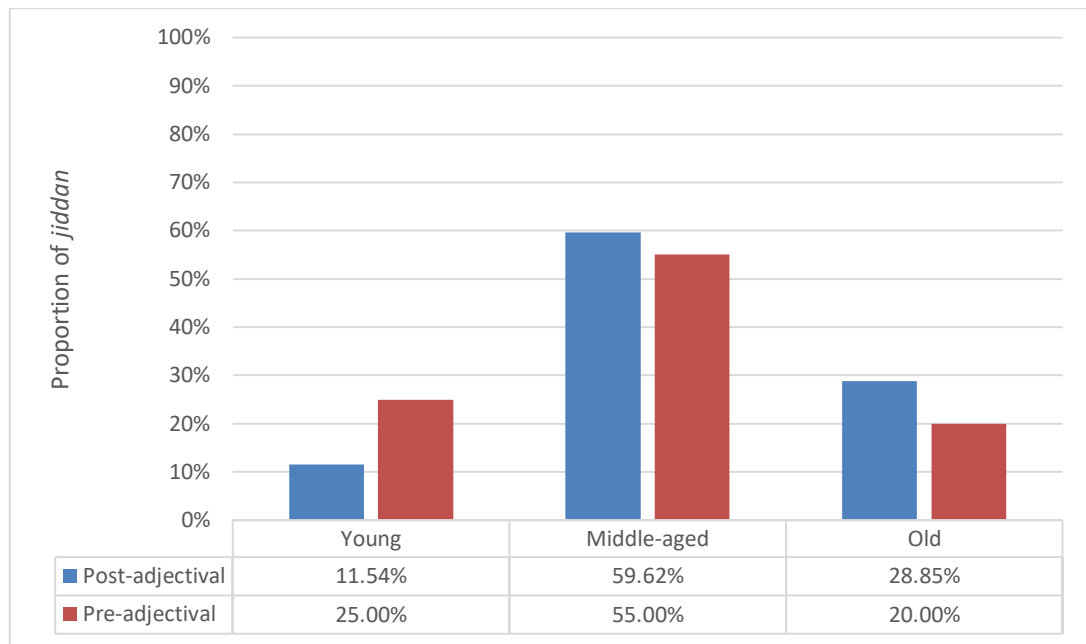
Figure 6.17 Proportional Distribution of *jiddan* Across Syntactic Positions by Age Group

6.2.15 Effect of Gender and Position

As position was found to be interacting with the age of speakers, it is likely that gender could also be significant, since these social factors appear to be highly influential for these two devices. The following section presents the interaction of gender and position.

6.2.15.1 *marrah*

A cross-tabulation of gender and position of *marrah* revealed that both male and female speakers favoured a pre-adjectival position (Table 6.22, Figure 6.18). Yet, female speakers had a slightly higher preference for the pre-adjectival position (63.69%; N=107/168) compared to male speakers (55.88%; N=19/34).

Table 6.22 Effect of Gender and Position on *marrah* in RNDC

	Post-adjectival		Pre-adjectival		Pre- and post - adjectival		Total	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Female	60	35.71%	107	63.69%	1	0.60%	168	100%
Male	15	44.12%	19	55.88%	0	0%	34	100%
Total	75	37.13%	126	62.38%	1	0.50%	202	100%

(χ^2=0.50, df=1, N=201, p-value=0.481) [114]

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[114] In this chi-square test, I excluded two pre- and post-adjectival tokens (i.e., third column in this table).
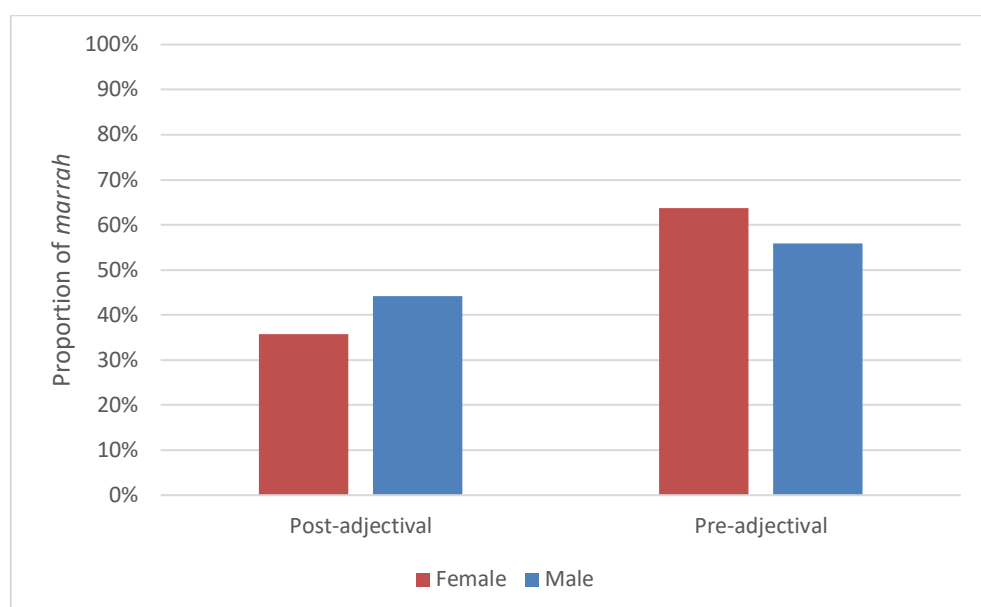
Figure 6.18 Effect of Position and Gender on the Usage of *marrah* in RNDC

While Table 6.22 illustrates for each gender, where their use of *marrah* is most likely to be located, Figure 6.19 presents the relative frequency of *marrah* in different positions for each gender. Both post-adjectival position and pre-adjectival position are predominantly occupied by female speakers' usage of *marrah* and these positions are almost evenly distributed in the speech of female speakers although pre-adjectival position slightly exceeds the post-adjectival position (84.92% vs. 80%). For males, on the other hand post-adjectival position slightly exceeds pre-adjectival position (20% vs.15.08%).

	Female	Male
Post-adjectival	80.00%	20.00%
Pre-adjectival	84.92%	15.08%
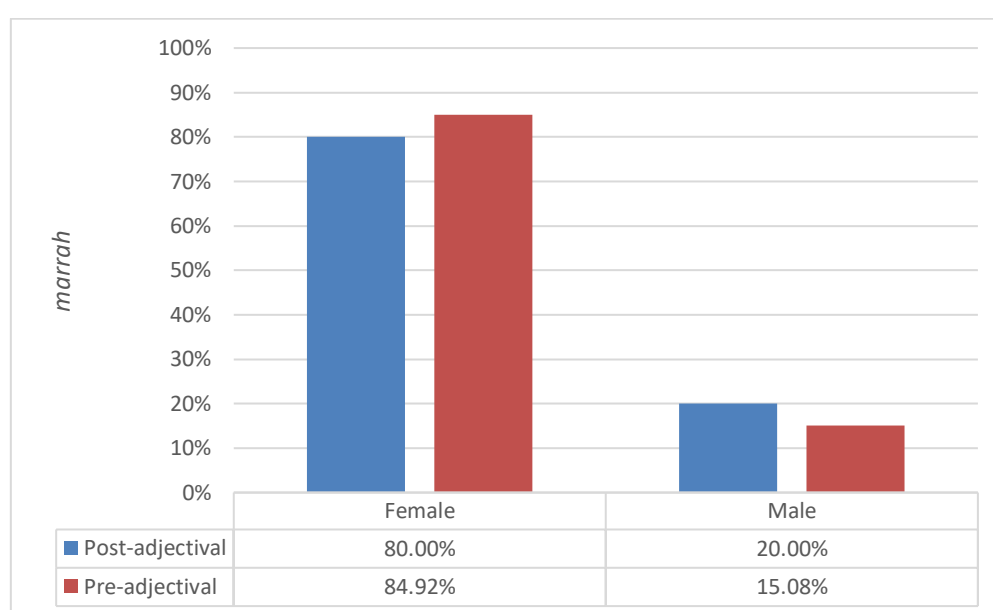
Figure 6.19 Proportional Distribution of *marrah* Across Syntactic Positions by gender

6.2.15.2 jiddan

A cross-tabulation of position and gender revealed that there is a difference in how each gender prefers to position *jiddan* (Table 6.23; Figure 6.20). Male speakers favoured a post-adjectival location (80%) while female speakers favoured a pre-adjectival position (55.56%). Female speakers seem to be shifting their usage from the traditional location after the adjective which is used in CA. This may be an influence from the amplifier *marrah* since it is the dominant element in their amplification system. It could also be an indication of a general shift towards premodification in the system, which is as the findings suggest, led by female speakers.

Table 6.23 Effect of Gender and Position on the Usage of *jiddan* in RNDC

	Post-adjectival		Pre-adjectival		Pre- and post -adjectival		Total	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Female	8	44.44%	10	55.56%	0	0.00%	18	100%
Male	44	80.00%	10	18.18%	1	1.82%	55	100%
Total	52	71.23%	20	27.40%	1	1.37%	73	100%

(χ^2=7.48, df=1, N=72, p-value=0.006) [115]
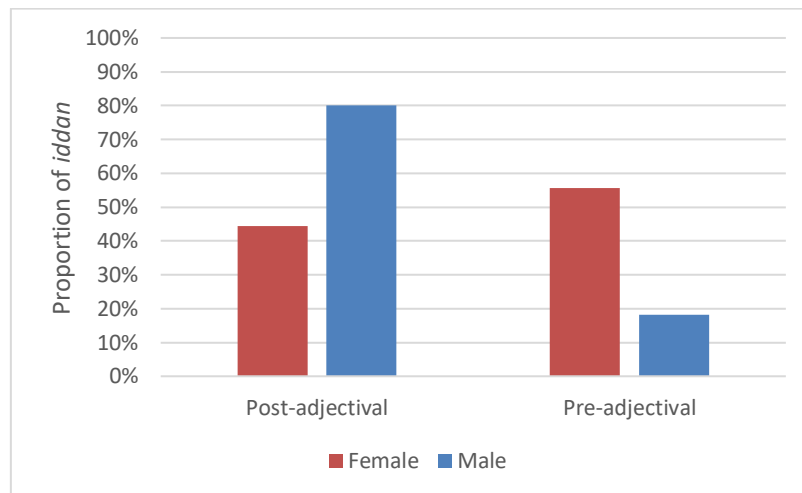
Figure 6.20 Effect of Gender and Position on the Usage of *jiddan* in RNDC

While Table 6.23 illustrates for each gender, where their use of *jiddan* is most likely to be located, Figure 6.21 presents the relative frequency of *jiddan* in different positions for each gender. Post-adjectival position is predominantly occupied by male speakers'

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[115] In this chi-square test, I excluded two pre- and post-adjectival tokens (i.e., third column in this table).

usage of *jiddan* (84.62%) while only 15.38% is occupied by usage of female speakers. On the other hand, pre-adjectival position is evenly distributed across genders.

	Female	Male
■ Post-adjectival	15.38%	84.62%
■ Pre-adjectival	50.00%	50.00%
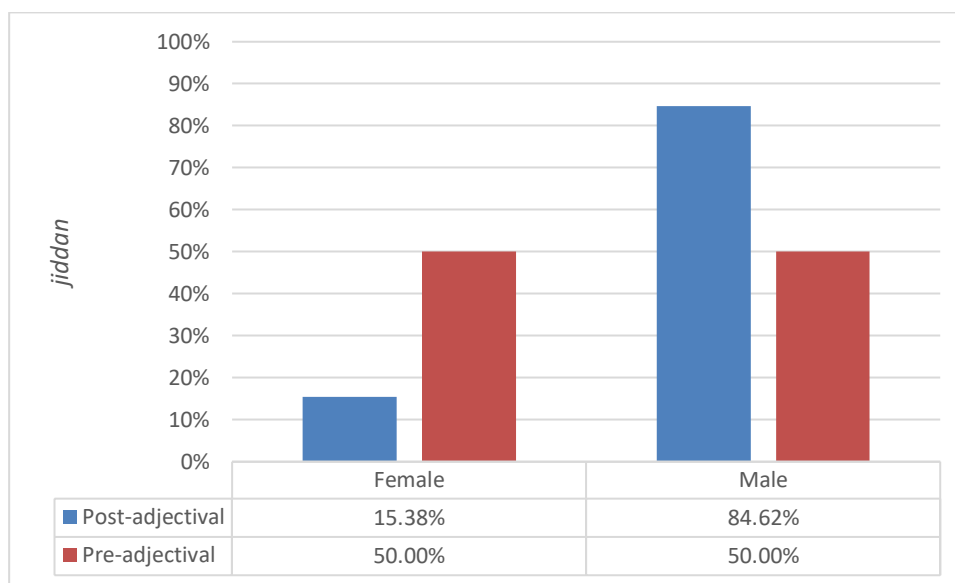
Figure 6.21 Proportional Distribution of *jiddan* Across Syntactic Positions by gender

6.3 Multivariate Analysis

In this section, the multivariate analysis of the boosters *marrah* and *jiddan* are presented (to interpret the results, see Chapter 5, Section 5.5). The choice of the dependent variables in the multivariate analysis was motivated by the number of tokens of intensifiers. In statistical analysis, it is recommended to have at least 10 tokens per cell for the independent variable since this will result in increased conformity with the expected pattern by 90% (Guy, 1980, p.20). When we have fewer than 10 tokens, there is a greater chance that the observed pattern is random rather than a replicable effect of the independent variables (Guy, 1980, p.20). Guy (1980, p. 20) confirms that having more than 35 tokens increases the conformity with the expected pattern by 100%.

In the statistical modelling of *marrah* and *jiddan*, I follow the approach described in Chapter 5, Section 5.5. I first run a preliminary model to assess the significance of all the factors. After that, in the case of *marrah*, I exclude the factors that were not found to be statistically significant to reduce the challenge posed on the model by having too many factors and interactions to facilitate reaching optimal results of the model (Tagliamonte 2012, p.136). In the case of *jiddan* model, on the other hand, I excluded three factors with the least statistical significance and retained two factors with the

lowest p-values since only one factor was found to be statistically significant (see Section 6.3.2 for further explanation). Further, I also exclude the semantic group factor from all the models due to the reason mentioned in Chapter 5, Section 5.5.1.

6.3.1 marrah

In this section, I present a mixed-effects logistic regression with *marrah* as the application value against all other amplifiers and the null-variant. As with the previous analysis (Chapter 5, Section 5.5), downtoners were excluded. Speaker and adjective were added as random factors. In the statistical modelling of *marrah*, I follow the same approach described in Section 6.3.

Including education as an independent factor caused instability in the model and as a result there were discrepancies between the proportions of *marrah* and the factor weights of the levels under this factor which indicates that there were interactions or collinearity between this factor and other independent variables in the model (Tagliamonte, 2012, p.134). Cross-tabulations between education and age revealed that middle-aged speakers with low education show no usage of *marrah* but the high education group of the same age group use it (Figure 6.22). Since middle-age strongly predicts high education, this means education is probably collinear with age. This collinearity means that the effect of education on *marrah* usage might not be entirely independent of age, as the two variables are correlated.

	Young	Middle-aged	Old
■ High	10.80%	4.50%	2.60%
■ Low	12.10%	0.00%	2.60%
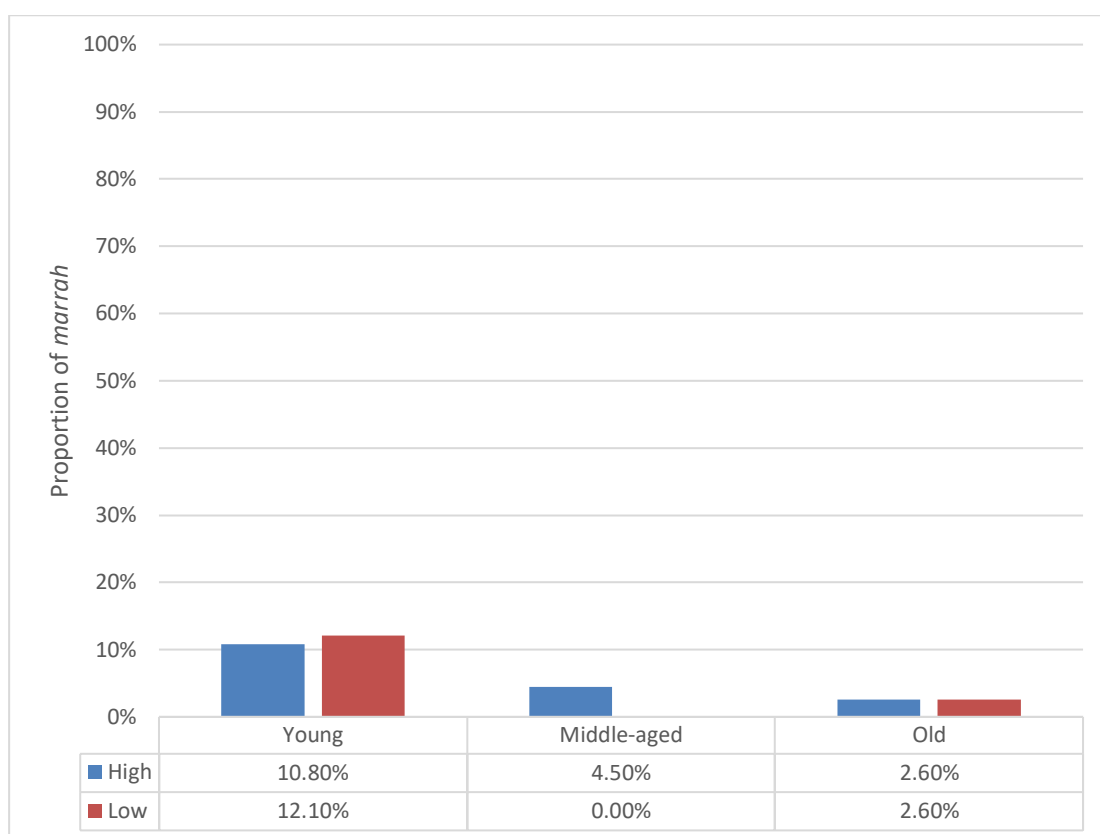
Figure 6.22 The Usage of *marrah* by Age and Education in RNDC[116]

For the high education group, in an earlier stage of the analysis, I included the following linguistic factors: the seriousness of the topic and adjective polarity (see Appendix 12) in a preliminary model due to their hypothesised influence on adjective intensification (see Chapter 3, Section 3.12). The seriousness of the topic (p-value=0.91) and adjective polarity (p-value=0.61) were not found to be statistically significant which is why I removed them and re-ran the model to have a more focused and simplified model.

In the final model (Table 6.24), the most significant factor is the gender of the speaker (p-value=7.36E-07). Female speakers with high education highly favour the usage of *marrah* (FW=0.74) while male speakers disfavour it (FW=0.25). This finding aligns with the gender-based stylistic distinctiveness anticipated in Chapter 5, Section 5.6.1 which is influenced by the gender segregation in Saudi Arabia. First-wave variationists would have attributed this correlation to the status of women in the community such as needing to be more assertive because of their powerless position or

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[116] In this interaction (and all other interactions detected in the multivariate analysis in this chapter), cross-tabulations present the proportion of the variable within the context of variation, including the zero variant.

their higher acknowledgment of the prestigious forms due to their lower security in society (see Trudgill, 1974, pp.92–94). Yet, I treat this variable as part of a style practice that has developed in association with female speakers due to the segregated nature of Saudi society, which aligns with the practice of third-wave variationists. This practice is usually linked to femininity but is in fact part of other kinds of behaviour that have developed associations with gender. These types of gendered behaviours are shaped by broader social structures that are influenced by other factors, such as traditional gender roles, power balances and gender-segregation in Saudi society, rather than being an essential feature of femininity itself. Further discussion of this aspect is presented in Section 6.3.1 and also in Chapter 8 where I explore the wider ideology around style and gender in the SD. The second highest conditioning parameter is the age of the speaker (p-value=6.19E-06). Young ND speakers highly favour the amplifier *marrah* (FW=0.83) while middle-aged and old speakers disfavour it (FW= 0.35 and 0.26 respectively). The third significant parameter is the function of the modified adjective (p-value=2.31E-04). The booster *marrah* is favoured with predicative adjectives (FW=0.60) and disfavoured with attributive adjectives (FW=0.39).

Table 6.24 Mixed-Effect Logistic Regression for the Variable *marrah* Used by the High Education Group in RNDC

Total N			2382	
Deviance			843.864	
Df			7	
Grand Proportion			0.0516	
R2 total			0.468	

Factors	Logodds	N	Proportion of the application value	Factor Weight
Gender	**P-value**	7.36E-07		
Female	1.069	1298	0.0709	0.744
Male	-1.069	1084	0.0286	0.256
Age	**P-value**	6.19E-06		
Young	1.639	415	0.108	0.837
Middle-aged	-0.614	1400	0.045	0.351
Old	-1.025	567	0.0265	0.264
Adjective Function	**P-value**	2.31E-04		
Predicative	0.429	1312	0.0686	0.606
Attributive	-0.429	1070	0.0308	0.394
Adjective	Random	**Std.dev**	1.041	
Speaker	Random	**Std.dev**	0.468	

For the low education group, I removed middle-aged group from the data based on Figure 6.22 which shows no usage of *marrah* by this group. In a preliminary model, all the social and linguistic factors were added (see Appendix 13). Adjective polarity (p-value=0.86) and adjective function (p-value=0.403) were not found to be statistically significant, so I removed them from the model. The seriousness of topics was marginally significant (p-value=0.052), So I decided to include it in the final model.

In the final model (Table 6.25), both age and gender are found to be statistically significant. Like the high education group, it is female speakers (FW=0.77) and younger speakers (FW=70) who favour the usage of the booster *marrah* while male speakers (FW=0.22) and older speakers (FW=29) disfavour it. The seriousness factor is also statistically significant (p-value=0.0428). Speakers with low education slightly favour *marrah* in light-hearted topics (FW=0.57) and disfavour it in serious discussions (p-value=43).

Table 6.25 Mixed-Effect Logistic Regression for the Variable *marrah* Used by the Low Education Group in RNDC

Total N			990	
Deviance			471.745	
Df			6	
Grand Proportion			0.0798	
R2 total			0.491	
Factors	**Logodds**	**N**	**Proportion of the application value**	**Factor Weight**
Gender	**P-value**	1.90e-05		
Female	1.236	720	0.106	0.775
Male	-1.236	270	0.0111	0.225
Age	**P-value**	2.04e-04		
Young	0.863	560	0.121	0.703
Old	-0.863	430	0.0256	0.297
Seriousness of topics	**P-value**	0.0428		
Non-Serious	0.283	389	0.0977	0.57
Serious	-0.283	601	0.0682	0.43
Adjective	Random	**Std.dev**	1.018	
Speaker	Random	**Std.dev**	0.279	

6.3.2 jiddan

The model below (Table 6.26) presents a mixed-effects logistic regression with *jiddan* as the application value against all other amplifiers and the null-variant. Downtoners were all excluded from the dataset, which is the method used in the regression of *marrah.*

Only speaker is added as a random effect factor, but not adjective (for further explanation see Chapter 5, Section 5.5.2).

In an earlier stage of the analysis, I ran a preliminary model with all the linguistic and social factors except the semantic category due to the challenge this factor posed on the modelling (see Section 5.5.1 above; Appendix 14). Only age was found to be statistically significant. Instead of keeping only one factor in the model following the approach I adopted in the regressions of *marrah* (see Section 6.3.1), I dropped the three least significant factors and retained the factors education (p-value=0.119) and seriousness of topics (p-value=0.212) which had the lowest p-values to avoid having an oversimplified model. The age of the speaker (p-value=0.857), adjective function (p-value=0.6) and adjective polarity (p-value=0.34) were excluded.

In the final model, gender (p-value=0.00832) is the most significant factor. Male speakers favour *jiddan* (FW=0.65) while female speakers disfavour it (FW=0.34). Education is also found to be significant (p-value=0.0424). The high education group favour the usage of *jiddan* (FW=0.63) while the low education group disfavour it (FW=0.36). The seriousness of topics is not found to be statistically significant (p-value=0.201).

Table 6.26 Mixed-Effect Logistic Regression for the Variable *jiddan* in RNDC				
Total N			3416	
Deviance			621.983	
Df			5	
Grand Proportion			0.0214	
R2 total			0.367	
Factors	**Logodds**	**N**	**Proportion of the application value**	**Factor Weight**
Gender	**P-value**	0.00832		
Male	0.636	1398	0.0393	0.654
Female	-0.636	2018	0.00892	0.346
Education	**P-value**	0.0424		
High	0.542	2382	0.0277	0.632
Low	-0.542	1034	0.00677	0.368
Seriousness of topics	**P-value**	0.201		
Serious	0.17	2195	0.0232	0.542
Non-Serious	-0.17	1221	0.018	0.458
Speaker	Random	**Std.dev**	1.066	

6.4 Discussion

As seen previously (Chapter 4, Sections 4.3, 4.4.1, and 4.4.2), the booster *jiddan* is found in CA in an identical lexical form while the booster *marrah* (which is not found in CA) seems to be a renewed form of *bilmarrah* that is found in CA. For this reason, *jiddan* is conceptualised as part of CA while *marrah* is a local form that is found in ND and not in CA. Further, identifying the differences between CA and spoken dialects is very complex and the lines between the two are sometimes blurry (Hary, 1996; Holes, 2004, p.343; Taha, 2007, p.109). Despite the complexities of identifying the taxonomy, forms within CA can be considered as stylistic practices that Arabic speakers have at their disposal (i.e., part of their repertoire) (Mejdell, 2021, p.208). This is why in the present paper, CA and ND are conceptualised as constituting part of the stylistic codes within the repertoires of speakers and usage of *jiddan* and *marrah* is dealt with as a feature of those styles respectively. This approach is in line with the principles of third-wave variationist research where linguistic styles are seen as the collection and accumulation of stances and that individuals have the ability to use linguistic features intentionally to construct their social identities.

In the discussion, I first argue that *marrah* is a form that is undergoing change-in-progress, which is led by females and discuss the results that support this proposition which are related to the age and gender of the speakers, the semantic type of adjectives and the position of *marrah* around the adjective. Those results are discussed considering the gender-segregated social networks in Saudi Arabia, the radical social changes happening there and the technological advancements which contribute to deconstructing the gender-based networks there. In the discussion of *jiddan*, I underscore the need to consider CA variables as elements within the social equation unlike the case of phonological variables in previous variationist studies. Then, I argue that a possible reason for their higher usage by men is their lower levels of emotionality because they are part of CA. In addition, I argue that *marrah* and *jiddan* should be handled as co-variants within the same system of amplification and that their social values are formed through the alternation between them. Based on this approach, I discuss how the motivation to refrain from using a certain form might arise, such as in the case of male speakers avoiding the use of *marrah*. Another possible interpretation, which I discuss that is inferred by studying *marrah* and *jiddan* side by side, is the level of accessibility to *marrah* by male speakers which might explain the observed patterns for

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their usage of both *marrah* and *jiddan*. Finally, I propose that the effect of education depends on the analysed form.

6.4.1 marrah

The findings of *marrah* in apparent-time seem to point towards a change-in-progress. This interpretation is based on the observed patterns in relation to gender, age, semantic category of the adjective and position of the intensifier. In this section, I highlight how these factors might have contributed to this change and interpret the results in light of the Saudi cultural context.

Since the booster *marrah* constitutes 65.37% of the total amplifiers in the data, the effect of gender on its usage contributes to a large part of the findings. Female speakers were found to favour *marrah* more than male speakers. It constitutes 90.32% of female speakers' amplification system and only 38.20% of male speakers' amplification system (Section 6.2.1). Therefore, the question here is why there is such a large difference between ND speakers based on gender in their usage of *marrah*. As discussed in Chapter 5, this can be attributed to factors like the gender-segregated social networks and their role in constructing traditional social roles that consequently influence one's linguistic behaviour. *marrah* expresses affective stances which are critical components of the traditional feminine persona (see Podesva and Kajino, 2014, p. 117). It is also not surprising that *marrah* is sharply stratified in the data. Researchers postulate that non-phonological variables tend to be more sharply stratified (Hall-Lew et al., 2021, p.10). This is partly because they are more salient to speakers (Dines, 1980, p.16) which means that, for instance, if they are associated with a certain social group, others might not want to use it especially if there is stigma surrounding these variables.

Interpreting the effect of age in apparent-time based on the current results is tricky. This is because the findings can be either interpreted as an age-graded pattern or a change in-progress. In the data, there is a trend that may be interpreted as an age-graded distribution (Labov, 1999, p.112; Labov, 2001, p.446). Age grading is a systematic change in linguistic usage with age but the society as a whole does not change (Labov, 1999, p.84). If this is the case, this means that the variable at hand is stable. However, research has shown that intensifiers are a fruitful environment for linguistic change and catching linguistic changes in progress (Ito and Tagliamonte, 2003; Cheshire, 2016, pp.254–255). When we pull together the effects of age, gender, position and semantic

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category, this gives stronger support to a change in-progress in the ND amplification system. In the following section, I will explain how these factors can be indicators of change. I also draw attention to the nature of the Saudi environment which could have contributed to the observed patterns and anticipated change building on the discussion presented in Chapter 5.

Younger speakers showed higher employment of *marrah* in RNDC. The booster *marrah* dominated (91.13%) the amplification system of the younger speakers compared to only occupying 59.43% and 57.78% of the middle-aged and older speakers' amplification systems. For male speakers, the largest proportion of *marrah* is observed within the amplification system of younger age group (26.55%) compared to 6.35% and 0% within the systems of middle-aged and older speakers, respectively. Hence, the largest difference between genders is between the older and middle-aged groups, respectively. The current findings can be interpreted by drawing on the social network model. The separation between the genders in Saudi Arabia functioned as a mechanism for maintaining the feminine linguistic style as reported earlier. Therefore, *marrah* should be viewed as a variable pronouncing affective stances of expressivity as part of the stylistic practice of women. The social networks in Riyadh are slowly becoming looser and less segregated with the increased mobility, modernisation and rising percentages of women's education and employment. These changes could potentially disassemble the traditional gender-based networks which can influence the linguistic styles of men and women including the usage of the amplifier *marrah* as will be explained in the following paragraph.

The rapid development in the Kingdom and the launching of the Saudi 2030 Vision (Chapter 1, Section 1.8.2) propelled dramatic changes within the social construction of the Saudi community and gave more empowerment to women (Parveen, 2022). Large opportunities have been recently created for females in the job market to build their own careers. In addition, the gender-segregation policy has been relaxed in many places. With this rapid modernisation in Saudi Arabia and specifically in the city of Riyadh, a break-up of traditional gender-specific networks is already taking place. This is enforced by the increased mobility of women who are obtaining higher educational levels and joining the work force now more than ever before in the history of the kingdom. Thus, the process of dismantling the structure of segregated networks is likely to gradually resituate members into an altered context. Individuals construct

their social identities within their social surroundings by engaging in mutual repeated stylistic moves (Eckert and Podesva, 2021, p.28; see Chapter 5, Section 5.6.1). These stylistic choices have the potential to change if there is a disruption or change in the type of stylistic repetitions (Butler, 1988, p.520). So, a higher resemblance in speaking styles between male and female speakers is expected to grow including affective stances that are critical components of gender identities (Podesva and Kajino, 2014, p.117). Dismantling the structure may be the main driving force propelling this linguistic change. Milroy (1980, p.178) confirms that "linguistic change will be associated with a break-up of such a structure.". The finding that young males are producing the majority of the tokens suggests that they might be the ones who are more affected by these social changes. This is possibly the case as their social networks are likely to be the ones at the height of the societal transformation in their workplaces and other daily local settings. This also means that we can predict even more intense diffusion of features linked to the female linguistic style including the usage of *marrah* among male speakers.

Another factor is the possible effect of online communication on dismantling the traditional segregated norms in the country. A break-down may be induced as men and women socialise more through technology. The internet became accessible to the public in Saudi Arabia by the end of the 1990s (Guta and Karolak, 2015, p.116). The internet penetration rate in Saudi Arabia is 99% (compared to the world average rate of 66.2%)[117] which leads to more frequent online communications including between men and women. There are 36.31 million internet users (98.99%) in the country at the beginning of 2023 and there are 29.10 million users (79.33%) of social media platforms in January 2023[118]. Digital platforms made it possible for men and women to communicate with the opposite gender contravening offline norms in the country (Al-Saggaf and Begg, 2004, p.48; Guta and Karolak, 2015, p.123). Increased interaction opportunities between the genders lead to decreased inhibition about the opposite gender (Al-Saggaf and Begg, 2004, p.49; Guta and Karolak, 2015, pp.123-124). Aljuwaiser (2018, p.2) interviewed four Saudi women born in 1991-1992 to investigate their practices in social media platforms. Those individuals almost all agreed on a change in their communication with the opposite gender from being extremely conservative to having relaxed interactions and virtual relations. Aljuwaiser (2018, p.8) argues that the

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[117] https://www.statista.com/topics/9947/social-media-usage-in-saudi-arabia/#editorsPicks (Accessed, March 26, 2024).

[118] https://datareportal.com/reports/digital-2023-saudi-arabia (Accessed, March 26, 2024).

practices of Saudi women in the digital sphere are "constantly challenging the offline cultural and societal rules". Thus, increased interactions between the genders in social media platforms are potential forces that could have reinforced the adoption of this amplifier by younger men who probably spend more time on those platforms and are more susceptible to linguistic change.

Another critical point related to age is that the low frequency of *marrah* within the amplification systems of older speakers of both genders is indicative of a significant change in the adjective intensification system in ND. Age in apparent-time can be used as an analytical tool not only to foresee future changes but also to reflect the past. Tagliamonte (2016, p. 92), in her discussion of intensifiers in the English language, postulates that "[i]ntensifiers in English are a mark of the times". In English this meant that using *'very'*, *'really'* and *'so'* signals whether a speaker belongs to an older, middle-aged, or younger generation, respectively, based on which amplifier was frequently used during their adolescence or early adulthood (Tagliamonte, 2016, p.92). Applying this to the current data means that *marrah* is gradually becoming trendy which is reflected in the gradual increase along the age groups. Yet, we should be careful in assuming that it is a completely innovative form since the form *bilmarrah* 'completely' as observed in Chapter 4, Section 4.4.1, is found in a corpus of old and contemporary CA and the older data from around 60 years ago in ND (Abboud, 1964, p.21). This could indicate that *marrah* is a recycled form and not a totally innovative form. Intensifiers can go through a process of recycling where forms that underwent a decline in usage would be revived again for the sake of delivering a more expressive effect (Hopper and Traugott, 1993, p. 122; König, 2017; Lorenz, 2002, p. 143; Tagliamonte, 2008, pp.389, 391). This renewal might have been linked to the form *marrah* and not *bilmarrah.* There are many questions that will remain unanswered because of the unavailability of historical spoken ND data that is sufficient for drawing a robust view of intensifiers in ND.

The interaction of age with the semantic content of adjectives and the position of *marrah* are particularly interesting. The interaction of age and the semantic content of the modified adjectives, reveals another clue that points to a possibility of change. Overall, we observe that there is a diffusion of the amplifier *marrah* over more semantic environments and that there is an increased frequency as the speaker gets younger. This means, when we look at the number of semantic categories modified by each age group, we notice that younger speakers modified more semantic contexts (Section 6.2.7.1) and

produced more tokens of this booster as well (Section 6.2.2). Examining the steps of this incrementation process along with using age as an analytical tool in apparent-time to reflect the past and the present helps to uncover the grammaticalisation status of *marrah*. The results suggest that there is a change in-progress. There seems to be a preference that is growing with younger speakers towards placing *marrah* in a pre-adjectival location (p-value<0.001). These findings could be used in combination with all the previous effects of age, gender and semantic content to anticipate a change in-progress in the usage of *marrah*. Females and younger speakers seem to play a critical role in this ongoing change.

6.4.2 jiddan

The booster *jiddan*, as mentioned in Chapter 4 (Section 4.4.2) is fossilised in the accusative case in many Arabic dialects (Versteegh, 2014, p.56). The declension system which assigns cases to the end of words is no longer used in ND but used in CA. This group of adverbs are still used in CA (see Chapter 4, Section 4.3). So, *jiddan* in CA is used for the same function of boosting which is found in ND. Previous studies on the variation of phonological variables disregarded CA variables as irrelevant to the social equation (see Ibrahim, 1986; Abd-El-Jawad, 1987). Ibrahim (1986, p.125), in the context of phonological variation, postulates that CA features lack the "social evaluative connotations" which are observed in the supra-local features. This was in response to the studies of phonological variation in the Arab world, which found that typically men or older speakers used features shared with CA but this overlap was due to the dialect and CA sharing the same feature. For example, Abd-El-Jawad (1987) found that for the phonological variable /q/ which is a classical feature of Nablus dialect and also used in CA, older speakers used it more than younger speakers and males used it more than females. Females and younger speakers adopted the innovative form /ʔ/ which he argues is the more prestigious variant. Therefore, the real situation is that females are using the innovative forms while males are using the rural local forms and that CA is not relevant and is not the motivation for men to use the local variant. Thus, those findings indeed show the same classical variationist patterns where female speakers (or mobile

people[119]) lead the change toward the innovative forms that hold prestige, leaving behind the local variants. Hence, change in language use is toward urbanisation which may sometimes coincide to be in direction of CA (Al-Wer, 1997). For DPFs, this cannot be applied. In fact, the treatment of phonological variables gives us insight about the social value of linguistic variables in Arabic dialects. Within the adjective intensification system of ND, we can suggest that the local variable *marrah* is socially marked compared to the pan-Arabic variant *jiddan*.

As we have seen in the results, while *jiddan* is used more frequently by educated speakers (Section 6.2.4 and Section 6.3.2), among educated speakers, it is male speakers who use *jiddan* more frequently (78.79%) (Section 6.2.5.2). This indicates that the preference for selecting CA variants among educated speakers is probably lower for females. Even if those females were educated, their preference is found to be the local variant *marrah*. As the form *jiddan* is identically found in CA, this suggests that it probably expresses an affective stance with a lower degree of subjectivity. As explained previously, gender-segregated communities in Saudi Arabia and the prevalence of traditional gender roles likely reinforce distinctive gendered styles for both males and females. Men in conversations are traditionally found to show less emotional reactions and focus more on information and facts (Holmes, 2013, p.317). Thus, using *jiddan* instead of *marrah* seems to align with the masculine linguistic style and potentially gives male speakers the ability to pronounce their emotionality while maintaining a certain level of neutrality because of its attachment to CA. The formal function of CA in the Arab world (see Chapter 1, Section 1.5) makes this a plausible interpretation.

The argument that *jiddan,* which is shared with CA, might convey a less personal stance is supported by the genres in which CA is primarily used in the Arabic language. CA is used nowadays mostly in written official documents, such as newspapers, governmental documents and websites and spoken in formal occasions, including lectures, religious sermons and news broadcasts. In RNDC, as observed in Section 6.2.11, *jiddan* was found in higher frequency in discussions of serious topics which aligns with these genres. Thus, the suggested objective and impersonal stances conveyed by *jiddan* appear to be compatible with the genre of these texts and certain spoken

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[119] Eckert (1989, p.248) argued against the assertion that women are more or less innovative and that there is any fixed linguistic feature attributed to gender. Rather, the influential dynamic factor affecting sociolinguistic patterns is *mobility* (Chambers, 2003, p.141). Gender-based variability is significantly shaped by the extent of speakers' social and geographical networks (Chambers, 2003, p.141).

forms of the Arabic language. Therefore, we can suggest that use of *jiddan* indexes such concepts (Holes, 1993; Bassiouney, 2013). Holes (1993), for instance, analysed the relationship between the form of language and the function of discourse in six political speeches delivered between 1956 and 1965 by the late Egyptian president Gamal Abd Al-Naser. Overall, Holes found that the usage of CA appeals to abstract, idealised or metaphorical messages that are associated with symbolic values among Arabs. For instance, CA is used when referring to Egypt as a "quasi-metaphysical entity" (Holes, 1993, p.24) and for discussing complex political concepts like democracy, socialism and economic concepts in a serious, formal and authoritative manner. In contrast, EA, which is used in everyday communication among the public, conveys personal and shared domestic values, such as remembering battles and victories and delivering sarcastic comments on the American aids. Therefore, EA is employed for personal and immediate messages that are relatable to the public. EA is intended to be more audience-inclusive and to create a sense of solidarity and brotherly connection with the audience. It is used for referring to real-life issues and enhancing the impact of Abd Al-Naser's message. Further, Abd Al-Naser strategically alternated between CA and EA to engage his audience and explain complex political concepts in simpler terms and give examples from everyday experiences. This switching contrasted the authoritative content with its explanation.

In a similar study, Bassiouney (2006) analysed political speeches by the former Egyptian president Mubarak. She observed that CA is adopted when the message seems to be de-personalised and objective, particularly when the president aims to represent himself as a national leader. On the other hand, EA is deployed whenever the president wants to connect more with the audience and show his solidarity by adopting the role of a fellow Egyptian, speaking about personal experience and childhood memories or positioning himself as an Arab leader that is concerned about his nation. Bassiouney (2006) noticed that these shifts between codes occur in discussions of the same topic. Overall, switching to CA is used to convey information while EA is employed to convince or elaborate through concrete examples (Bassiouney, 2006). Although the current study does not delineate features of CA and the vernacular to measure the frequency of code-shifting and analyse their social and linguistic contexts, as is often done in studies of code-switching in the Arabic language, an approach focusing on patterns of a single variant like the amplifier *jiddan* aligns with third-wave variationist perspectives on how

styles can be evoked through the employment of singular forms as much as through entire codes (see Moore and Podesva, 2009, p.479 and Ilbury, 2020).

Lim and Hong (2012) found in their Mandarin Chinese data that some amplifiers are favoured in discourse contexts which require a low level of personal involvement or distancing of the *self* like in academic writings, as opposed to amplifiers preferred for contexts of high personal subjectivity, such as *Romance Fiction.* This implies that the stances expressed by amplifiers project varying levels of self-involvement. Hence, the usage of *jiddan* and *marrah* might be linked to their varying levels of emotionality and personal involvement, which is potentially based on their typical genres (CA and ND) similar to the findings by Holes (1993) and Bassiouney (2006). This may partly explain why overall *jiddan* is more frequent among male speakers since it seems to align with traditional masculine styles that lack emotionality.

6.4.3 marrah and jiddan

jiddan and *marrah* can be seen as features of styles and those features are signs that index social references which can be categories, personae, institutional practice, etc. (Irvine, 2002, p.22). It is possible to understand and interpret the usage of *jiddan* and *marrah* when conceptualising these elements as part of a "system of distinctiveness" (Irvine, 2002). These elements belong to contrasting styles and their social meanings are enhanced by this distinctiveness. In other words, the link between these two styles is "ideologically mediated" (Irvine, 2002, p.22). Studying *marrah* alongside *jiddan* helps us see the bigger picture by contrasting their correlational patterns in the data. This highlights the effectiveness of the variationist approach for sociolinguistic investigations of these devices, which I adopt in this project as opposed to calculating the frequency of amplifiers in isolation of their co-variants (see Chapter 3, Section 3.10). This is because their social indexicality arises from variation in both form and frequency not merely frequency (Pichler, 2013, p.28). Hence, amplifiers acquire their social value by alternating with their co-variants in the same system. The patterns observed for *marrah* and *jiddan* suggest that the employment of stance markers like amplifiers which express emotions and attitudes is not arbitrary but is rooted in the community's social fabric (Precht, 2003; Tagliamonte, 2008). This means that speakers, whether consciously or not, tend to follow culturally established linguistic norms in expressing their stances,

which is influenced by the cultural norms of the society (Precht, 2003). In a relevant study, Tagliamonte (2008, p.365) examined the variation of amplifiers in Canadian English within a corpus that consists of informal conversations of 120 participants which she elicited from the Toronto English Corpus[120]. Tagliamonte (2008, p.389) noticed that younger male speakers favoured the amplifier *pretty* more than female speakers of the same age group who seemed to favour the amplifier *so* and both amplifiers appeared to be on the rise. Tagliamonte (2008, p.389) hypothesizes that this polarisation in the choice of amplifiers by the younger males and females might be a result of an unconscious reactive behaviour by young male speakers. Using another available amplifier in the inventory, which is *pretty*, despite its somewhat "girlish" associations to attractiveness and beauty, possibly allows young males to participate in the ongoing change without using the feature that is noticeably linked to female use (Tagliamonte, 2008, p.389). Thus, the choice of amplifiers, such as *marrah* and *jiddan*, as well as *so* and *pretty*, as observed in Tagliamonte's (2008) study, seems to be influenced by gender roles and social identities in the community, which may, in turn, influence individuals' attitudes toward those amplifiers (see Chapter 5, Section 5.6.1). This influence often leads to distinctive choices within the amplification system of different social groups. The case study which I present in Chapter 8 further explores this area. The patterns of *marrah* and *jiddan* also underscore the need to direct further attention to the shifting between CA and other Arabic varieties. This is because it helps in identifying the social, contextual and pragmatic dynamics that operate those forms (i.e., CA and vernaculars). This aspect, therefore, should not be downplayed by efforts targeting the identification of speech levels in the Arabic language.

I argued previously that *jiddan* seems to be a less personal form that potentially expresses a lower degree of emotionality due to its link to CA which is a relatively valid argument. At the same time, as observed in the current study, there seems to be an ongoing change with *marrah* taking over a great proportion of the adjective intensification system in ND especially for women. From the pattern observed in the data, we can infer that the diffusion of *marrah* is highly advanced within women's social networks and social networks function as "norm-enforcement mechanism" (Milroy, 1980, p.136). Thus, it may be that *marrah* occupies a larger proportion of the

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[120] The corpus consists of over one million words and the sample is stratified by age, gender and social class (Tagliamonte, 2008, p.365). The data was collected in the early 2000s.

intensification system among female speakers compared to that of male speakers. So, it is more likely that women will use *marrah* than *jiddan* because it seems to be already diffused into larger semantic and pragmatic contexts. Not having access to the ongoing linguistic change that *marrah* is undergoing by men probably means that these men cannot participate in this change-in-progress (see Nevalainen and Raumolin-Brunberg, 2017, pp.110–132). As a result, *marrah* is probably occupying smaller semantic contexts in their adjective amplification systems. This is a mechanical force that should not be overlooked in the interpretation of linguistic patterns for variables and their development (Labov, 1999, p.550).

CA variants are primary elements within the intensification system for ND speakers. Therefore, as explained in the previous paragraphs, *marrah* and *jiddan* are operating as co-variants within the system of amplification. The boosters *marrah* and *jiddan* seem to be the most common forms in ND based on RNDC (see Chapter 4). Therefore, if speakers want to convey the function of adjective amplification, there is a high probability they will be using either *marrah* or *jiddan* since all the other forms are infrequent in the system. Based on this, there is a chance that the usage of one form is motivated by the social value associated with it or the opposite variant. Hence, the observed patterns for *marrah* and *jiddan* might partly be explained by drawing on the social meanings of these forms. The preference for *jiddan* by men might partly reflect their avoidance of the booster *marrah*, which we suggest may potentially index femininity along with other features (see Chapter 8). Anecdotally, a friend once told me that her brother, who is 19 years old, expressed his unwillingness to use *marrah* because it is mostly used by girls. A finding that supports this anecdotal evidence is the age of speakers. Older male groups are the ones who seem to favour *jiddan* the most in all the data, compared to younger male speakers. Whilst young speakers seem to be the ones exceptionally affected by the changes in dismantling the social network structure in the country, the low frequency of *marrah* and the high frequency of *jiddan* by the older age groups suggest a lower influence of the social changes on these groups. Older and middle-aged male speakers perhaps experienced longer periods of highly conservative social and religious norms (see Chapter 1, Section 1.8.2). Thus, *jiddan* is possibly an alternative, less marked pan-Arab variant that seem to be in congruence with their traditional upbringing.

The effect of education on the usage of *marrah* and *jiddan* is different. This is because *jiddan* is found in an identical form in CA, while *marrah* seems to be an updated form of *bilmarrah,* which is not found in CA. The effect of education on the adoption of *marrah* in the data is in line with the proposition that conceptualises education as a marker of social mobility. Al-Wer (2002) argues that in the Arab-speaking communities especially recently urbanised places, education should be treated as a proxy variable. This means that it is better seen as a channel for measuring the speaker's size of "outside contacts" (Al-Wer, 2002, p.50). Given that *marrah* is part of the local dialect and that is likely a recent (or a revived) element in ND especially among female-based social networks (Chapter 5, Section 5.6.1; Section 6.2.1), thus, the higher usage of this variant by highly educated male speakers compared to males with low education (Section 6.2.5.1) is likely a reflection of the effect of education on loosening their tightly-knit male-based social networks and their higher mobility in the community. So, viewing it as a change-in-progress led by females partly explains its higher preference by educated male speakers and younger male speakers. Those individuals probably have less tight-knit networks and a higher mobility level which are enabled by their higher education or their occupations and the social changes the kingdom is undergoing. Additionally, the results of *jiddan* give stronger support to the interpretation of *jiddan* as an index of education since it is highly linked to CA. While for *marrah*, education seems to be linked to mobility and perhaps more access to female-based networks. For *jiddan*, its use signals either a higher level of education (i.e., access to CA) or aspirations toward the prestige associated with educated individuals. Notwithstanding, an aspect that still requires further investigation, perhaps in a dataset that balances the age and academic qualifications of the participants, is whether the higher access to educational qualifications, especially for older speakers, might have influenced the patterns observed in the use of *jiddan*. In other words, gendered social structures might be at play, especially for older speakers. This is because, in the past, male and female speakers did not have the same educational opportunities in Saudi Arabia. Overall, the treatment of education depends on the variable at hand, as each form has different social meanings.

6.5 Conclusion

The booster *marrah* seems to be favoured by females and younger speakers while *jiddan* is favoured by males and older age groups. Among highly educated speakers, male speakers use *jiddan* more frequently compared to educated female speakers. In addition, highly educated male speakers use *marrah* more frequently compared to male speakers with lower education. Both boosters collocate more frequently with predicative adjectives. The booster *jiddan* is utilised more frequently in serious topics while *marrah* is used more frequently in non-serious topics. For both *marrah* and *jiddan*, the pre-adjectival positioning is favoured by younger speakers, while older speakers favour post-adjectival locations. Studying *marrah* and *jiddan* as elements in one system of amplification proved to be beneficial in understanding the complex patterns and interpreting them in light of the social and linguistic parameters.

The following chapter will explore those amplifiers by shedding light on individual users of these boosters and reflecting what we observed in this chapter on the usage of several outliers. This will be achieved by conducting a quantitative and qualitative analysis of the data, which will enhance our understanding of the distributions observed in this chapter and the factors influencing these patterns.

Chapter 7 Outliers

7.1 Introduction

The Labovian variationist approach underscores the significance of unconscious language patterns observed in large communities (Schilling, 2013, pp.26–28). In this type of sociolinguistic quantitative analysis, the social context and group dynamics that influence language usage and the social meaning of this use are highly valued (Schilling, 2013, pp.26–28). Researchers are often tempted to focus on the majority of speakers whose data falls within the dominant range of statistical distribution (Chambers, 2003, p.96). Yet, the earliest research by Labov had been critiqued for assuming that the speech community is linguistically homogeneous (Stuart-Smith and Timmins, 2010; Schilling, 2013, p.21). When conducting sociolinguistic studies, sometimes researchers are faced with "individuals whose speech seems completely anomalous" (Chambers, 2003, p.93). It is often through observing "the flange groups" or extremes who fall outside of "the body of subject" and contrasting them with the rest of the data that we are able to gain wider insights (Chambers, 2003, p.96). Labov, in his research of language variation within large social groups, emphasised the significance of understanding the force played by key individuals in driving linguistic change (Labov, 2001, p.33). He examined the identities, personal traits and characteristics of specific speakers contributing to linguistic change (Labov, 2001, pp.385–411). There has been an increased interest in considering individual language styles alongside group language styles that developed as a result of researchers' recognition (e.g., Coupland, 2007; Johnstone, 1996) of the critical role played by speaker's agency (Schilling, 2013, pp.26–28). These studies show that individual speakers play a significant role in linguistic innovation through their intentional and conscious linguistic choices (Schilling, 2013, pp.26–28). Hence, because investigating language variation is a complex process, a comprehensive approach that includes studying the styles of individual speakers and also the linguistic patterns of groups of speakers should be adopted (Schilling, 2013, pp.26–28). Combining macro-level and micro-level approaches provides a holistic understanding of language variation and change since macro-level analysis gives an overview of the patterns while micro-level unravels the intricacies involved in using

linguistic variation in the construction and negotiation of identities. For this reason, in this chapter, I conduct an in-depth analysis of individual outliers in the data. This is specifically conducted on users of *marrah* and *jiddan.* It is hoped that this analysis will contribute to uncovering concealed patterns, challenging and testing our understanding of the norms which were elicited based on the aggregate data given in Chapter 6 and also highlighting the effect of other factors like unexplored contextual parameters, personal experiences and social networks.

In the previous chapter, the analysis of the vernacular form *marrah* revealed that there is potentially a change-in-progress which is led by female speakers. The booster *marrah* was highly favoured by female speakers and interpreting this pattern required reflecting on the gender-segregation in Saudi Arabia where gender-based networks and traditional gender roles could have contributed to the sharp stratification across male and female speakers. I anticipated that the current changes in the country, which are leading to a dismantling of the social structures that restrict communication between the genders, might lead to an increased usage of this variant by male speakers. This is partly reflected in the finding that young male speakers are the most frequent users of *marrah* since they are the ones who will likely be more influenced by these dramatic social changes in the Saudi community. In addition, *jiddan*, which in comparison to the vernacular form *marrah*, was found to be favoured by male speakers, which could possibly be because of its neutrality that is derived from CA compared to the vernacular form *marrah*. Another possible interpretation of this patterns is the lack of access to *marrah* by male speakers as a result of the segregated social networks. This probably meant that the only available form to them for conveying adjective amplification is *jiddan,* as these forms are the only common forms in the ND adjective amplification system based on RNDC. I also proposed that male speakers' higher preference towards adopting *jiddan* might be a reactional attitude towards the other available form in the system which is *marrah* due to its higher adoption by female speakers (see Chapter 8). Hence, the previous propositions tackle *marrah* and *jiddan* as possible oppositional forms where those forms alternate with each other in the system and hence, further layers of social indexicalities are added to their profiles. This chapter will allow me to examine and test these interpretations by focusing on individual users of *marrah*. The amplification practices in RNDC and social backgrounds of individual speakers will be examined.

It should be acknowledged that, overall, the number of tokens of these variants per speaker is relatively small as shown in Table 7.1 below. We can observe that many speakers produced fewer than 10 tokens. Table 7.1 illustrates the frequency of the boosters *marrah* and *jiddan* within the amplification system of *jiddan* users in RNDC. Based on the normalised frequencies presented in Table 7.1, the outliers F11 and M18 are chosen for the analysis of *marrah,* while M24 and F7 will be analysed for *jiddan*. These outliers are chosen for further analysis because they exhibit the highest normalised frequency of *marrah* or *jiddan* in RNDC.

Table 7.1 Adjective Amplification System for Users of the Booster *jiddan* in RNDC

	Speaker	*marrah*		*jiddan*		Other Amplifiers		Total	
		N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
1	F11/19	26	96.30%	1	3.70%	0	0.00%	27	100%
2	M8/19	2	66.67%	1	33.33%	0	0.00%	3	100%
3	M21/21	1	25.00%	3	75.00%	0	0.00%	4	100%
4	F4/23	7	70.00%	2	20.00%	1	10.00%	10	100%
5	F26/23	9	81.82%	1	9.09%	1	9.09%	11	100%
6	M18/27	14	93.33%	1	6.67%	0	0.00%	5	100%
7	M1/29	3	60.00%	1	20.00%	1	20.00%	5	100%
8	F16/30	18	85.71%	1	4.76%	2	9.52%	21	100%
9	F3/32	4	50.00%	2	25.00%	2	25.00%	8	100%
10	M16/32	2	66.67%	1	33.33%	0	0.00%	3	100%
11	F21/33	2	40.00%	2	40.00%	1	20.00%	5	100%
12	F1/34	7	77.78%	1	11.11%	1	11.11%	9	100%
13	M12/35	0	0.00%	5	83.33%	1	16.67%	6	100%
14	M6/37	0	0.00%	2	66.67%	1	33.33%	3	100%
15	M15/40	0	0.00%	16	76.19%	5	23.81%	21	100%
16	M24/43	1	9.09%	10	90.91%	0	0.00%	11	100%
17	F5/44	7	63.64%	3	27.27%	1	9.09%	11	100%
18	M13/47	0	0.00%	1	50.00%	1	50.00%	2	100%
19	M25/52	0	0.00%	2	50.00%	2	50.00%	4	100%
20	F7/57	3	25.00%	5	41.67%	4	33.33%	12	100%
21	M19/57	0	0.00%	1	100.00%	0	0.00%	1	100%
22	M17/62	0	0.00%	4	100.00%	0	0.00%	4	100%
23	M14/65	0	0.00%	6	75.00%	2	25.00%	8	100%
24	M5/70	0	0.00%	1	100.00%	0	0.00%	1	100%

Figures 7.1, 7.2, 7.3 and 7.4 below present the recorded tokens of the adjective boosters *marrah* and *jiddan* for individual speakers in RNDC (see Appendix F)[121].

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[121] Speakers' IDs are coded as F for females and M for males. The number after the slash / is the age of the speaker.
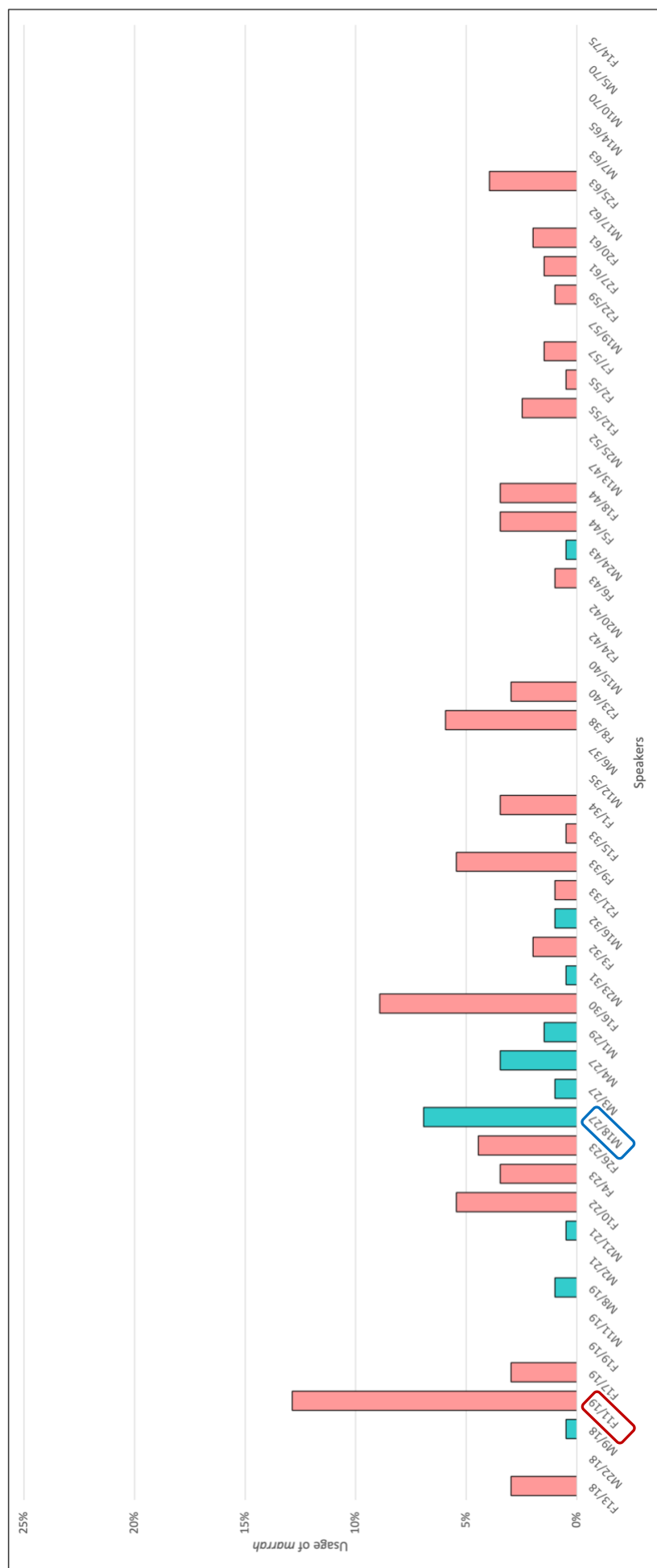
Figure 7.1 Usage of *marrah* by All ND Speakers in RNDC (Younger to Older)
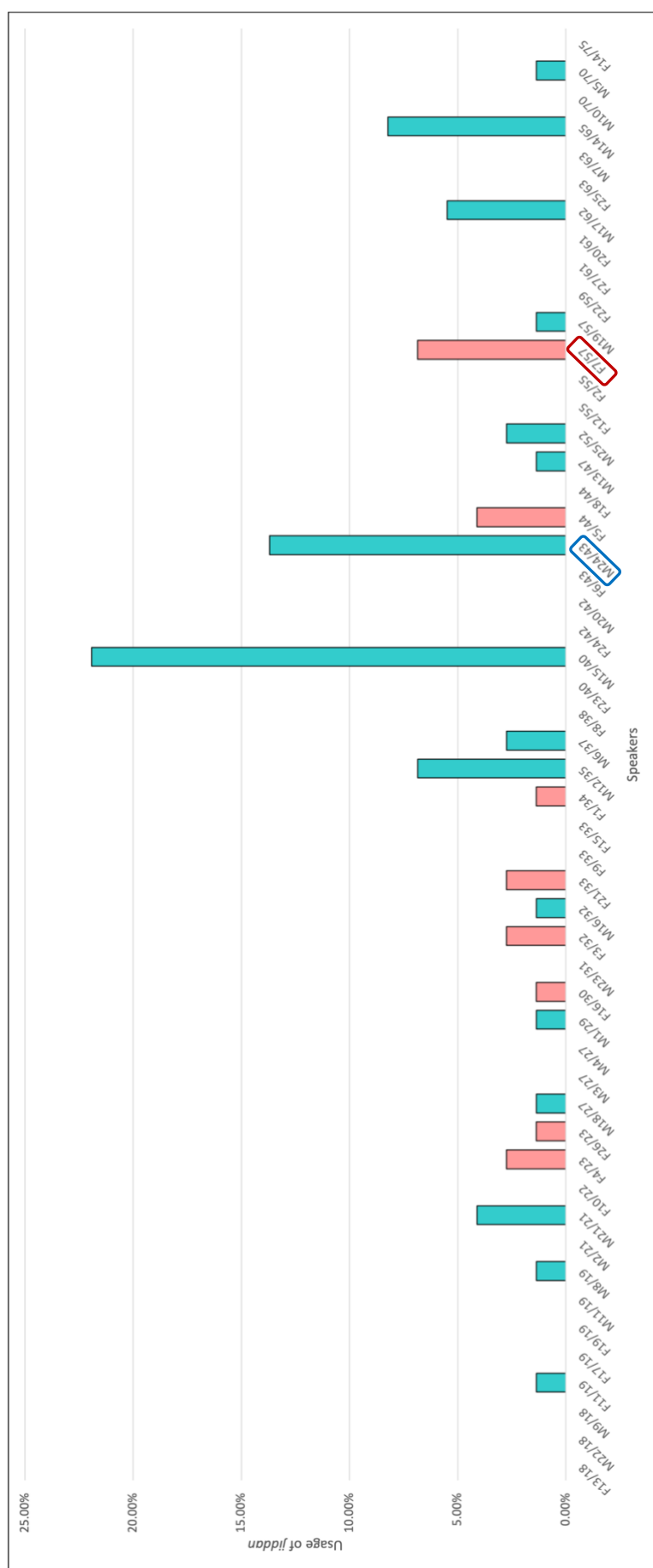
Figure 7.2 Usage of *jiddan* by All ND Speakers in RNDC (Younger to Older)
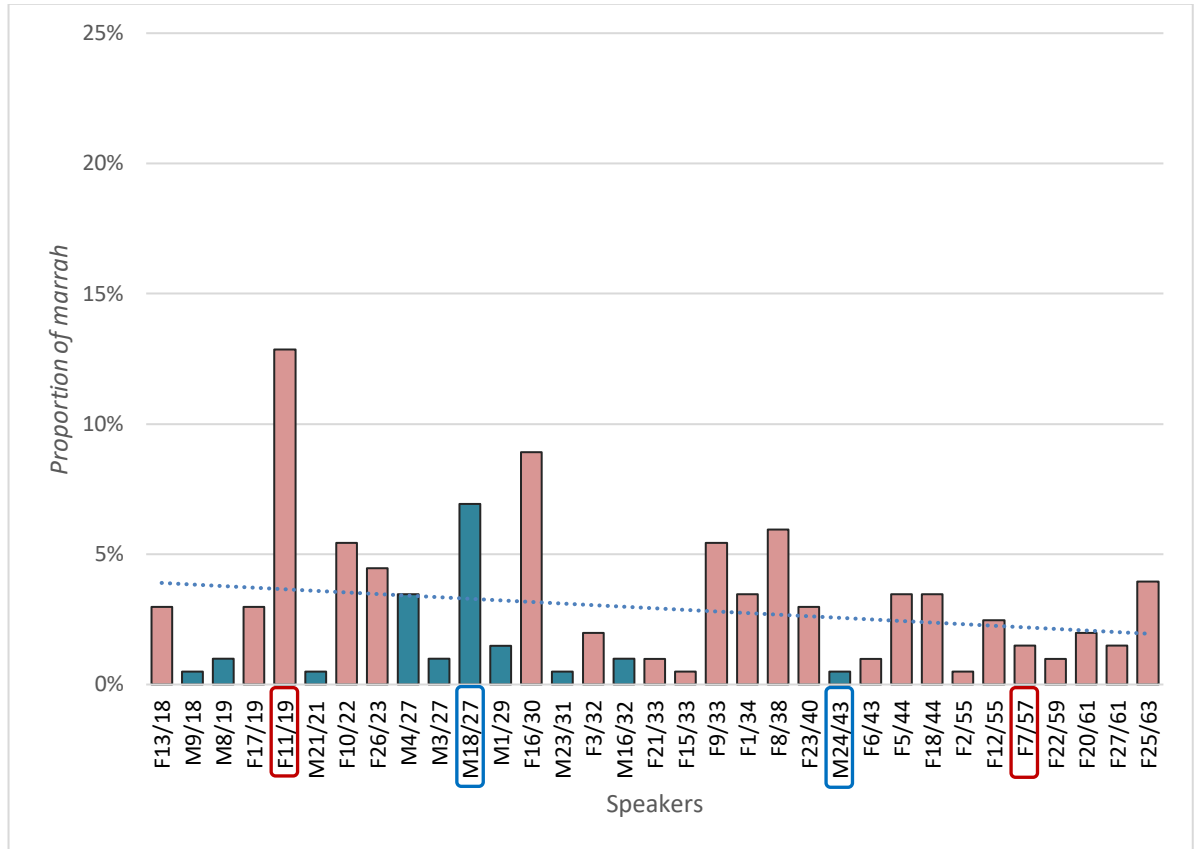
Figure 7.3 *marrah* Users Only in RNDC (Younger to Older)
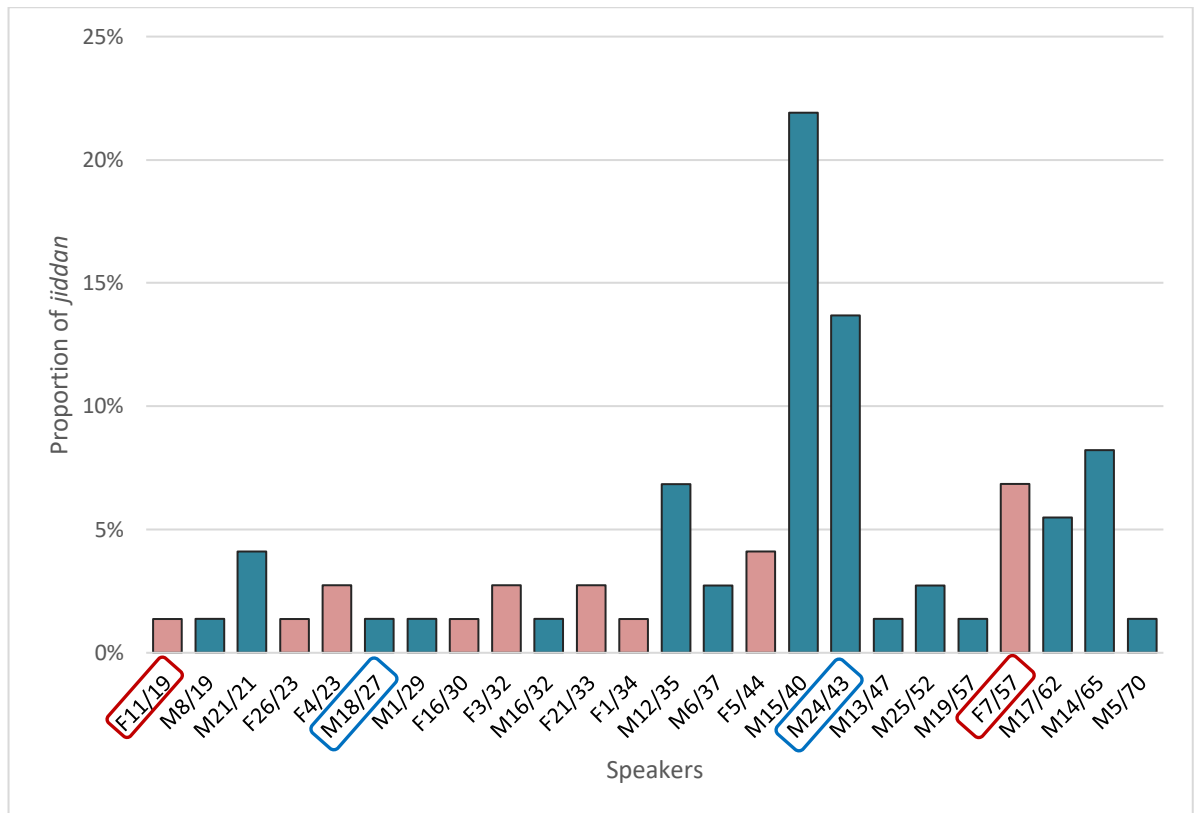
Figure 7.4 *jiddan* Users Only in RNDC (Younger to Older)

As seen in Chapter 6 and what will be presented in Chapter 8, it appears that *marrah* is one of the linguistic features indexing femininity while *jiddan* is highly used by men. Therefore, studying these elements in the speech of the opposite gender and seeing how different or how similar it is to the usage of the same gender is a very informing process (Levon, 2021, p.42). For example, speaker F11 has an exceptionally high usage of *marrah* compared to other female speakers, even though *marrah* is overall highly produced by female speakers. However, speaker M18 deviates from other male speakers by producing an unusually high proportion of *marrah,* which is against the general trend in the data where men are using *marrah* less frequently than women. Speaker M24 produced the highest proportion of *jiddan,* which overall seems to be used more frequently by men. Speaker F7, on the other hand, produced the highest proportion of *jiddan* compared to other female speakers. Through analysing the usage of these outliers, we will also be able to test other hypotheses formulated in this research, particularly, those concerning the effect of social factors like social mobility, social networks, level of education and alignment between speakers on the usage of amplifiers. Moreover, in-depth analysis will reveal some linguistic aspects relevant to the usage of amplifiers, such as the role of the discussed topic, the context of discourse like narration and the position of amplifiers. Although those who use *marrah* and *jiddan* less frequently may reveal valuable insights too, analysing frequent users of these variables aligns with the focus of this chapter which is to reveal the missing pieces of the story which could not be revealed using correlational methods.

7.1.1 Adjective Intensification System of *jiddan* Users

Before moving on to analyse individual speakers, there is useful information that can be revealed by examining individual adjectival amplification systems. When closely examining the adjective amplification system of *jiddan* users, a pattern can be observed (Figures 7.5, 7.6 and 7.7)[122] In the adjective amplification system of younger male speakers who used *jiddan*, with the exception of M21, we observe that *marrah* dominates their system (Figure 7.5 and Figure 7.7). However, as we move to the right, among older speakers who used *jiddan*, they either did not use *marrah* at all or used it less frequently than *jiddan*.

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[122] The null-variant was removed from this calculation.
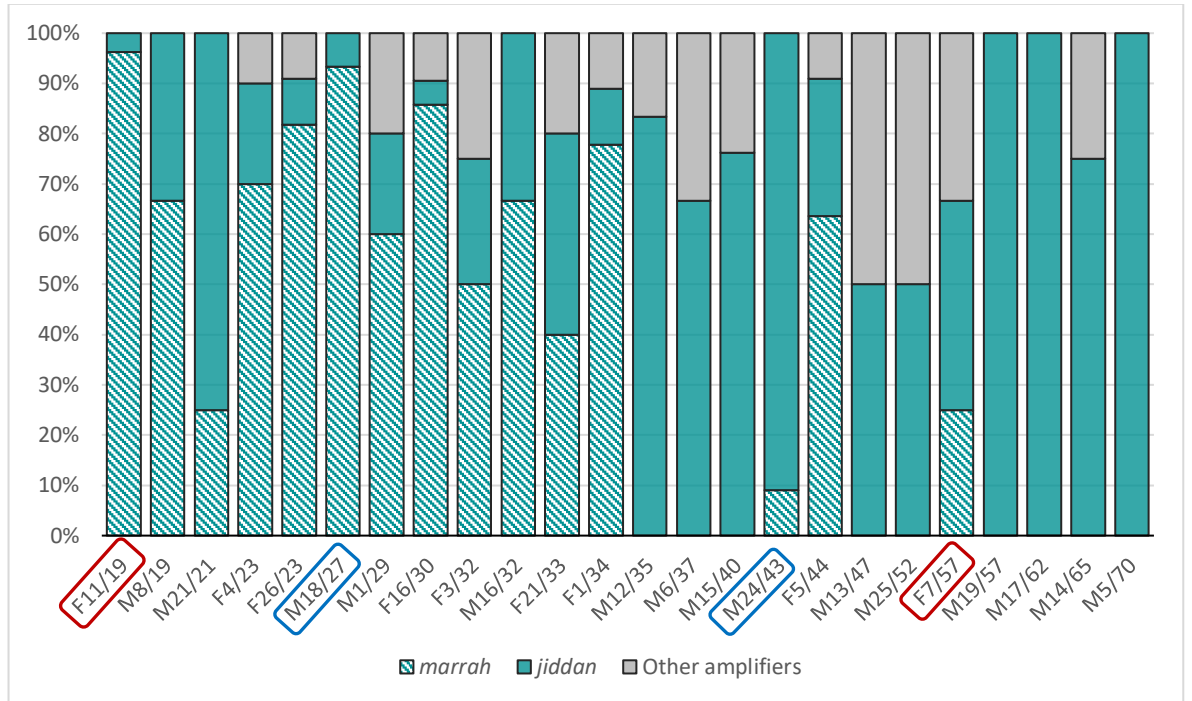
Figure 7.5 Proportion of *jiddan* and *marrah* within the Adjective Amplification System of *jiddan* Users in RNDC (Younger to Older)
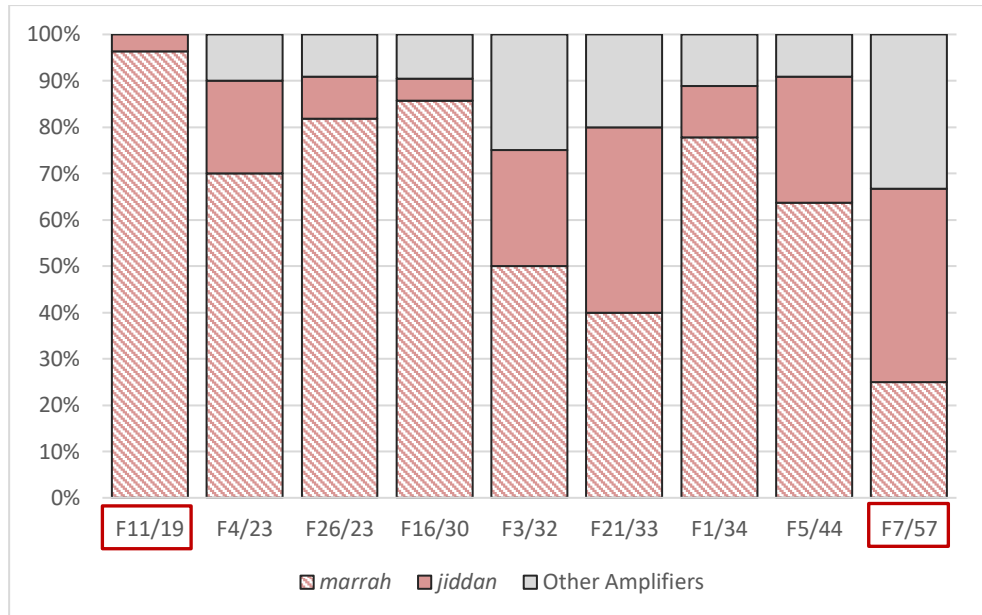
Figure 7.6 Proportion of *jiddan* and *marrah* within the Adjective Amplification System of *jiddan* Female Users Only in RNDC (Younger to Older)
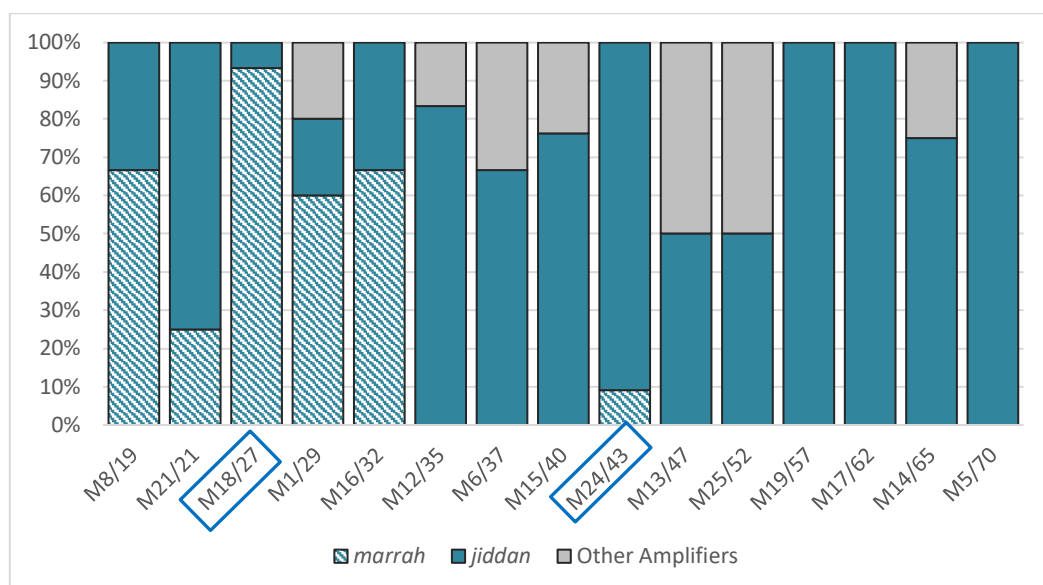
Figure 7.7 Proportion of *jiddan* and *marrah* within the Adjective Amplification System of *jiddan* Male Users Only in RNDC (Younger to Older)

This observation aligns with the hypothesis made earlier in Chapter 6, Section 6.2.8. and Section 6.4.2 which attributes the high usage of *jiddan* by middle-aged male speakers and older male speakers to the status of their adjective amplification system which developed in a segregated community. Thus, *marrah* in their system is likely to be used for intensifying fewer contexts. However, when we observe the system of females who used *jiddan*, the distribution of *marrah* and *jiddan* in their system is different (Figure 7.5 and 7.6). It is observed that, except for the oldest speaker F7, *marrah* either occupies an equal proportion to *jiddan* (e.g., F21) or a greater proportion, which is the prevalent case. Even for speaker F7, when compared to middle-aged and older male speakers, the proportion of *marrah* in her system (25%; N=3/12) is still relatively high.

7.2 *marrah*[123]

7.2.1 Speaker F11 Background

F11, who is a 19-year-old single female speaker, was interviewed with her sister, F10, who is 22 years old. F11 produced 12.87% (N=26/202) of the total tokens of the adjective amplifier *marrah* in RNDC, while F10 produced 5.45% (N=11/202) (Figure 7.1; Table 7.1;

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[123] Before presenting the backgrounds of *marrah* outliers, it is important to acknowledge that in my explanation of these outliers I draw on Chambers' (2003) categorisations to contextualise their usage and enrich their qualitative analysis. However, I do not intend to make absolute claims or overgeneralisations, as this chapter focuses on a limited number of speakers, and an in-depth analysis of other speakers in the dataset has not been conducted.

Appendix H). F11 produced more than double the tokens produced by her sister, F10, despite sharing similar social backgrounds. F11 is among the youngest participants in the sample. She finished high school and is currently studying law at university. She lives with her family and her father is retired, while her mother works at a university as head of a department. When asked about her close relationships and friends, she expressed that she considers her female cousins as her friends and also has friends from high school. At university, she does not have friends but only what she considers classmates.

When we reflect on speaker F11, we can suggest that she represents a case that we can call an "insider" as referred to by Chambers (2003, pp. 110–114). Insiders, according to Chambers, are individuals at the center of their social group who are the prototypical embodiment of the social characteristics typical of their group. In his discussion of insiders, Chambers describes certain personal characteristics, like being involved in extracurricular activities in school, spending their best time with their peers and being the center of their group. In a follow-up enquiry, I asked F10 about the difference between her and her sister, F11, in terms of their sociability, friendships and participation in activities. F10 described her sister, F11, as being an extrovert with many friends who also likes to keep herself busy by doing different activities. F11 would get excited about going out with friends, spending time with them and participating in social events and activities. Yet, F10 described F11 as being sociable to a certain extent, meaning that she would prefer to spend time with her friends rather than their neighbours, for example, or meeting new people. F10 reported that her sister, F11, has more friends compared to her, while F10 has fewer friends. F10 explained that she is more reserved compared to her sister and that she tends to prioritise family over friends. From the previous description, we can notice that there are certain characteristics that match Chambers' description which suggests that this speaker can qualify as an insider according to Chamber's definition. The description provided by F10 might also help in explaining the difference between them in their exploitation of *marrah*. Based on her background, we would not have expected F11 to be the most frequent user in the data because of the similarity between her background and other female speakers in the sample (see Chambers, 2003, pp.112-133). However, Chamber's definition of insiders gives a possible explanation for the observed pattern in F11's usage of *marrah*. Chambers (2003, p.114) explains that although insiders are not the innovators of linguistic change, they often are the followers of change and the ones who

accelerate it. Insiders usually skew the results observed in the data because they exaggerate the patterns of their social group (Chambers, 2003, p.114). F11 used *marrah* more frequently compared to her cohort of young female speakers which could be because of her insider position in the community.

It is known that young speakers are the ones who lead linguistic change in society (Eckert, 2003, p.115; Tagliamonte, 2016, p.53). This is achieved not only by inventing new variants but by young people's higher level of adaptability (Eckert, 2003, p.115; Tagliamonte, 2016, p.53). Adolescents are in a critically powerful role to adapt to changes in life because of the nature of their transitional phase (Eckert, 2003). Because of this social nature, they can cause lasting social changes (Eckert, 2003). Being 19 years old means that this speaker had just transitioned from an environment of a small community, like high school, which tends to be limited and less diverse and moved to a wider and more diverse environment at university. This means that this period is characterised by a social and geographical expansion of social networks, which could widen the range of their linguistic behaviours due to this exposure to diverse networks (Tagliamonte, 2016, p.53). Thus, this exceptional transitional phase might be the reason behind the innovative adoption of the booster *marrah*. In addition, this age is characterised by a more intense effect of peer pressure and increased communication with peers (Feldman and Elliott, 2001, p.3; Eckert, 2003; Tagliamonte, 2016, p.53). Further, sociolinguists suggest that people in the same social class, age and gender have a stronger effect on each other compared to the effect of older individuals (Chambers, 2003, p.184). In fact, the radical social mobility facilitated by university-based networks with peers and classmates, accompanied by peer pressure and aspirations to fit in, could be the reason behind the observed pattern in the data, where the younger generation is using *marrah* more than the older generations.

7.2.2 Speaker M18 Background

M18 produced the highest proportion of the amplifier *marrah* across male speakers in RNDC. He produced 6.93% (N=14/202) of the total tokens of the adjective amplifier *marrah* in RNDC (Table 7.1; Figure 7.1). M18 is a 27-year-old single male. He comes from a large family consisting of 18 siblings. His mother is a housewife, which is common among women of that generation (i.e., 45+ years old), while his father works

in real estate. He holds a BA degree in law, which is typically studied in CA in Saudi Arabia since it is studied within an Islamic context. He works as a legal researcher at a government institution. In his workplace, there is a relatively high level of gender segregation and he does not interact with female co-workers. Therefore, his workplace can be considered a traditional and conservative professional environment. In his position, he predominantly uses CA.

M18 is a socially mobile individual who has access to wider social networks through his education and work. M18 also spoke during the interview about his experience working as an Uber driver and his motivation for that was to gain experience working with the public. His experience with Uber specifically gives him access to female-based social networks, especially since women are among the frequent users of this service. In addition, having eight sisters, with whom he has a strong relationship, is another factor that gives him access to different linguistic styles and societies, especially those linked to feminine linguistic styles. So, although this speaker is considered socially mobile, he also has access to female-based networks through his part-time job and female siblings. M18 was interviewed individually. The nature of this interview could be another factor contributing to the usage of amplifiers, since in dyadic interviews there may be a higher alignment between the speakers, resulting in a higher production of affective stances, including amplifiers (see Podesva, 2018).

Speaker M18 is an interesting case. Compared to other young male speakers, he is the most frequent producer of the variant *marrah.* In Chapter 6, Section 6.2.3, we observed that it is the young group that produced the highest rate of *marrah*. While this pattern is observed among both genders, overall, female speakers were using *marrah* more than male speakers of the same age group. Yet, M18 used *marrah* more frequently compared to other younger female speakers. Therefore, we may suggest that M18 represents a case similar to the description by Chambers (2003, p. 93) of "oddballs" who are "nonconformists both linguistically and socially". The patterns observed for these individuals are different from the trend of their cohort. Chambers identifies three sub-categories of oddballs. Outsiders are individuals who are somehow isolated from their speech communities. Aspirers are individuals who aspire to be of higher social classes. M18 does not seem to fit the previous two definitions. The third category is interlopers, who are individuals who use linguistic features different from the pattern observed in their community as a result of their mobility. Chambers gave examples of geographical

mobility in his explanation of this type where speakers move from one place to another at a young age and show features in their speech similar to their place of origin. We may suggest that the mobility that affected the production of *marrah* by M18 is not a geographical one but of a social nature. The social mobility of M18 is gained first through his social environment in a large family with many sisters and not necessarily by moving from one place to another. His access to female-based networks from an early age could be the reason behind the observed anomaly in his usage of *marrah*. Further, his work as an Uber driver can also be seen as an influencing force that gave him more social mobility which might have contributed to the observed pattern in his *marrah* usage.

7.2.3 *marrah* in the interviews of F11 and M18: Overview of Functions

In the interview with F11, held jointly with her sister, F10 (Table 7.2), the booster *marrah* is overwhelmingly favoured by all speakers. This amplifier constituted 97.78% (N=44/45) of F11's amplifier usage in the interview while *jiddan* constituted only 2.22% (N=1/45) of her usage. Similarly, M18 exhibited a strong preference for *marrah* (95.65%; N=22/23) compared to *jiddan* (4.35%; N=1/23). It is interesting to see both interviewers using the variant *marrah* in these interviews, which may suggest that they are aligning their speech with those outliers in their usage (i.e., known as mirroring), though further data would be needed to confirm this. There is only one token of *jiddan* in the interview with both F11 and M18 (Table 7.2 and Table 7.5). Based on the education and current career of M18, we might expect him to use *jiddan* more frequently. Yet, this is not the case (Table 7.2). Both F11 (59.09%; N=26/44) and M18 (63.64%; N=14/22) used *marrah* more frequently as an adjective booster (Table 7.3).

Table 7.2 Usage of *marrah* in the Interviews of F11 and M18

Speaker	*marrah*		*jiddan*		Total	
F11 Interview	N	%	N	%	N	%
F11	44	97.78%	1	2.22%	45	100.00%
F10	26	96.30%	1	3.70%	27	100.00%
Interviewer-1	5	100.00%	0	0.00%	5	100.00%
M18 Interview	N	%	N	%	N	%
M18	22	95.65%	1	4.35%	23	100.00%
Interviewer-2	2	100.00%	0	0.00%	2	100.00%

The amplifier *marrah* is performing different functions in these interviews (Table 7.3) while *jiddan* is only observed once as an adjective modifier. This calls for a corpus-based approach in the analysis of *marrah* to understand all its functions and its development as an amplifier. The finding that the greatest proportion of *marrah* is used as an adjective modifier by F11 and M18 supports the benefit of prioritising the investigation of *marrah* as an adjective modifier, where we obtain the highest number of tokens and it confirms cross-linguistic research which has found similar results (Bäcklund, 1973, p.279; Almossa, 2024).

Table 7.3 Amplified Elements by *marrah* (Speakers F11 and M18)

	M18		F11		Total	
Function of *marrah*	**N**	**%**	**N**	**%**	**N**	**%**
Adjective booster	14	63.64%	26	59.09%	40	60.61%
Agreement booster (preceded by a yes/no question)	2	9.09%	0	0%	2	3.03%
Embedded modified element	2	9.09%	0	0%	2	3.03%
Emotive filler	2	9.09%	6	13.64%	8	12.12%
Noun booster	0	0%	1	2.27%	1	1.52%
Verb booster	2	9.09%	11	25%	13	19.70%
Total	22	100%	44	100%	66	100%

7.2.4 Context of Usage

7.2.4.1 marrah

Table 7.4 illustrates the contexts within which F11 used *marrah*. F11 used adjective amplifiers in ten topics while M18 used them in seven topics. F11 used the highest proportion of adjective modifier *marrah* (out of the total tokens of *marrah*) in discussing the role and rights of Saudi women (19.23%; N=5/26) (Excerpt 1). Excerpt 1 from F11 illustrates her discussion about Saudi women's rights based on her background as a law student. A normalised frequency analysis, which reflects the density of the speech, suggests that *marrah* is more frequent in F11's discussion of the city of Riyadh (Frequency=20.0). M18, on the other hand, used an equal proportion of *marrah* (21.43%; N=3/14) to amplify adjectives in the context of socially categorising residents in Riyadh according to districts and working online. Yet, a normalised frequency analysis suggests that *marrah* is more frequent in his discussion of driving in Riyadh (Frequency=43.47).

None of the tokens by F11 or M18 are used within a narrative context, which contrasts with the suggestion by Brown and Tagliamonte (2012) that narrative contexts are significant triggers of amplifiers. For instance, M18 spoke at length about some stories that happened to him while working as an Uber driver and in none of these narratives did he use *marrah*. The results of F11 and M18 reveal that as amplifiers are used to signal affective stances, they vary greatly based on interests of individual speakers. When choosing the topics, the objective was for these topics to engage and resonate with broad audience within the Saudi community. Thus, although controlling the topics raises the possibility of comparability, it is not an absolute predictor of the produced affective stances because personal interests differ based on personal traits, social environments, life experience, educational backgrounds and many other factors.

Both F11 and M18 only used the amplifiers *marrah* and *jiddan* to amplify adjectives and did not use any other adjective amplification forms (Figure 7.5, Table 7.5). F11 used *jiddan* in the subject of e-learning while M18 used it in speaking about classism in Riyadh based on region.

Excerpt (1)

F11:

01   [...] hū mū fajʔah ṣār laha bas fajʔah ṣārat al-ḥuqūq fajʔah ṣārat al

02   ḥuqūq yaʕnī ṭlaʕat lahā (.) ʔawwal kānat (.) madfūnah (.) kānaw

03   yaʕnī maʕalēš kalāmī al-ʕāmmyy ysallkūn laha

       [...] It is not suddenly she had (the rights) but suddenly the rights suddenly became suddenly the rights became I mean they sprung up for her (.) before she was (.) buried (.) they were excuse my words[124] but they were not giving this subject an adequate effort

Interviewer:

       lā lā ʕādī xḏī rāḥtk

       No no feel free to speak your mind

F11:

04   ***marrah*** yaʕnī (.) ***marrah*** kānaw ysallkūn b-kill al-ʔumūr (.)

       Really I mean (.) ***really*** they were not giving this an adequate effort and attention

05   ʔanā yaʕnī ʔaḥss mn ʔahamm al-ʔumūr (0.2) ḥuqūqahā al-qānūniyyah

06   yaʕnī al-ttalāq al-fasx al-xulʕ (.) ***marrah*** kanaw ysallkūn li-al-marʔah b-hāḏī

07   al-ʔumūr

---

[124] F11 used the slang verb "*ysallkūn*," which is typically used in contexts where someone nods their head (literally or not) to allow the conversation to flow without being interested in or intending to apply or abide by what their interlocutor is saying. In this excerpt, F11's usage does not seem to fit this literal meaning of *ysallkūn*. The context of her usage probably refers to effort or action taken by the authorities, which is how it is glossed in the translation.

I feel that one of the most important issues (0.2) are her legal rights meaning divorce[125], faskh[126] and khul'[127] (.) *really* they were not giving these issues adequate efforts and attention (.) be it the judges or the society itself

08   ʔlḥīn lā ʔlḥīn *marrah* taġayyrat hāḏī al-mwāḏīʕ yaʕnī

Now no (.) now these issues *really* changed

Interviewer:

yaʕnī mumkin ḥuqūqahā xallatha tṣīr ʔaqwā maṯalan ʔaqwā dōr fi al-mujtamaʕ

So maybe gaining these rights made her stronger for instance having a stronger role in the society

F11:

09   taġayyarat (.) ṭabʕan ʔīh (0.1) yaʕnī qānūniyyan w-ḥattā ʔjtmāʕiyyan ʔlḥīn yaʕnī (0.1) bdat titġyyar naḏrat al-mujtamaʕ li-al-muṭallaqah hāḏā mawḏūʕ *marrah* muhimm

It changed (.) of course yeah (0.1) so legally and even socially now (0.1) how the society looks at the divorced woman is beginning to change this is a *very* significant issue

10   ʔawwal yaʕnī kān mustaḥīl (.) al- yaʕnī mskīnah tstḥī ʔiḏā kānat muṭallaqah w-ʕalā ʔasbāb tāfhah yaʕnī qad ykūn tawafuq (.) madrī ʔēš

In the past, it was impossible (.) the I mean she used to be ashamed if she was divorced even if it was because trivial reasons like not getting on well with each other (.) or whatever

11   fa-al-mawḏūʕ yaʕnī *marrah* ṣaʕb ṣarāḥah (.) bass alḥīn alḥamdllāh bdā ytḥassan ṣarāḥah

So this issue is *very* difficult honestly (.) but now thank God it is beginning to improve honestly

12   […] fa yaʕnī hāḏā ṣarāḥah ʔanā ʔašūfah (.) *marrah* muhimm w-alḥamdllāh ʕalēh

[…] so this honestly I think (.) is *very* significant and thank God for it

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[125] "Unilateral divorce by the husband" (Cusairi and Mahdi, 2018)

[126] "Judicial dissolution of marriage by religious authorities." (Cusairi and Mahdi, 2018)

[127] "Divorce by redemption whereby a wife pays the husband a sum of money, usually part of or full amount of *mahr* (bridal gift) in order to release herself from the marriage" (Cusairi and Mahdi, 2018)

Table 7.4 Context of Adjective Booster *marrah* by Speakers F11 and M18

	Context	F11			M18		
		N	%	Normalised Frequency per 1000 Words[128]	N	%	Normalised Frequency per 1000 Words
1	Women's role in KSA	5	19.23%	12.47	1	4.76%	4.31
2	E-learning/working online	4	15.38%	18.02	3	21.43%	6.59
3	Riyadh City	3	11.54%	20.0	2	14.29%	4.35
4	Religious Subjects	3	11.54%	12.82	0	0%	0
5	Self-development	3	11.54%	17.54	0	0%	0
6	Teaching Arabic Dialects	2	7.69%	9.13	0	0%	0
7	Eating out	2	7.69%	16.30	0	0%	0
8	Online Shopping	2	7.69%	14.39	0	0%	0
9	Driving in Riyadh	1	3.85%	14.71	2	14.29%	43.47
10	Uber	1	3.85%	9.17	2	14.29%	4.72
11	Classism and Districts in Riyadh	0	0%	0	3	21.43%	18.98
12	Favourite time of the day	0	0%	0	1	7.14%	8.13
	Total	26	100%		14	100%	

Table 7.5 Context of Adjective Booster *jiddan* by Speakers F11 and M18

	Context	F11		M18	
		N	%	N	%
1	Classism and Districts in Riyadh	0	0%	1	100%
2	E-learning/working online	1	100%	0	0%

7.2.5 Position of Amplifiers

F11 used *marrah* and *jiddan* more frequently in a pre-adjectival position. Only 3.70% (N=1/27) of her amplifiers appeared in a post-adjectival location (Table 7.6 and Table 7.7). M18 on the other hand, used 33.33% (N=5/15) of his amplifiers in a post-adjectival position including *jiddan* while the remaining proportion of *marrah* tokens (66.67%; N=10/15) were positioned pre-adjectivally.

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[128] These frequencies (and all other similar calculations in this chapter) are calculated according to the number of words used in speech within each discussion topic. The calculation includes only the speaker under examination in the interview. The questions of the interviewer were used as a guide to manually categories the interview text into topics.

Table 7.6 Positioning of Adjective Amplifiers for Speakers F11 and M18

	Post-Adjectival		Pre-Adjectival		Total	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
F11	1	3.70%	26	96.30%	27	100%
M18	5	33.33%	10	66.67%	15	100%
Total	6	14.29%	36	85.71%	42	100%

Table 7.7 Positioning of Adjective Amplifiers *marrah* and *jiddan* for Speakers F11 and M18

	Post-Adjectival	Pre-Adjectival	Total
	N	N	N
jiddan	1	1	2
F11	0	1	1
M18	1	0	1
marrah	5	35	40
F11	1	25	26
M18	4	10	14
Total	6	36	42

When questioned about *jiddan* and the difference between *jiddan* and *marrah*, in a follow-up questionnaire conducted after their interviews, F11 indicated that *jiddan* is used by speakers who prefer clear language. F11's opinion aligns with what is often heard from Arabic language speakers who view CA as the correct and clear form of the language, while dialects are considered corrupted forms (Albirini, 2016, pp.13–14, 177). F11 believes that *jiddan* is more *fuṣḥā*, while *marrah* is relatively colloquial. Similarly, M18 views *jiddan* as formal, while *marrah* is informal. M18 considers *jiddan* an excellent word but finds it uncommon in his environment. F11 and M18 both expressed a preference to use *marrah* before the adjective, which, according to F11, makes it clearer for the listener. M18 believes there is no difference between the two positions.

7.3 *jiddan*

7.3.1 Speaker M24 Background

M24 produced 13.70% (N=10/73) of the total tokens of the adjective amplifier *jiddan* in RNDC and exhibited the highest normalised frequency of *jiddan* (Table 7.1; Figure 7.2). M24 is a 43-year-old married male speaker. He was interviewed with M23, with whom he had no previous relationship. His father is a teacher. He has an MBA in business management, which he obtained from the UK. He now works as a project manager at a

government medical institution where there is no gender-segregation, which is typical in the medical sector in Saudi Arabia. Communication between co-workers of both genders in the medical sector is typically higher than in other fields and based on this, we would expect him to have higher access to female-based networks. This gives this participant particularly significant access to female-based social networks. Despite this, we notice that although he used *marrah*, he has a higher preference for *jiddan* (Table 7.8). M24 indicated that he uses CA, ND and English regularly in his professional communications. To some extent, these factors seem to influence his usage of amplifiers, as we observe that he used both *jiddan* and *marrah* in his interview (Table 7.8).

7.3.2 Speaker F7 Background

F7 produced 6.85% (N=5/73) of the total tokens of the adjective amplifier *jiddan* in RNDC and exhibited the highest normalised frequency of *jiddan* among female speakers (Table 7.1; Figure 7.2). F7 is a divorced 57-year-old female. She was recorded in a dyadic interview. She has a BA in English Literature and an MA in Educational Leadership, which she obtained from the United States. She worked as an educational supervisor[129] at the Ministry of Education, but she recently retired. She worked in different locations in Riyadh as part of her job as a supervisor. She also worked before her retirement on the development of several projects in the Ministry, such as the giftedness and creativity program. She currently lives in the eastern region of Riyadh. Her BA in English Literature means that most of her studies were in the English language and she also completed her MA degree in English since it was from the USA. Despite studying in the English language, her high educational qualifications positioned her in an educational environment where CA is the variety used in official communications. In addition to her high education, the nature of her work, which placed her in different locations over the years, makes her a highly mobile individual. All these factors can be seen to inform her usage of both *jiddan* and *marrah* in the data (Table 7.8).

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[129] Educational supervisors work at the ministry of education and supervise schools to make sure they are following the guidelines provided by the Ministry.

7.3.3 *jiddan* in the interviews of M24 and F7: Overview of Proportion and Functions

In the interview of M24, *jiddan* is highly favoured for adjective amplification (83.33%; N=10/12), while F7 showed a more balanced distribution of the amplifiers *jiddan* (41.67%; N=5/12) and *marrah* (58.33%; N=7/12).

Table 7.8 Usage of *jiddan* in the Interviews of M24 and F7

Speaker	Jiddan		marrah			
M24 Interview	**N**	**%**	**N**	**%**	**N**	**%**
M23	0	0.00%	2	100%	2	100%
M24	10	83.33%	2	16.67%	12	100%
Interviewer-2	0	0.00%	2	100%	2	100%
F7 Interview	**N**	**%**	**N**	**%**	**N**	**%**
F7	5	41.67%	7	58.33%	12	100%
Interviewer-1	0	0.00%	4	100%	4	100%

Compared to the functions of *marrah* in the analysis of the two outliers (Table 7.3), we notice that *jiddan* is pragmatically restricted in its functional environments and is not as versatile as *marrah* (Table 7.9). Speaker F7 also employed other forms of amplification (Table 7.10).

Table 7.9 Amplified Elements by *jiddan*: Speakers M24 and F7

	M24		F7	
Function of *jiddan*	**N**	**%**	**N**	**%**
Adjective booster	10	100%	5	100%
Verb booster	0	0%	0	0%
Total	10	100%	5	100%

Table 7.10 Other Adjective Amplifiers used by Speakers F7

	F7	
Amplifier	**N**	**%**
kṯīr 'a lot'	2	50%
tamāman 'completely'	2	50%
Total	4	100%

7.3.4 Context of Usage

7.3.4.1 Speaker F7

As illustrated in Table 7.11[130], speaker F7 produced the highest proportion of adjective intensifiers in discussions of whether we can differentiate between social classes in Riyadh based on districts and regions (N=6; 46.15%). Normalised frequency analysis also shows that amplifiers are frequent in this discussion (Frequency=17.34). We observe that F7 employed four different forms in this topic.

Her discussion was based on her personal experience of working in different regions in Riyadh as part of her career as an educational supervisor and also living in two different regions in Riyadh: the north and the east (Excerpt 2). The speaker seemed enthusiastic in her discussion of this topic and this is evident in her prolonged chat about it and also the repetition of the booster *marrah* (line 03). This repetition or *parallelism* of linguistic elements like amplifiers can be interpreted as a strategy which increases the emphasis and emotional intensity of the speaker by creating a rhythmic effect (See Chapter 4, Section 4.2.3). Therefore, this draws the attention of the listener while foregrounding the content of the discussion.

The distribution of amplifiers in her system does not suggest an obvious restriction of contextual environments for each amplifier. This is supported by her usage of four different amplifiers to upscale adjectives in one topic. The speaker utilised four elements within her system to express her opinion on a serious topic. This utilisation is probably a strategic adjustment to enhance the expressive function of amplifiers and the engagement of the listener. This can be interpreted as a form of *deviation*[131] (see Leech, 2014, pp.56–61), where using different amplifiers would allow the speaker to modulate their speech to express various degrees of intensity and maintain the engagement of listeners while still foregrounding the discussion. Thus, we can look at this as a communicative or stylistic strategy by the speaker to raise the linguistic efficacy in their dialogue.

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[130] Appendix H includes only 3 tokens of the adjective booster *marrah* from F7 while Table 7.11 shows 4 tokens because one amplified English adjective 'busy' was removed from the data set. Yet, this is maintained here for an in-depth analysis of her system.

[131] In poetry, it is defined as a foregrounding strategy where poets intentionally deviate from conventional language to enhance the impact of the language and foreground certain themes (Leech, 2014, pp.56–61).

Table 7.11 Context of Adjective Amplifiers by Speaker F7

Topic	Jiddan			marrah			kṯīr			tamāman			Total		
	N	%	Normalised Frequency per 1000 words	N	%	Normalised Frequency per 1000 words	N	%	Normalised Frequency per 1000 words	N	%	Normalised Frequency per 1000 words	N	%	Normalised Frequency per 1000 words
Classism and Districts in Riyadh	2	15.38%	5.78	1	7.69%	2.89	1	7.69%	2.89	2	15.38%	5.78	6	46.15%	17.34
Daughter Uni admission Story	0	0.00%	0	1	7.69%	6.45	0	0.00%	0	0	0.00%	0	1	7.69%	6.45
Online Shopping	0	0.00%	0	1	7.69%	1.88	1	7.69%	1.88	0	0.00%	0	2	15.38%	3.75
Studying abroad as a mother	1	7.69%	3.22	1	7.69%	3.22	0	0.00%	0	0	0.00%	0	2	15.38%	6.43
Women in KSA	2	15.38%	4.14	0	0.00%	0	0	0.00%	0	0	0.00%	0	2	15.38%	4.14
Total	5	38.46%		4	30.77%		2	15.38%		2	15.38%		13	100%	

Excerpt (2)

F7:

01 al-jānib xallīny ʔagūl lik al-ṯaqāfy *jiddan* muxtalif ṣarāḥah

   The aspect let me tell you the cultural aspect is *very* different honestly

02 ḥattā xallīny ʔakūn ṣarīḥah (.) ḥattā fī jānib al-ttaʕāṯy maʕ al-ddīn (.) muxtalif

   Even let me be honest (.) even within the religious aspect (.) they are different

03 fa ʔanā ʔagūl lik demoġrāfiyyan (.) w-hī muxtalifah *marrah marrah marrah*

04 yaʕnī zayy maṯalan (.) ʕišt fī manṭiqat al-ššarg

   So even I am telling you that demographically (.) and it is *very very very* different like

   for instance (.) I lived in the eastern region

Interviewer:

ʔīh

yeah

F7:

05 šarg al-rriyāḍ (.) zēn (.) w-ʕišt fī šmāl al-rriyāḍ (.) okay

   The eastern region of Riyadh (.) right (.) and I lived in the northern region in Riyadh

   (.) okay

Interviewer:

ʔīh

yes

F7:

06 ʕalā ʔinnhum bidaw al-ššarg yrūḥūn li-al-šmāl alʔān (.) ʔīh bidaw

   They (people in the east) even started moving to the north now (.) yeah they started

Interviewer:

 al-šmāl [laugh] ʔīh

The north [laugh] yeah

F7:

07 [...] fa-kānaw (.) al-nnās ʔlly mawjūdah fīha *kṯīr* multazimīn dīniyyan

   […] they were (.) the people living there were *very* conservative religiously

F7:

08 [...] ʔštaġalt fī al-ddaxl al-maḥdūd 132(.) taxayyalay

   I worked at Al-Dakhl Al-mahdod (.) imagine

Interviewer:

ʔmm

mm

F7:

09 w-knt ʔaḥḍar yōmēn w-ʔaġīb ṯalāṯ ʔyyām [laugh] fā ʕālam muxtalif (.)

10 *tamāman* okay

---

132 Al-Dakhl Al-mahdod is a district in Riyadh 'lit. limited income' located in the western region of Riyadh. Most of the population consists of low-income residents.

And I used to go two days and not go for three days [laugh] so it is a **completely** different world okay

Interviewer:

ʔīh

yeah

F7:

11 [...] baʕdēn ngaḷōny l-al-ʕazīziyyah ʔanty familiar ʕārfah al-rriyāḍ ʔanty

[...] then I was transferred to Al-Aziziyyah[133] are you familiar with Riyadh

Interviewer:

ʔīh ʔīh ʔakīd ʔīh (.) al-ʕazīziyyah maʕrūfah

yeah yeah sure yeah (.) Al-Aziziyyah is well-known

F7:

12 ʔīh ṭayyib baʕdēn ngaḷōny l-al-ʕazīziyyah (.) muxtalifah (.) ṭabaqat al-nnās

13 **jiddan** muxtalifah (.) ʔlly mawjūdah hnāk (.) okay

Yeah ok then I was transferred to Al-Aziziyyah (.) different (.) the social class of people there is **very** different (.) okay

7.3.4.2 Speaker M24

As illustrated in Table 7.12, speaker M24 produced the highest proportion of adjective intensifiers in discussing the efficacy of using Saudi Dialects for marketing (27.27%; N=3; Frequency=9.49). While discussing the usage of SDs in marketing and advertisements, speaker M24 discussed marketing strategies in general and this topic exhibited the second highest normalised frequency, with a frequency of 8.57. He indicated that within his business major, he learned about marketing and spoke about it passionately (Table 7.12, Excerpt 3). Speaker M24 used repetition in a total of four tokens of *jiddan*. Three of these repetitions were utilised in discussion of marketing strategies, while one token was duplicated in his discussion of e-learning, where he also used three tokens of *jiddan* (27.27%).

Except (3)

M24:

01 jamīl **jiddan** ʔnnk tṯaqqf maṭalan fī al-ʔamākn al-ssiyāḥiyyah xṣūṣan al-ʔamākn

02 al-tārīxiyyah (.) jamīl **jiddan** ʔnnk tṯaqqf al-siyyāḥ (.) al-ʔajānb maṭalan b-

03 lahjātk (.) al-kalimāt al-maʕrūfah (.) xṣūṣan kalimāt al-ḍiyāfah zayy yā halā

---

[133] Al-Aziziyyah is a district in the southern region in Riyadh.

04 yā marḥabā ʔglṭū tfaḍḍalaw (.) yaʕnī zayy al-kalimāt hāḏī maṭalan biyūt al-

05 šʕr gṣāyid (.) ḥlū jamīl **jiddan** kiḏā b-al-ʕaks taʕks ṯaqāftk w-tsawwq barḍū

It is ***very*** beautiful that you educate at for example in the tourist attractions especially the historical places (.) it is ***very*** beautiful that you educate foreign tourists (.) for example about the dialects (.) the common words (.) especially welcoming phrases like 'welcome' 'you are most welcome' 'welcome inside' (.) like these words for example verses and poems (.) nice ***very*** beautiful to do this to reflect your culture and also promote it

06 [...] fī tarā mawḍūʕ al-ttaswīq tarā mawḍūʕ jadalī kbīr **jiddan jiddan**

07 **jiddan** (.) xuṣūṣan yaʕnī al-ššarikāt (.) w-al-ʔafrād (.) mn nāḥiyat al-ttaswīq

08 tarā yaʕnī yaʕnī fīh ʔstrātījiyyāt fī al-ttaswīq (.) ʔstrātījiyyāt

09 ḍakiyyah **jiddan jiddan jiddan jiddan** (.) w-mnhā yā ṭwīl al-ʕmr ʕalā sabīl

10 almiṯāl (.) yaʕnī ʔnnk ʔant txally mawḍūʕ al-ttaswīq tabaʕk ʔaw al-fkrah

11 alʔiʕlāniyyah tabaʕk mawḍūʕ jadal bēn al-nnās (.) hāḏy fkrah **jddan**

12 **jiddan** jamīlah

[...] in the area of marketing let me tell you the subject of marketing is a ***very very very*** major controversial topic (.) especially for companies (.) and individuals (.) within marketing let me tell you there are strategies (.) ***very very very very*** intelligent strategies (.) among them for instance (.) that you make your subject of marketing or your marketing idea a controversial topic among people (.) this is a ***very very*** beautiful idea

Table 7.12 Context of Adjective Amplifiers by Speaker M24

	jiddan			*marrah*			Total	
Topic	N	%	Normalised Frequency per 1000 Words	N	%	Normalised Frequency per 1000 Words	N	%
E-learning	3	27.27%	6.57	0	0%	0	3	27.27%
Marketing Strategies	3	27.27%	8.57	0	0%	0	3	27.27%
Religious Subjects in School	1	9.09%	2.67	0	0%	0	1	9.09%
Rising Costs of Living	0	0%	0	1	9.09%	2.45	1	9.09%
Using Saudi Dialects in Ads/Marketing	3	27.27%	9.49	0	0%	0	3	27.27%
Total	10	90.91%		1	9.09%		11	100%

7.3.4.3 Iteration

Jiddan outliers specifically show an unusual tendency to iterate their amplifiers (Table 7.13). More than a third 35% (N=7/20) of their amplifiers are repeated. This means that their contribution consists of a quarter (25%; N=7/28) of the total iterated amplifiers in the whole data set. This substantial proportion is indicative of iteration as an established

feature peculiar to their idiolects. It also highlights the critical role outliers play in linguistic variation.

Table 7.13 Iteration of Amplifiers by All Speakers Compared to Outliers

	All Speakers		*jiddan* Outliers	
	N	%	N	%
Uniterated	281	90.94%	13	65.00%
Iterated	28	9.06%	7	35.00%
Total	309	100%	20	100%

7.3.5 Position of Amplifiers

Overall, as illustrated in Table 7.14, speakers F7 and M24 do not show a preference for a specific position around the adjective. It appears that, in general, *jiddan* shows relative flexibility in terms of its location (Table 7.15). It is used in both positions by both speakers.

Table 7.14 Positioning of Adjective Amplifiers for Speakers F7 and M24

	Post-Adjectival	Pre-Adjectival	Pre and Post-Adjectival	Total
F7	50.00%	50.00%	0.00%	100.00%
M24	54.55%	45.45%	0.00%	100.00%

Table 7.15 Positioning of Adjective Amplifiers for Speakers F7 and M24

	F7		M24	
Amplifier	Post-Adjectival	Pre-Adjectival	Post-Adjectival	Pre-Adjectival
jiddan	2	3	6	4
kṯīr	0	2		
marrah	2	1	0	1
tamāman	2	0		
Total	6	6	6	5

Speakers M24 and F7 have three aspects in common. First, they all have high social mobility. They are considered mobile because they all obtained degrees and also have or have had careers, which makes their social networks socially and geographically diverse. This high level of mobility, however, did not equate with higher usage of the ND

variant *marrah*. Second, the dominant language in their degrees was not CA but English. They both represent a case where higher education is not necessarily equated with higher "functional knowledge" in CA if education is taken as the measure of this knowledge, which allows for higher integration of CA variants in their speech (see Al-Wer, 2013, p. 248). In fact, education gives them greater access to the English language, which is an observation that researchers have noted in Arabic variationist research (e.g., Khattab, 2023). Hence, we should not simply attribute their higher usage of *jiddan* to their higher education. At the same time, both of them hold or have held senior administrative positions in their jobs, which they gained as a result of these high educational qualifications and which typically require consistent use of formal style and CA.

As explained in Chapter 6, Section 6.4.2, CA possibly aligns with authoritative voice like what is observed in the speeches of Gamal Abd Al-Naser (Holes, 1993) and Hosni Mubarak (Bassiouney, 2006). Thus, usage of *jiddan* by these individuals can appeal to their authority, leadership and professionalism in their roles. This factor might have played a significant role in their usage of *jiddan*. Their usage of *jiddan* likely adheres to the norms in their fields and their professional identity and career responsibilities. Hence, we can conceptualise the usage of *jiddan* outliers in terms of *linguistic capital*, which seems to align with the authoritative function and prestige of CA, as it is associated with reputable sectors that traditionally employ it. The concept of linguistic capital refers to the idea that individuals seek to acquire linguistic forms associated with prestige or standard language to gain social advantage (Trudgill, 1974, p.94). The usage of *jiddan* by those outliers possibly grants them a level of prestige associated with the elite and well-educated class in those distinguished disciplines. Hence, viewing the employment of this amplifier through the lens of linguistic capital allows us to interpret how it might be utilised by speakers to assert their positions by managing social hierarchies (Bourdieu, 1991). This is also supported by the usage of *jiddan* by speakers M13 and M19 (see Chapter 6, Section 6.2.2). These speakers, as we previously mentioned, are middle-school graduates who work in the military sector which, in Saudi Arabia, is not often considered prestigious unless the individual holds a high-ranking position. Lower-ranking personnels do not often receive the same level of social status. As noted before, in Chapter 6, Section 6.4.2, in earlier variationist research on phonological variation (Ibrahim, 1986; Abd-El-Jawad, 1987; Al-Wer, 1997), it was

concluded that CA variants are irrelevant to the social scene and those variants must be excluded from the pool of variation. Yet, the findings here suggest a certain value seem to be attached to the CA variant *jiddan.* This underscores the value of conducting more variationist analysis of DPFs to better understand the dynamics of language variation and change in Arabic and its complex connection with sociolinguistic factors.

Three final points to discuss here are related to the age and gender of these speakers and their attitudes towards the amplifiers used. First, it is known that the speech of middle-aged and older speakers contains features of the dialect learned in childhood, slang remnants from their youth and linguistic adjustments made during adulthood (Labov, 2001, p.101; Chambers, 2003, p.203). Thus, the higher usage of *jiddan* by these middle-aged and older speakers and other speakers in the data, can be seen as part of these adjustments made to serve professional purposes in their careers and subsequently became ingrained in their linguistic systems. Therefore, the usage of *jiddan* is influenced by the linguistic marketplace of these speakers. This may also explain why younger speakers are not using *jiddan* at the same high frequency, as their life experiences are still not as mature as those of the older age groups. Such features would require time to become ingrained in their systems. Hence, they likely do not yet have access to this linguistic marketplace.

Second, as observed in Table 7.11 above, speaker F7 represents an interesting profile. Speaker F7 steps outside the conventional female-speaker practice, particularly through her higher usage of *jiddan* compared to other female speakers. In addition, while other older female speakers used *marrah* in RNDC, what sets her apart from older female speakers is combining both *marrah* and *jiddan* in her system (see Appendix H). Her engagement in the educational and professional fields which are often dominated by male speakers likely shaped her high linguistic adaptability and mobility. This linguistic flexibility probably gave her access to the form *jiddan* which is more frequently used among male speakers (in those professional spheres), while also adhering to the feminine linguistic norm which tends to be charecterised by features like *marrah*. Hence, the amplification behaviour of speaker F7 might reflect navigating both the male and female-dominated linguistic markets.

In addition, attitudes and orientations towards CA and the booster *marrah* could have affected their usage. Speaker M24, on the other hand, did not see any difference between *marrah* and *jiddan* and indicated that they are used in the same context.

Speaker F7, on the other hand, indicated that she used *jiddan* because she likes to express herself in a tangible manner. She justified her higher usage of *jiddan* compared to *marrah* as an influence of globalisation, noting that *jiddan* is understood by everyone. She postulates that *marrah* is colloquial and is used by the public.

Another interesting case from RNDC, which I present here as an example that highlights the potential relevance of attitudes to the patterns observed in the data, is speaker M15. The booster *jiddan* constitutes 76.19% (N=16/21) of the amplification system of speaker M15. This speaker exhibited the third highest frequency after speakers M24 and M12. He also used five other tokens of amplifiers that are shared with CA (23.81%) which are *lil-ġāyah* 'extremely', *miyah-bil-miyah* '100%' and *tamāman* 'completely'. Speaker M15 said that *jiddan* is part of his style of expression and a way to concentrate or focus on the adjective. He expressed his disfavour towards *marrah* and indicated that it is a colloquial expression (Excerpt 4). He believes that "there is a large difference between the two (i.e., *marrah* and *jiddan*)" and, according to him, "using the word *jiddan* reflects the high cultural level of the individual." He believes that "it is more sophisticated and a word with a CA meaning that describes the word in its accurate form."

Excerpt (4)

M15:

fīh farg kbīr bēn al-ṯntēn ʔaʕtaqid ʔn ʔstixdām kalimat *jiddan* tʕabbr ʕan ṯaqāfat al-šaxṣ w-ʔarqā w-kalimah lahā maʕnā ʕarabī faṣīḥ yaṣifhā b-šaklahā al-ṣaḥīḥ

Finally, what was interpreted in Chapter 6 as a gender-related preference towards using *jiddan* is unpacked in this chapter. In Chapter 6, we tentatively attribute this higher usage of *jiddan* by male speakers to its perceived objectivity and impersonal nature, as suggested by the analysis of the aggregate data, alongside the functions of CA and our understanding of gender roles and culture in Saudi Arabia. Education was interpreted as a potential contributor to the higher usage of *jiddan* due to greater exposure to CA in education. This chapter, however, reveals further links that are crucial for understanding the variation of *jiddan*, such as the professional status of individuals, the linguistic capital associated with CA, perceptions and attitudes and conformity to societal expectations. At the same time, as stipulated in Chapter 6, Section 6.4.3, other gendered norms might

be linked to this distribution. The professional roles that provide access to these specific CA features have often been largely inaccessible or limited for older females in the Saudi community. Hence, this area, as noted in Chapter 6, should be further explored in future research of Arabic DPFs where there is alternation between local and CA forms.

7.4 Conclusion

Outliers showed usage patterns of amplifiers which reflect their life stages, personal experiences and their social roles. Our understanding of *marrah* and *jiddan* variational patterns is enhanced by this stylistic micro-level investigation. The social attitudes of outliers towards the amplifiers *marrah* and *jiddan* remain an intriguing area that needs unpacking in future research. I further explore part of these attitudes and stereotypes in association with *marrah* in the following chapter.

Chapter 8 Perceptual Analysis of *marrah* in X

8.1 Introduction

In this final chapter, I attempt to bridge the gap between traditional variationist sociolinguistic analysis and socio-pragmatic and stylistic approaches by conducting a case study of the enregisterment of the booster *marrah* in digital discourse. This is achieved by investigating what male users of X perceive as features of the feminine speech style, including the amplifier *marrah*, in mockery posts. By analysing these posts, I explore how these linguistic forms reflect broader social values and stereotypes. Thus, this chapter builds on patterns and trends that emerged from Chapter 6 and the close-up analysis of outliers in Chapter 7.

Researchers have identified three steps of indexicality for linguistic features, which are illustrated in Table 8.1 (Johnstone et al., 2006). Indexicality occurs when a language item has specific associations in the mind of the hearer (Holmes, 2013, p.247). Hall-Lew et al. (2021, p.5) define it as "a process of association, where a linguistic form points to some dimension of its conventional context of use." Johnstone et al. (2006), for instance, in their examination of the sociolinguistic evolution of the *Pittsburghese* dialect (i.e., the dialect associated with Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania), explain how this process took place. There are many linguistic features on different linguistic levels that became associated with Pittsburghese, such as the monophthongisation of the diphthong /aw/, the fronting of /o/, the use of the second-person plural pronoun *yinz* 'you all' and the use of the general extender *n'at* 'and that'. In first-order indexicality, outsiders could notice that there are certain features that identify those from southwestern Pennsylvania, especially Pittsburgh and link those features also to the working class and males. When people became aware of the distribution of these features, they started using this knowledge to identify the identity of speakers and also to manage their usage of those features according to their desired identity. For example, they would unconsciously use fewer features to sound more educated and cosmopolitan and more if they wanted to sound like Pittsburghers. In third-order indexicality, speakers use these features, which became enregistered, in a deliberate and conscious way; this role is played not only by individuals but also by various platforms such as the media and online communities. In this chapter, I will attempt to

look at *marrah* and its indexical values using a different source of data, specifically on the social media platform X (formerly Twitter).

<table>
<caption>Table 8.1 The Three Steps of Indexicality for Linguistic Features (Johnstone et al. 2006)</caption>
<tr><td>First-order Indexicality</td><td>- Starts when speakers notice that a linguistic feature is linked to a social category.</td></tr>
<tr><td>Second-order Indexicality</td><td>- Speakers start to implement these associations for social purposes to create a social identity for instance or avoid one.</td></tr>
<tr><td>Third-order Indexicality</td><td>- Linguistic features acquire explicit social meaning.
- Gaining access to metalinguistic knowledge about those features through people's engagement in a "reflexive activity" which is the usage of communication signs to describe other communicative signs (Agha, 2007, pp.16–17) or "talk about talk" (Johnstone et al., 2006, p.80)
- Linguistic markers are used when referring to certain social groups and are included in cartoons or performances of those identities (Johnstone et al., 2006, p.80).
- Linguistic markers become enregistered as stereotypes[134].
- Enregisterment refers to the process of creating a link in the mind of people between a specific linguistic style and a social category or a persona (Agha, 2003).</td></tr>
</table>

If we generalise the pattern observed in Chapter 6, which is the higher frequency of the booster *marrah* by female speakers, to other speakers of ND and perhaps other SDs, this suggests a high chance that non-linguists have noticed this pattern. In other words, it is possible that people are aware of an association between *marrah* and females, motivated by its context and the higher usage of this variable by female speakers compared to male speakers (i.e., first-order indexicality). This is likely, given that lexical variables are more noticeable than other types of variables, such as phonological variables (Dines, 1980, p.16). This implies that awareness of this first-order indexicality by ND male speakers may be a factor that inhibited them from using *marrah*, leading to the significant difference in usage of this amplifier in the data (i.e., second-order indexicality). Speakers might assume that using a feature stereotypically associated with females could affect how they are perceived by others and, thus, impact their gender identity as men (see Agha, 2007, p. 240).

This is especially critical in a religiously conservative environment like Saudi Arabia. Society in the Islamic world generally and in Saudi Arabia specifically, is predominantly governed by Islamic values and beliefs. Islamic texts are explicit in maintaining a distinct categorisation of genders, prohibiting the imitation of the

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[134] Stereotypes are the positive or negative magnified beliefs held toward certain social categories (Allport, 1979, p.187).

opposite gender. One Hadith[135] transmitted from Prophet Mohammed (peace be upon him) states: "God has cursed men who imitate women and women who imitate men"[136] (Ibn Hajar, 2001, p.345). In the Islamic context, cursing is considered a punishment from God for those who commit major sins. Muslim scholars, in their explanations of this Hadith, postulate that this includes clothes, speech, words and body movements (Ibn Hajar, 2001, p.345; Anon, n.d.). This includes those who consciously and intentionally adopt behaviours and clothing of the opposite gender (Ibn Hajar, 2001, p.345). Not only might religion influence ND speakers, but also the culture, which affects the social behaviours of individuals. Traditionally, many values have been associated with masculinity by the Arabs. In Arabian culture, men are idealised for possessing qualities like power, authority, bravery, honesty, honour, generosity and hospitality (Mallah, 2011, pp.342, 369–370, 383, 392). All these qualities align with the traditional masculine role of men in Arabian cultures. People in the Arab world operate collectively, meaning that they prioritise loyalty to their extended family and larger social relations, compared to other communities where individualism is more prevalent (Feghali, 1997, p.352). This means that if *marrah* is associated with a feminine style, male speakers would likely avoid it not only on religious grounds but also on social grounds, which discourage the adoption of behaviours that contradict traditional masculine traits due to the shame that would be projected onto them. Thus, metalinguistic knowledge is considered vital to understanding the sociolinguistic variation of *marrah*, as explained above. Johnstone et al. (2006, p. 99) indicate that:

> (...) sociolinguists interested in understanding patterns of variation and change in the speech community need to pay attention not just to people's talk but to the metapragmatic activities in which they create and circulate ideas about how they talk.

Now, to know whether a language feature is indexed or not requires attitudinal confirmation and eliciting attitudes is a complex process (Holmes, 2013, p. 421). Overt or explicit perceptions can be elicited by asking people directly about their feelings towards a certain language feature via interviews or questionnaires and whether or not this feature is linked to a certain social group, as was elicited from outliers in Chapter 7. This method is different from the matched-guise method originally used by Lambert (1967) to elicit unconscious or implicit attitudes towards specific language forms (e.g.,

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[135] Bukhari transmitted this Hadith.

[136] Translation of this hadith is based on Mishkat al-Masabih 4429 - Clothing - كتاب اللباس - Sunnah.com - Sayings and Teachings of Prophet Muhammad (صلى الله عليه و سلم) (Accessed, January 17, 2024).

Labov, 1966; Labov et al., 2011). Asking explicitly about linguistic features can be embarrassing, especially if it is linked to speakers' masculinity or femininity (Holmes, 2013, p.82; Lakoff, 1975). This often leads respondents to provide conservative responses even if they do not hold these beliefs themselves, which is a recycling of familiar ideologies and beliefs about the language (Coupland, 2007, p.97). Therefore, the more socially loaded a form is, the more distorted and skewed the collected data may be (Holmes, 2013, p.82). Eliciting reflexive data via direct intervention in the previous methods of eliciting overt and covert attitudes requires serious efforts to reduce the influence of such intervention by the researcher on the findings (Agha, 2007, p.153). Another possible way of spotting stereotypes and ideologies that does not involve intervention by the analyst is by using public discourse such as TV, newspapers, and social media, since people often tend to openly express their opinions (Holmes, 2013, p.421; Dragojevic et al., 2021). This method has some advantages, like the accessibility of the data and its usefulness in discovering public opinion about linguistic features that are undergoing change in progress, which appears to be the case with *marrah* (Holmes, 2013, p.421). Furthermore, the effect of the researcher's intervention is eliminated, since these expressions are produced without interference by the researcher. For this reason, I have chosen to focus on public reflexive behaviours on social media, specifically those posted on X (formerly Twitter).

Social media platforms are popular among Saudi citizens, with X being particularly influential in Saudi Arabia. The number of X users in Saudi Arabia in early 2023 was 15.50 million[137]. About 40% of those users are female and 60% are male. It has become an official space for ministries, members of the royal family and high-profile officials in the country (Winder, 2014). This platform is used among Saudis for exchanging ideas and opinions on subjects related to politics, society, religion, media, sports, entertainment and many other areas of interest in the country (Noman et al., 2015). For Saudis, X serves as a virtual space to engage in discussions and debates (Alkarni, 2018; Almutairi, 2021; Noman et al., 2015; Sreberny, 2015; Westall and McDowall, 2016) in a manner comparable to a court (Alliefan, 2022) or a parliament (Winder, 2014). Thus, for Saudi citizens (as elsewhere in the world), X is not just an online space for posting personal updates (Almutairi, 2021). Thus, it serves as a prominent

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[137] https://datareportal.com/reports/digital-2023-saudi-arabia (Accessed, January 26,2024).

platform for finding a plethora of ideas and perspectives on many topics and issues, including opinions about language use and linguistic variables. Therefore, data in the current study will be collected from X.[138]

The Saudi community is also known for its continuous engagement in humorous interactions, especially in the cyber community, where there is a high level of freedom and anonymity. These engagements are referred to as *ṭagṭagah*[139] 'roasting'. A similar phenomenon, known as 'flaming'[140], emerged in the West in the 1980s (e.g., Dery, 1994; Hardaker, 2017). This form of communication typically involves responding to a form of provocation on online platforms using language that is expletive-laden, profane and sarcastic (Hardaker, 2017). These interactions often escalate into a heated debate (Hardaker, 2017). Several newspaper articles have discussed the phenomenon of *ṭagṭagah*, which is practiced widely in Saudi society. Al-Shammari (2016), for example, wrote[141]:

> The Saudis use the word 'ṭagṭagah' (roasting, ridicule - lit. crackling) to refer to satire and mockery of others, whether individuals or organisations, through written sentences, audio recordings, or static and animated images. It resonates widely with members of society.

Al-muneef (2015) defines *ṭagṭagah* as an act usually done against kind and naive people:

> It is an exclusively Saudi term that means 'mockery and ridicule' of others through laughter and joking, whether they are individuals or groups. It is typically practised by those who claim to be 'astute, intelligent and witty' in front of those they consider kind and naïve. The roasting (lit. crackling) or to 'roast' someone else means they exploit the other's kindness and simplicity to make them a 'laughingstock' in front of everyone, showcasing their 'roasting' abilities to others.

Muharrag (2020) postulates that Saudis have distinguished skills in ridiculing and enjoy engaging in dark humour, especially on social media where there is "a detachment

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[138] It is worth noting that I was aware of the posts that comprise the X dataset here before deciding to use them for the current investigation (i.e., I did not *look for* this post and its responses, but rather I was made aware of it and then identified its relevance).

[139] This word in CA can be considered an onomatopoeia, meaning the sound of stones falling on each other and the sound of a horse's hooves on hard ground (Ibn Mandhour, 1981, p.2684).

[140] Trolling is another concept in the literature, but it is slightly different from flaming. The main difference is the intent, as trolling is the strategic attempt to provoke, disrupt and antagonise others, typically for amusement and entertainment rather than as a reactive response (Hardaker, 2017).

[141] These are translations of Al-Shammari (2016), Al-muneef (2015) and Muharrag (2020), which are written in Arabic.

from the offline self," enhanced by the ability to mask one's identity (Bullingham and Vasconcelos, 2013):

> It seems that Saudis are highly adept at making sarcastic comments in their private and intimate gatherings with friends. However, they tend to be reserved in formal settings. They have found in new social media platforms a space of freedom to exchange all kinds of things, turning it into an outlet where they engage in their dark humour and light-heartedness (Muharrag, 2020).

This engagement in dark humour and mockery makes X data an effective source for eliciting authentic insights into linguistic attitudes without facing the challenges typically encountered in the direct elicitation methods noted above.

The current study is a small-scale case study aimed at examining the perceptions of Saudi male users of the amplifier *marrah*. Saudis generally voice their opinions about several aspects on X, which is why the data here is elicited from this platform. It is by no means representative of all attitudes. At the same time, it is an attempt to utilise metalinguistic data to dismantle the complex ideological, social and linguistic factors underlying the variational pattern of *marrah*, which, as we have seen in the previous chapters, constitutes a principal component in the adjective intensification system in ND.

8.2 Research Questions

The current chapter aims to answer the following questions:

1. Is *marrah* perceived as a female marker by male users of X?
2. Is it stigmatised by male users in X? If so:
   a. How is this stigma conveyed?
   b. What are other linguistic features that have a similar sociolinguistic profile to *marrah*? And how do they contribute to the perception and potential stigmatisation of *marrah*?

In the following sections, I will first give some background about the source of the data used in the current study and the types of posts collected and the themes in them. Giving this background before the data collection process and analysis is essential for setting the context before discussing the practical aspect of handling data. After that, I specify how these posts are collected and categorised and the type of data that will be further analysed. I will then present the analysis of that data and within this analysis I highlight

several linguistic features in these posts. This includes the usage of *marrah* in these posts to index femininity.

8.3 Data Source: Replies to a Post by a Saudi Author

The data in this study is extracted from X. The data was collected from responses to a viral post by a Saudi man who criticised the diffusion of feminine, gentle styles of writing and expression into men's writing styles to the extent that one cannot differentiate between genders based on writing styles:

> *maʕ kaṯrat al-tawāṣul bayna al-jinsayn fī wasāʔil al-tawāṣul tasarrabat kaṯīr min al-ʔsālīb al-ʔunṯawiyyah al-raqīqah fī al-kitābah wa-al-taʕbīr ʔilā baʕḍ al-rijāl, ḥattā ṣirnā lā nufarriq bayna ʔsālībihim wa-ʔsālīb al-ʔināṯ, wa-hāḏā mimmā yuʕābu bihi al-rajul, wa-huwa min al-ʔašyāʔ allātī lā tušraḥ bal takfī fīhā al-ʔišārah, al-muhimm maʕšar al-ḏukūr: ʔistrajlū šwayy!*

> With the increasing interaction between the genders in social media, many of the feminine and gentle styles of writing and expressions have seeped into the writing of some men to the extent that we could hardly differentiate between their styles and the styles of females and this is something that disgraces men and this is one of those things that shouldn't be explained but rather hinted at. Most importantly, O males: toughen up a bit![142]

The author of this post is an assistant professor at a Saudi University who majors in Islamic studies and as of the time of writing (October 2024) has 92.7k followers. The post statistics on October 29th, 2024 are: 1.5k reposts, 3.1k likes and 378 bookmarks. The total number of replies to this post is 283, including replies by the author himself.

8.4 Data Collection

I collected the replies manually from X. This was done by copying the posts into an Excel sheet. I then categorised the posts into three types (Table 8.2). Posts by male users were collected, while those by female users were excluded, using the username and profile photo as a guide[143]. While replies by female users were excluded from the main data

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[142] This translation, and all other translations of posts here, are my own.

[143] The username or photo may not reflect the correct gender of the user which is a limitation in using this type of available data on social media platforms unless we are using data from well-known verified users.

where I analyse the linguistic features in these replies, in the discussion (Section 8.7), I incorporated three replies by female speakers to reflect on the understanding of the audience regarding the stylisation made in the male users' posts and how these performances utilise linguistic cues that seem to be known to both genders. Focusing on the replies by male users only is motivated by the broad goal of this chapter, which is to uncover how male users interact with or handle gendered linguistic norms, especially in relation to the employment of the booster *marrah*, which, as observed in Chapter 6, was used more frequently by female speakers and less frequently by male speakers. Thus, building on those earlier patterns, I anticipated in Chapter 6 that one of the influencing factors behind the observed patterns could be related to the attitudes of male speakers towards *marrah*. Therefore, whilst the perspectives of female users are important, focusing on how the replies of male users, which contain their reactions and present their awareness level to gendered linguistic norms, is deemed vital for focus of the current study generally and especially the current chapter. In addition, irrelevant posts, like ads or other unrelated posts, were also disregarded. I only focused on the main replies to the post that directly responded to the original post, while replies to replies were disregarded. Whilst replies to replies could include interesting views, I exclusively collected the main replies because they were directly targeted at the issue raised by the post, which is the unfavourable increased assimilation between masculine writing styles and feminine writing styles. Studying replies to replies would be better suited for a study with a broader scope, unlike the limited scope of the current chapter.

The total number of replies in the dataset, after applying the previous filters, is 121. All the posts are written in Arabic. Although dialect identification based on writing is complex, it seems, based on reading these replies, that most of them are written by SD speakers. However, no effort has been made to determine if they are all speakers of Saudi dialects[144].

Table 8.2 Categories of Replies to the Post by the Saudi User

	Reply Category	N	%
1	Comment only	72	59.50%
2	Comment identifying feminine linguistic elements	15	12.40%
3	Demonstration of feminine linguistic style	34	28.10%
	Total	121	100%

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[144] There may be implications for not following a strict identification of dialects. For example, there may be cross-dialectal variation among Arabic speakers in what they index as feminine linguistic features. Therefore, we should be careful in generalising the findings in the current study to the wider Saudi community. Further data is required to confirm the current observations.

The collected responses give feedback on the initial post by the professor. The replies elaborate on specific language features that could be linked with a feminine speech style, including *marrah* alongside other features. The linguistic features considered part of the perceived feminine style are either used in imitations or commented on by users. Posts containing comments and opinions that do not address language or imitate it are only considered to understand the context but are not included in the final dataset. Example 1a, for instance, depicts a reply where the author humorously comments on the decreasing number of masculine men. Such posts are not added to the final dataset. Posts considered here are those like example 1b, which includes a comment and explicit identification of linguistic elements, and 1c, which is a stylised post projecting a feminine persona.

1)

a. farīgnā waḷḷah gaḷḷ marrah madrī nkamml al-dawrī wallā ninsḥb ya-ʕyāl
   I swear to God our team is really shrinking o'boys I do not know if we will continue the league or withdraw
b. bamūt wš daxxal al-jumlah al-sābiqah balaġat ʔaʕlā marāḥil al-narfazah ʔiḏā jaʔat mn rajul
   I'm gonna die that's irrelevant. the previous sentence gives the highest levels of agitation if it comes from a man
c. ḏā šfīh zaʕlān yā dktūr ʔaḥss ḥarfiyyan mā ḥabbēt
   why is this man angry hey doctor I feel that I literally do not like

As explained previously, X provides a platform where people can express their thoughts and opinions to a broad audience. These expressions may resonate with the audience creating "ambient affiliations" with them (Zappavigna, 2011). This means users on X may have ambient affiliation not through direct interaction but due to shared values and viewpoints (Zappavigna, 2011). The general atmosphere on Saudi X is a religious one (Noman et al., 2015; Al-ghathami, 2016). Thus, it seems that the envisaged audience for this post shares values with the author. Although users in digital spaces face the challenge of invisibility and diversity of their audience, they often overcome this challenge by tailoring their posts to an imagined audience that they mentally conceptualise and to whom they target their communication (Litt, 2012; Litt and Hargittai, 2016). The post strongly aligns with Islamic teachings and the author appears to base it on this perspective, creating affiliation with a like-minded audience. In similar online spaces, people often have differing personal perspective on how to write their

posts and appeal to the audience on X (Marwick and Boyd, 2011). Users with large number of followers, like the author of the post above, are usually strategic in how they tailor their posts (Marwick and Boyd, 2011). They view their followers as a fan-base and employ "micro-celebrity" strategies to carefully craft their posts to brand themselves or to attract the attention of the audience (Marwick and Boyd, 2011, p.8). The linguistic composition of the posts may therefore be a strategic step by the author to attract attention and increase the visibility with his post. The author concludes his post by saying *ʔstarjlū šwayy!* 'toughen up a bit!/ lit. be a little more masculine or man up'. The verb *ʔstarjlū* is derived from the word *rajul* 'man'. This could imply that readers are not masculine enough or lack masculine traits which might be disturbing for an audience with similar conceptualisation of masculinity. Yet, the professor does not propose or assume that specific features are feminine and should be avoided by men. This makes the responses that reply in a stylised manner a valuable resource for analysis.

An imagined audience in X may not represent the actual audience who reads and interact with the post (Marwick and Boyd, 2011; Litt, 2012). When writing posts, the audience is not precisely known as the platform is public. Anyone can read the post and interact with it in several ways. Although followers of one's account can give an estimate of the size of the audience, in reality, it is not precise (Marwick and Boyd, 2011). Posts can be reposted, which introduces the original post to a new audience or even quoted, allowing the transmitter to add their comment on the post. Posts may also be reproduced in various media platforms (Marwick and Boyd, 2011). This post was reproduced in other social media platforms like Snapchat, WhatsApp and TikTok[145]. Despite this reproduction, I only focus on the replies to the original post on X because they capture the initial and direct engagement with the post. The users in these posts are replying directly to the author of the post and have access to his profile on X. Looking at the repost on other platforms would entail changing the method of engagement and interaction and perhaps a change in the social profile of users such as their ages depending on the platform. Older speakers, for instance, might have higher access to WhatsApp compared to TikTok. It would be informative though to explore the replies on other social media platforms because of the different demographics they offer.

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[145] I personally read this post in these platforms.

Two types of replies to this post are observed. The first kind of replies to this post explicitly state their point of view. The majority of posts appear to show agreement with the proposition of the author. Replies that agree with the author have either expressed their agreement briefly or added other aspects where men nowadays are imitating the style of women. For example, a few replies mention how men are not only adopting the tenderness of women's speech style but are even extending this imitation to other aspects that they consider part of women's style, such as wearing their clothes, following a skincare routine and doing laser treatments (example 2a). Among those posts of agreement are posts which point to specific linguistic features as feminine features (examples 2b and 2c). These are beneficial to the current study as these men engage in conscious stereotyping of what they believe to be feminine linguistic styles. The features they highlight influence the enregisterment of those features as constituents of the feminine style (Johnstone et al., 2006). Therefore, I will consider the features referred to in those posts in my analysis. Hence, my focus will not only be directed towards *marrah* but also towards the linguistic features that men use in these posts because they invoke what men perceive as a feminine persona. I aim to establish if *marrah* is positioned as being part of this feminine speech style and, if so, how prominently it sits within it.

2)

a. *Yā dktūr, lētah waggafat ʕala al-harj al-māyiʕ min al-šabāb, lākin maʕ al-ʔasaf wṣalat ʔilā ʔinnhum ʔaxaḏū rabṭāt šaʕar al-ḥarīm, w-swārāthum, w-galāyidhum, w-ḥalaghum, w-lbsōhā ʔaġlab šabāb hāl-wagt, bāgī bas al-zamām yalbsūn, w-lā tansā al-šanṭah hal-yōmēn mā ngūl ʔillā aḷḷah yrddhum raddan jamīlā. waffaqkum aḷḷah*

   O doctor I wish it is only the tender speech from guys but unfortunately most guys now wear women's hair ties, bracelets, necklaces, earrings they only have nose studs left to wear and don't forget the bags these days. We can only say may they return to God may God grant you success.

b. *w-min miṯil hal-kalimāt al-māyiʕah al-ʔunṯawiyyah (taxayyalaw) (ṣirt ʔaḥbb) (ḥarfiyyan) (yifūz) (ʔaḥiss ḥabbēt) ṭaġat hāḏihi al-kalimāt ʕ akṯar mašāhīr al-falas ʔistrajlū jʕalkum lil-māḥī.*

   And among those feminine tender words *(imagine)*(I started to *love*) (*literally*) (*wins*) (I *feel* that I *loved*). These words diffused among those damn influencers, toughen up may you be wiped out.

c. *ʔattafiq jiddan maʕ d. ʕabdaḷḷāh[146] liʔann al-qāriʔ ytaxayyal šakil al-kātib taxayyal rajul yaktib (ḥabbēt) wallā ystaxdim 😣 wallā ʔalwān qulūb mtġayyirah waḷḷah laysa naqṣān fī al-ṭarīqah al-ʔunṯawiyyah bass mā tanfaʕ farīgnā.*

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[146] This is not the real name of the author.

I completely agree with Dr.Abdullah because the reader imagines the author. Imagine a man using (expressions like *'loved*,' or uses 🥺, and coloured heart emojis). It's not a deficiency in the feminine style, but it doesn't suit our team.

Several responses even attempted to find reasons behind this behaviour, such as fathers' negligence of their sons, distance from men's gatherings, studying with females, and increased communication with females via social media platforms. Several others gave a solution to this phenomenon which is compulsory military service for all boys after high school (example 3).

3) *ʔanā mimman yuʔayyidūn al-tajnīd al-ʔijbārī limuddat sanah baʕd al-ṯanawī minhā yistrajil al-šāb yitʕallam al-jiddiyyah w-al-difāʕ ʕan al-waṭan ʔin ʔistalzam al-ʔamr.*

I am among the supporters of compulsory military service for a year after high school this will toughen up young men, teach them seriousness and defending the country if necessary.

A few replies expressed their disagreement with the author. For instance, one reply dismissed what the author said by stating, "you like to chat, what he said is nonsense" (i.e., undermining the speaker's credibility). Another user considered this offensive to women (example 4a). Another speaker acknowledged that he uses words that he likes regardless of their gender association and viewed their perceived tenderness as a positive and favoured feature (example 4b).

4)

a. *ʔaxī mā hāḏā al-taʕālī, hal nasit ʔanna al-marʔah ʔinsān ʔayna tajidu al-naqṣa ʕind al-marʔah allaḏī tunabbihu al-rijāl likay lā yaqāʕa fīh?*

Brother, what is this arrogance? Have you forgotten that women are human beings? Where do you find a deficiency in women that men need to be warned about to avoid?

b. *wiš al-māniʕ ʔaw al-ʕēb? al-ʔalfāḏ w-al-muṣṭalaḥāt w-muʕṭayāt al-ḥayāh waḥdah bēn al-jinsēn, yaʕnī lā ʔarā ḍayr bi-ḏālik ṭālama ʔnnah mā yʔaṭṭir ʕalā (al-taṣarrufāt w-ṭabīʕat al-takwīn), yaʕnī šayy ʕajabnī, wiš ʔatkallam b-ʔslūb ʔabū lahab? al-riqqah mā xālaṭat šayy ʔillā zān w-mā nuziʕat min šayy ʔillā šān, ((mā ḥabbēt taġrīdtik)) 😂😂*

What's the problem or issue? words, terms and life events are shared between genders. I don't see any harm in that as long as it doesn't affect (behaviours and the nature of composition). I mean, if I like something, which style do you want me to adopt? That of Abu Lahab[147]? When gentleness is mixed with anything, it becomes better and when it is taken from anything it becomes worse. ((I didn't *like* your tweet)) 😂😂

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[147] Abu Lahab is the uncle of Prophet Mohammed who opposed the message of Islam. He is known to be hard-hearted and harsh.

A few replies had a neutral response. For example, one author commented on the nature of communicating online via social media. The author believes that written language is very sensitive, which may lead to misunderstandings between interlocutors[148] (example 5a). Another user had a philosophical point of view and quoted a text from a book written by the Syrian professor Bakkar (2012, p. 147) (example 5b).

5)

a. *luġat al-kitābah fī wasāʔil al-tawāṣul ḥassāsah jiddan w-ʔaḥyānan al-mutalaqqī yafhamik bi-šakl xāṭiʔ wa-yusīʔ al-ḏann.. lammā titkallam maʕ al-šaxṣ wajhan li-wajh ʔafḍal min al-murāsalāt allī qad tubayyin wijhat naḏar ʔaw fikrah xaṭaʔ.. baʕḍ al-nās titfājaʔ ʔinnah yazʕal min kalāmik w-yfassirhā b-mzājh.. fa-lihāḏā ʔaʕtaqid ʔanna al-baʕḍ ʔaṣbaḥ ḥarīṣ fī al-kitābah w-hādiʔ f-lā tʕtabrōnhā*

   The language used in online communication is extremely sensitive and sometimes the recipient may misunderstand you or assume the wrong intentions. Speaking face-to-face with someone is better than written messages that may convey a different perspective or idea incorrectly. Sometimes you are surprised that others can get upset by your words and interpret them based on their mood. That's why I believe that some have become cautious and calm in their writing, so don't consider it (in a wrong way).

b. *al-taḥaḍḍur yaksū al-ḥayāh ḥullah ʔunṯawiyyah (...) wa-min al-mulāḥaḏ ʔanna al-nās kullamā maḍaw fī ṭarīq al-taḥaḍḍur, wa-kullamā tamakkanū fī al-madanīyyah ʔakṯar janaḥū naḥwa al-maʕānī al-ʔunṯawiyyah, ʔay ʔinnahu yuhayminu ʕalā ʔaxlāqihim wa-sulūkiyyātihim wa-ʕalāqātihim mā yuʕaddu min xaṣāʔiṣ al-marʔah wa-ʔihtimāmātihā, ḥattā ʔinnahu layaṣiḥḥu lanā ʔan naqūl: ʔinna rūḥ al-ḥaḍārah ʔunṯā, wa-laka ʔan taqūl bināʔan ʕalā hāḏā: ʔinna rūḥ al-badāwah wa-al-ḥayāh al-rīfiyyah ḏakar.*

   Urbanisation attires life with a feminine garment (...) It is noticeable that as people progress on the path of civilization and advance in urbanisation, they tend to lean more towards feminine qualities. This means characteristics traditionally associated with women dominate over their ethics, behaviours and relationships to the extent that it is valid for us to say: the spirit of civilisation is feminine and based on this, you could argue: the spirit of nomadic and rural life is masculine.

Based on the replies, what appears to be the reason behind the noticeable agreement with the proposition of the post and the negative comments about the feminine style overall is its alignment with the ethics of the Arabian and Islamic culture which prohibits and discourages effeminate behaviour. This is probably the same reason that triggered a self-identified homosexual Saudi social media influencer to respond to the post

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[148] This view is backed up by sociolinguistic research in digital communication (see Walther, 1992; Dery, 1994; Walther and D'Addario, 2001).

(example 6a). In example (4b) above, even though the speaker sees no harm in using feminine linguistic features, he aligns with the religious position by saying *"ṭālamā ʔnnh mā yʔaṯṯr ʕalā al-taṣarrufāt w-ṭabīʕat al-takwīn"* 'as long as it doesn't affect behaviour and the inherent nature'. Another comment that supports this argument is example (6b). Example 6b agrees with the post by applying the same concept to women. This suggests that these replies are not criticising the feminine style per se but the adoption of these linguistic styles by men. It could express that language style should be distinctive in a binary way between men and women, presumably sustaining the beliefs about male and female identity and social roles in Saudi Arabia (i.e, that language is a part of that gendered behaviour).

6)

a. *ymmah mnnik* 😫😫😫😫 *ʔaḥiss lā m nibī*
   oh how scary 😫😫😫😫I feel like we don't want

b. *ʔattafiq w-ʔḍīf maʕ kaṯrat al-tawāṣul bayna al-jinsayn fī wasāʔil al-tawāṣul tasarrabat kaṯīr min al-ʔsālīb al-rijāliyyah al-xašnah fī al-kitābah wa-al-taʕbīr ʔilā baʕḍ al-nisāʔ, ḥattā ṣirnā lā nakād nufarriq bayna ʔsālībihim wa-ʔsālīb al-rijāl, wa-hāḏā mimmā tuʕābu bihi al-marʔah, al-muhimm maʕšar al-nisāʔ:*
   tmassakaw b-ʔunūṯatkum

   I agree and I add: With the increasing interaction between the genders in social media, many of the rough masculine styles of writing and expressions have seeped into the writing of some women to the extent that we could hardly differentiate between their styles and the styles of men, and this is something that disgraces women, Most importantly, O' women: hold on to your femininity.

As presented in the previous replies, the position of these users is expressed in a relatively straightforward manner. The second type of replies responded to the main post by ventriloquising or voicing a female character (example 1b, 1c and 6a). Females in these posts are ridiculed by viewing them as extremely emotional and mentally unstable. Table 8.3 presents the overall themes portrayed by those authors. These contexts may not seem to be stigmatising per se, but a comedic effect is created when we visualise the significant contrast between the persona of the men who portrayed these images and how those females are portrayed (Habasque, 2020).

Table 8.3 Semantic Contexts in the Dataset

Theme	Context
Weakness and incapability	Inability to understand, not knowing, claiming to be very strong
Expression of emotions	Expressing admiration and affection
Extra cuteness	Butterflies, cuteness
Feminism	Reference to strength or power
Modernity	Calling the professor backward, usage of English expressions

This second type of reply (example 7) represents a form of performance where the performer is putting on a show "for the audience rather than to the audience" (Bell and Gibson, 2011). Men in these kinds of posts are satirically replying to the author by imitating women's speech style. Therefore, the priority for these performers is emphasising how the message is delivered rather than delivering it (Bell and Gibson, 2011; Johnstone, 2011). This performance is likely framed by the other type of responses and the beliefs mentioned above. The posts contain linguistic markers that are strategically used to portray a female persona. In performance, performers use enregistered linguistic features that usually bundle together and create distinct linguistic styles for specific personas or become associated with certain social groups (Agha, 2003; Eckert, 2004; Agha, 2007; Eckert, 2012). Thus, studying the bundled linguistic features men use to invoke a feminine persona helps in understanding the sociolinguistic profile of these elements, including *marrah*. The act of performing by implementing enregistered linguistic elements is known as *stylisation* (Ilbury, 2020, p.240).

7) *al-taġrīdah marrah marrah cute* 🤣
   The tweet is so so cute 🤣

Stylisation is originally associated with the concept of *heteroglossia* introduced by Mikhail Bakhtin (1981) and is based on the idea that within a single linguistic code, there are various co-existing varieties or styles. The notion of stylisation is defined by Rampton (2009, p. 149) as "reflexive communicative action in which speakers produce specially marked and often exaggerated representations of languages, dialects, and styles that lie outside their own habitual repertoire".

There are many defining criteria for stylisation. First, stylised speech events project personas or identities that are distinct from the expected identity of the performer (Coupland, 2007, p.149). Second, it is metaphorical, which means that it uses symbols

or ideas that detach the speaker from their immediate context (Coupland, 2007, p.149). It involves a high level of awareness and intention to draw attention to its own way of communication (Coupland, 2007, p.149). Furthermore, it is intended for an audience familiar with the context of the projected personas and triggers the audience to re-evaluate the social identities portrayed (Coupland, 2007, p.149). Stylised speech events involve creativity and thus, some people are better at it than others (Coupland, 2007, p.149). Finally, stylisation disrupts the social context of the current communication by adding new contexts with new identities that lead to questioning established norms (Coupland, 2007). Because these posts by male users represent stylised written utterances, they represent a rich resource to explore ideologies and stereotypes related to the linguistic styles of women and potentially explain linguistic variation. Hence, I will examine those types of posts to explore the linguistic features deployed in these stylised performances that project a feminine identity. I will also supplement these performances with the explicit identification made in the second type of comments by men (Table 8.2).

Collecting explicit attitudes implements a strategy similar to *opinion-mining,* which has been used in many fields. In marketing, for instance, companies use social media platforms to retrieve opinions of consumers about their products (Jansen et al., 2009). A similar approach has been implemented in linguistic research, where linguists use those digital platforms to capture unfiltered opinions stated explicitly about language varieties or linguistic features (Barton and Lee, 2013, p.107; Tsurii, 2022). The second type of responses (i.e., stylised performance) aligns with a growing body of research that highlights the critical role of micro-level categories, where linguistic features, including orthographic practices, are employed strategically to invoke certain identities (e.g., Ilbury, 2020, 2022, 2023; Meletis, 2023). This is considered a developmental step in computational sociolinguistics (see Nguyen et al., 2016), which aims at exploring systematic macro-level patterns of language variation in digital discourse based on factors like register, region and gender (e.g., Argamon et al., 2007; Eisenstein, 2015; Grieve et al., 2018; Tagg, 2012; Tagliamonte and Denis, 2008).

There is also a growing interest in the digital linguistic practices of Arabic language users. This area is exceptionally beneficial for studying language use and variation of Arabic varieties, given the nature of those forms of Arabic which, until the invention of the internet, were almost solely spoken. In the literature, many studies focus on how

Arabic speakers shape their online identities and communication functions through the affordances of CA, vernaculars, Arabic-English (or Arabic-French) code-switching, the English language and Arabizi[149] (Gordon, 2011; Alothman, 2012; Schulthies, 2014; Bassam, 2017; Al Alaslaa, 2018; Alhejely, 2020). There is also a large body of research focusing particularly on the usage and features of Arabizi in online texts (Abu Elhija, 2014; Abu Elhij'a, 2012; Akbar, 2018; Akbar et al., 2020; Alghamdi and Petraki, 2018; Alkadi, 2019; Allehaiby, 2013; Alothman, 2012; Bianchi, 2011; Palfreyman and Khalil, 2006; Sullivan, 2019). A few studies investigate the systematic linguistic variation based on macro-level factors such as gender and age. Bassam (2017), for example, explores the role of the speaker's gender and the gender and age of their interlocutor on the patterning of code-switching in SMS texts among Lebanses undergraduates. Arafat and Hamamra (2021) also investigate how elongated spellings of words are used by Palestinian men and women in digital discourses. Overall, more research is still needed in the area of computional sociolinguistics, especially studies of stylised performance which involve "metaparody of self-deauthentication" (Coupland, 2007, p.183; Ilbury, 2020) in digital discourses of Arabic (e.g., Ilbury, 2020).

8.5 Analysis

Replies of type 2 and 3 (Table 8.2) are uploaded in MAXQDA (for details about this software see Chapter 3, Section 3.11). I conducted the analysis through careful reading of posts. MAXQDA is used to code relevant features and themes. Given the narrow scope and limited size of the dataset, third-party coding was not seen as necessary.

8.6 Results

In this section, I will present observations of *marrah* in the data. In addition, other linguistic features are presented regardless of whether they occurred with *marrah* in the post or not. I argue that features that appear in those stylised performances or comments represent enregistered feminine linguistic forms. Linguistic features rarely function in isolation but work in a compound manner in the construction of social meanings based on the social, pragmatic and linguistic context of the produced utterance (Drager et al., 2021, p.176). Therefore, the objective of research investigating

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[149] Arabizi is a Romanised writing system of Arabic language that uses Latin script and Arabic numbers to represent Arabic sounds (Alghamdi and Petraki, 2018). It developed as a result of the need to write in Arabic despite the lack of technological developments that supports the Arabic language (Alghamdi and Petraki, 2018).

social styles, is understanding the social pertinence of a cluster of linguistic variables in their situational relevance instead of focusing on an individual feature, regardless of their quantitative significance (Androutsopoulos, 2007, pp.279–280). In addition, as explained before, the goal of stylisation is to draw attention to the act of performance itself and, since it is a written performance, it includes an extra level of intentional and focused actions (Coupland, 2007, p.149; Tagg, 2012, p.176). This is because speakers in spoken language may produce linguistic forms they are not conscious of, but in written language, speakers are extremely aware of their language (Tagg, 2012, p.176). Further, authors of these replies are expected to put additional effort into their stylisation since the original post is criticising the writing style of men for assimilating that of women. Therefore, linguistic features in their replies should be treated with careful consideration because these features are appearing in posts that emulate feminine language. This rationalises exploring the linguistic features in these posts regardless of their frequencies. Hence, I will highlight some linguistic forms even if they appear once or twice in the data because of their critical role in invoking the feminine persona in these posts. Features that did not bundle with *marrah* at all in the data are: emphasisers, terms of endearment, admiration verbs, the slang expressions *txaṭṭā* 'get over', *ṣanaʕ yōmī* 'made my day' and *yfūz* 'wins' and changing emphatic /tˤ/ to non-emphatic /t/.

As a starting point, I use Lakoff's (1975) work *Language and Women's Place* as a guide to inform the identification of linguistic features traditionally associated with women. It should be acknowledged that Lakoff's work is mainly based on observations and impressions rather than systematic empirical data (Cameron, 2001, p.34) and is primarily based on mid-to-late twentieth century American societal contexts. Further, a major critique of Lakoff's (1975) *Language and Women's Place* is its simplistic approach in linking linguistic forms to specific functions (Cameron et al., 2006). For example, tag questions in Lakoff's work indicate tentativeness and unassertiveness, yet, this seems to overlook the multifunctional nature of linguistic forms (Cameron et al., 2006). Cameron et al. (2006) add that the communicative function of linguistic forms is not invariant and that it is not analytically transparent in all cases which is what Lakoff's framework tends to imply. Hence, it is necessary to account for the complexity of language use by considering the linguistic and social context when analysing speech features, because most utterances serve multiple functions in real interactions. This critique highlights the complexity of language use, which cannot be reduced to straightforward correlations

between form and function, as Lakoff's framework typically suggested. In addition, Lakoff's approach, like early sociolinguistic and variationist research, seem to establish direct correlations between linguistic features and social categories such as gender. However, linguists especially third-wave sociolinguistics (e.g., Eckert, 2012; see Chapter 5, Section 5.6.1) challenged this essentialist approach and argued that linguistic features are part of stylistic practices that can function as resources used strategically by speakers to construct identities depending on the social context.

Therefore, while Lakoff's (1975) work had been influential especially by drawing scholars' attention to the potential relation between language and gender, it should not be handled as other empirical studies that are based on systematic data collection and analysis. At the same time, it can serve as a preliminary reference for identifying potential linguistic features indexing femininity. Given the scarcity of equivalent studies focusing on Arabic vernaculars, Lakoff's work can serve as an initial point of comparison, while also critically evaluating its applicability. In the present chapter, I do not assume a direct transferability of Lakoff's framework, rather I use it as a rough analytical base to start the analysis while keeping in mind that there might be cross-cultural differences stemming from the differing values and languages aids in recognising the linguistic elements in the current study. Further, some features can be used as a general label for other features like *italics* as we will explain later in the analysis. In addition, because the nature of the digital discourse in those posts differs from what Lakoff based her work on, which were face-to-face interactions, there will be certain elements that are digitally sensitive. Digital communication introduces new stylistic and interactive elements that must be accounted for. Lakoff (1975) identifies several linguistic features associated with women's language in her book: certain meaningless particles (e.g., *oh dear*), extensive usage of *so*, various hedging features (e.g., *kind of*), polite forms, hypercorrect grammar, empty adjectives and italics.

In the posts, as we will see below, we observed that male users are using linguistic features that some studies have associated with women's language (in English and in Arabic) such as, for instance, the use of amplifiers, empty adjectives, hedges, etc. (Lakoff, 1975). There are also many forms that convey expressiveness and intimacy that some studies have identified as typical features of women's linguistic style, like love verbs, terms of endearment and admiration verbs. Further, men attempted to reflect high emotionality by using several features, like the orthographic strategy that might

reflect phonological effects often linked to heightened feelings, such as the repeated letters. Several interjections expressing semi-speech actions and emotional responses are employed like ʔōh 'oh' and wah 'oh'. It was interesting to find within the perceived feminine forms recent lexical features like ʔatxaṭṭā 'get over' and DPFs like ʔnnū. This means that there appears to be a link between feminine speech and linguistic innovations, including *marrah*, even though the latter is not as recent as some of these features (see Chapter 4, Section 4.4.1). Overall, a specific portrayal emerged in those posts which seems to reflect a young urban female which somehow parallels the popular American "Valley Girl" stereotype (see Habasque, 2019, 2020). Features of this stereotype will be demonstrated in detail in the following sections.

8.6.1 Lexis

8.6.1.1 marrah and Other Amplifiers

The amplifier *marrah* appeared in 11 posts (Table 8.4; examples 8 a-k). Only one other amplifier is recorded, ḥēl 'very', in the whole X data set (example 8l), which is an amplifier observed in ND (Ingham, 1994, p.57; Almossa, 2024). The deployment of *marrah* in these stylisations might be influenced by the higher usage of this feature by women. In addition to the patterns observed in RNDC, Almossa (2024) too found that this feature is more frequently employed by women in her data.

Table 8.4 Occurrence of *marrah* as a Stereotyped Feminine Linguistic Element in the Posts

Amplifier	N
marrah	11
ḥēl	1

8)

a. al-taġrīdah ***marrah marrah*** cute
    the tweet is ***so so*** cute
b. ʔaḥss ṣaḥīḥ ***marrā***
    I feel that it's ***so*** true
c. ***ʔnnū ʔaḥss marrah*** ṣaḥḥ kalāmk ***ʔaw šayy ḥarfiyyan*** al-šabāb ma raḥ ***ytxaṭṭōn***
    ʔaxīran ʔaḥad tkallam ʕan al-mawḏūʕ ***ʔaḥss*** farāšāt
    I mean I think what you said is ***so*** correct or something literally the guys will not
    overcome this at last someone talked about this issue ***I feel*** butterflies

d. *ʔōh marrah* ʔāsf lk tagdar ttxaṭṭā
   oh I am *so* sorry for you, you can overcome this

e. *ʔaḷḷāh marrah* nice
   wow very nice

f. *bamūt* šfīk ʔant kiḏā *marrah* mtḥajjr
   I will die why are you *so* rigid

g. *banhār marrah* ʔaḥiss ṣaḥḥ kalāmk
   I'm gonna collapse I *really* think what you said is correct

h. ʔaḥiss *xēr* mū gādr ʔafham ʕajazt ʔaḥāwl bass ʔanā gwyy *marrah*
   I feel *what in the world* I am unable to understand I couldn't I am trying but I am *very* strong

i. ʔaḥiss *marrā la*
   I think *so no*

j. *marrah ḥabbēt*
   I *really love* (it)

k. kalāmk *marrah* mū *ʔokēh*
   What you said is *really* not *okay*

l. ʔattifg *ḥēl*[150]
   I *really* agree

Within these occurrences of *marrah,* there are two variants, *marrah* which has a final /h/ (example 8a) and *marrā* (example 8b) which has a final long vowel /ā/. Based on this observation, it is likely that there are two variants of *marrah,* which may be linked to inter-dialectal and/or intra-dialectal variation. Because the current study does not involve a phonological examination of *marrah*, this underscores the need for further research to explore these phonological variations. It is not clear if *marrā* with a final /ā/ is perceived as a constituent of the feminine style or just a dialectal variation. Anecdotally, a female speaker from Hail city once told me that in Hail, they use *marrā* with a final long vowel unlike in central Najd, who use it with a final -*h*. At the same time, a male social media influencer on Snapchat whose account is mainly for commenting on and roasting other famous people, once criticised the deletion of the final -*h* by a female influencer:

> *jāyyā ḥilwā ṣēfiyyā .. tarā niṭg ḥarf al-hāʔ b-šakil wāḏiḥ fī al-kalimāt al-mawjūd fīhā mā yqallil mnnik walā šayy yfaššil*[151].

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[150] Yet, this booster did not occur in RNDC.
[151] The post was available on June 21st, 2024.

jāyyā 'coming.Fem' ḥluā 'pretty' ṣēfiyyā 'for summer'[152].. pronouncing the *-h* clearly in words that contain it doesn't diminish you or cause any embarrassment

In another post, he presented someone's reply to his Snap post:

šaklik mā tadrī yḥsbūn ʔnnik tkūn min ʔahl al-riyāḍ yaʕnī mā tanṭig ḥarf al-hā?

You probably don't know they think being from Riyadh means you don't pronounce the letter *h*.

Both the original post and the reply are criticising the deletion of final *-h*. The reply is especially interesting as it associates the deletion of final *-h* with Riyadh dialect. Overall, these posts like example 8 reflect a stylised appropriation where these men incorporate elements from what they believe to be a feminine style. Thus, this implies that *marrah* is probably perceived to be a marker of femininity since it is used to evoke this feminine persona.

8.6.1.2 Emphasisers

As illustrated in Table 8.5, seven posts used the emphasiser *ḥarfiyyan* 'literally' (example 9a). This emphasiser also appears once in RNDC, produced by the outlier F7. There is one other emphasiser, *w-rabbī,* which occurred once in the data (example 9b). The emphasiser *ḥarfiyyan* 'literally' recently became frequent in SDs and it is likely to be implemented in the vernacular as a result of calquing (Al-Kafawin, 2024; Al-dakhil, 2024; Mahmoud, 2013). It seems that this feature is also evolving in the English language (Israel, 2002; Calhoun, 2013; Kostadinova, 2018).

Table 8.5 Emphasisers in the Dataset	
Emphasiser	**N**
ḥarfiyyan 'literally'	7
w-rabbī 'I swear to God'	1

9)

a. xawiyyiyy wajhah yjīb al-maġaṣ w-ṭāiyḥ b-kalmat ***ḥarfiyaan*** w-ṣanaʕ yōmī yōm ygūlhā wddī ʔaʕṭīh kaff
My friend who has an ugly face (lit. causes colic) got into the habit of using the word ***'literally'*** and 'made my day' when he says them I want to slap him
b. ***w-rabbī*** ṣādg
I swear to God he's truthful

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[152] These are examples on words where the final *-h* is deleted in pronunciation.

8.6.1.3 *ʔaḥiss* 'I feel, I think'

Five posts used the verb *ʔaḥiss* 'I feel' with the booster *marrah* (examples 8b, 8c, 8g and 8h). This verb also appears in 11 further posts in the dataset (example 10) (i.e., a total of 16 tokens in the dataset). These verbs preface statements for protection and deference. Lakoff (1975, pp.53–54) postulates that such features occur more frequently in women's speech probably because they are typically socialised to be less assertive than men. Therefore, using such hedging or face-saving devices in projecting a female persona reveals that they are portraying a traditional image of a woman who is perhaps polite and tentative. Lakoff (1975, pp.53–54) views hedges as feminine linguistic elements and asserts that hedges manifest in various linguistic features, including verbs like 'I think', which are doing the same function of *ʔaḥss* in Arabic varieties. Affective stancetaking through acts of high alignment with the interlocutor, emotionality and expressivity tend to be associated with traditional feminine identity (Chapter 5, Section 5.6). We previously mentioned that usage of amplifiers typically expresses high involvement and heightened emotions and evoke an empathetic persona that match the stereotyped image of females. Likewise, hedging one's position seems to align with this traditional stereotype of tentative, less assertive woman. In the English language, for instance, Bellés-Fortuño and Campoy-Cubillo (2010), based on the Michigan Corpus of Academic and Spoken English[153] (MICASE), investigated the use of the phrase *I feel* in academic discourse and found that female speakers used this feature more frequently compared to their male counterparts. They also found that the phrase *I feel* was frequently used in highly interactive speech events. These speech events are more common in the humanities and social sciences (see Biber, 2006) which are areas where emotional expressivity is often encouraged (Bellés-Fortuño and Campoy-Cubillo, 2010). This suggests that the stylisations by the post writers may reflect a conscious or unconscious alignment with these traditional stereotypes of a feminine identity, where emotionality and expressivity are significant components of their discourse.

10)   *ʔaḥiss kalāmk ṣaḥḥ ʔaw šayy*
       I **feel** that what you said is true or something

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[153] https://quod.lib.umich.edu/cgi/c/corpus/corpus?c=micase;page=simple

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8.6.1.4 Interjections

One user used the interjection *ʔōh* 'oh' in his post with the amplifier *marrah* (example 8d). These elements are expressions that are not necessary components in the syntactic structure and are characterised by emotive and interactive meanings (Biber et al. 1999, p.56). These "little words or non-words" are considered according to Ameka's (1992, p.101) categorisation as "primary interjections" which function solely in this role. They are peripheral compared to lexical and function words to the extent that their status as words is debatable, but their communicative power is significant (Ameka, 1992). They reflect the speaker's attitude, reaction or mental condition (Ameka, 1992, p.106). It seems that interjections fall within the features perceived as part of the feminine linguistic style as we see other posts with various interjections (example 11) although *ʔōh* 'oh' is the only one co-occurring with *marrah*. In the English language, Peláez (2023) in her data which is based on the TV series *Gossip Girl* and the Santa Barbara Corpus of Spoken American English (SBCSAE)[154] found that overall, in both datasets, women used the interjections *ah*, *oh, oh my God, uh* and *um* more frequently compared to men. Hence, the utilisation of these interjections in the posts might be an awareness of this feature in the speech of female speakers.

The usage of these elements in the portrayal of a feminine persona in digital discourse is seen as an attempt to mirror speech-like forms (Tagg, 2012, p.181). Yet, researchers acknowledge that digital discourse represents a form of communication style that has its own features which intersect with spoken and written discourses (Walther and D'Addario, 2001; Crystal, 2006, p.31; Tagliamonte and Denis, 2008)[155]. Thus, some features and variations may not always mirror those found in face-to-face interactions (Eisenstein, 2015). Table 8.6 illustrates these expressions and the function or emotional expression conveyed by these elements.

11) **wah** ḥabbēt ṭarḥk al-ḏukūrī
     oh I love you masculine allusion

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[154] This corpus consists of approximately 249,000 words elicited from natural conversations. https://www.linguistics.ucsb.edu/home

[155] Although presumably these imitations are not specifically mimicking *digital feminine style,* but rather a model of feminine style more broadly, where the prototypical status of spoken language might be thought to be primary.

Table 8.6 Primary Interjections in the Dataset

	Interjection	N	Function[156]
1	*ʔōh* 'oh'	1	Empathy
2	*wah* 'oh'	1	Admiration
3	*wāy* 'oh my, wow'	1	Expresses admiration, empathy and frustration
4	*wāw* 'wow'	1	Surprise and admiration
5	*ʔm* 'em'	1	Filler, hesitation marker
	Total	5	

Another group of interjections is also found in the data (Table 8.7). This group of expressions is classified by Ameka (1992, p.105) as "secondary interjections"'. They are considered as interjections based on their "notional semantics" and originally belong to different word classes. They are only considered as interjections because of their utilisation as stand-alone elements. Only the four forms *ʔaḷḷāh, bamūt, banhār* and *xēr* co-occurred with *marrah* (examples 8 e-h above). Again, examples like 8f and 8g, which contain markers of extreme emotionality, reflect the parodical and satirical nature of the replies. Example 8h, for instance, draws an image of a someone who is unintelligent, mentally unstable and with heightened emotions. Their reference to power '*gwyy*' here might reflect an ideological reference to the traditional roles of men and women in Saudi society and perhaps this reference is triggered by the calls for women's rights and the feminist wave that has gained popularity in the country and been discussed extensively on social media platforms especially X. For example, on X, hashtags like #Women2Drive and others have been used to promote a campaign in support of women's driving right (Almahmoud, 2015). Also, the hashtag #EndMaleGuardianshipSystem was initiated by activists to abolish the male guardianship system in Saudi Arabia in 2016 (Alotaibi, 2021). Thus, the user's mentioning of *gwyy* 'powerful, strong' seems to criticise this movement.

Table 8.7 Secondary Interjections in the Dataset

	Interjection	N	Function
1	*ʔaḷḷāh* 'wow'	1	Surprise with admiration
2	*mtt* 'I died' and *bamūt* 'I will die'	4	Express extreme degree of adverse emotions like sadness, fear and frustration and also positive emotions like laughter and amusement.
3	*banhār* 'I will collapse'	1	
4	*xēr* 'what in the world'	3	Frustration, surprise, disbelief and confusion
5	*ymmah [mnnik]* 'oh how scary'/ 'wow I'm so scared'	1	Fear, admiration
6	*yaḷḷā* 'oh well'	1	Signals Resignation and acceptance of undesired thing
	Total	11	

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[156] Identification of these functions is based on my personal native knowledge of these elements and also the function they are utilised for in the posts.

8.6.1.5 Discourse-Pragmatic Features

DPFs are optional elements that perform specific pragmatic functions and belong to various word classes (Pichler, 2013, p.4). There are DPFs in the data that co-occurred with *marrah* which are *ʔnnū* 'I mean, like' and *ʔaw šayy* 'or something' (example 8c). A token of *ʔaw šayy* also appeared without *marrah* (example 10). Other DPFs - that do not co-occur with *marrah*- are also recorded which are: *taxayyal* 'lit. imagine, can you imagine/believe it', *ʔk* 'ok' and *still* (e.g., examples 2b, 12b and 12c) which constitute part of the perceived feminine style by males. Table 8.8 depicts these features along with their functions and the number of recorded tokens for each feature. The usage of *madrī* 'I don't know' and the general extender *ʔaw šayy* 'or something' in these posts is compelling. The utilisation of such features which index uncertainty, hyper-politeness and unassertiveness (along with other lexis like *ʔaḥiss* 'I feel') supports the idea that the portrayed feminine persona is a traditional stereotypical representation of women. These elements play a role in the construction of a feminine style that is both the product of, and an expression of, traditional female roles and stereotypical behaviours. In ND, Almossa (2024, p.120) examined the full form of the DPF *mā ʔadrī* 'I don't know', the reduced form *mā drī* and the coalesced form *madrī* and found that the coalesced form was used more frequently by young females in a pattern that suggest a change-in-progress. The spelling of the form in the X post (example 12b) suggests that it is probably the coalesced form. Hence, the persona represented in the post might be reflecting a young female which seem to be a recurrent image in these posts. While studies of the variation of general extenders in Arabic vernaculars are scarce, in the English language, the results are not consistent in terms of whether or not female speakers use them more frequently. Cheshire (2007), based on a corpus of interviews with 96 adolescents from the towns Hull, Milton Keynes and Reading, found that there was no clear gender-based pattern in the use of general extenders such as *and stuff*, *or something* and *and everything*. On the other hand, Sellberg (2015) based on the British National Corpus (BNC)[157] found that overall, female speakers showed a higher frequency of using general extenders.

        ʔnnū and *taxayyal* are innovative forms in Saudi dialects while *ok and still* are borrowed from English (see Section 8.6.3.4). An aspect that is common between these

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[157] The data is based on spoken language which consists of 10,409,858 words.

features is their apparent novelty which aligns with the projected progressive urban persona that these authors seem to represent. It is also interesting that *marrah* bundles with those features given its older history dating back to more than 60 years ago (Abboud, 1964, p.21) (see Chapter 4, Section 4.4.1). This adds another dimension to our understanding of the profile of *marrah* as a form which might index cosmopolitanism and progressiveness, a profile that is distinct from the more classical variant *jiddan*.

Table 8.8 Discourse-pragmatic Features in the Dataset[158]

	Discourse-pragmatic feature	N	Function
1	*ʔnnū* 'I mean, like'	1	Reformulation marker, filler, hesitation marker, quotative
2	*Still*	1	Introduce a contrast, despite that
3	*ʔk* 'ok'	1	Agreement marker
4	*taxayyal* 'lit. imagine, can you imagine/believe it'	1	Attracting the attention, excitement marker
5	*ʔaw šayy* 'or something'	2	General extender (i.e., utterance final tag)
6	*madrī* 'I don't know'	1	Signalling insufficient knowledge or uncertainty, hedging or a face-saving device
	Total	7	

12)

a. **ʔaḥss** kalāmk ṣaḥḥ *ʔaw šayy*
    I think what you said is correct **or something**
b. **madrī** bass **still** mā ḍarrōk
    I don't know but **still** they did not cause any harm to you
c. *ʔk gaḷbū*
    k darling

The DPF[159] *ʔnnū* 'I mean, like' is stereotyped with the booster *marrah* (example 8c). In example 8c, *ʔnnū* is used in a sentence loaded with presumably feminine speech markers which are: *marrah*, *ʔaḥss* 'I feel, I think' and *ʔaw šayy* 'or something'. It is used sentence-initially to mark hesitation or reformulation in a function which is somewhat similar to the English DPF *like.* Appropriating *ʔnnū* as a feminine marker by men brings to mind a stereotype that was popular at least between the years of 2009-2012 among female students at universities in Riyadh. Girls of this assumed type were called *banāt al-ʔnnū* 'ʔnnū girls'. Their speech is characterised by features that are similar to the ones mentioned in the posts such as the increased usage of *marrah*, the use of empty

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[158] It should be noted that DPFs are multifunctional. Hence, Table 8.8 presents some of the functions of these DPFs. There might be other functions not captured here.
[159] For a full definition of DPFs see Chapter 1, Section 1.1.

adjectives like *nice,* Arabic-English code-switching and the use of interjections like *yāy* including the overuse of the discourse marker and quotative *ʔnnū* which is why they are labelled by it (Almohandesah, 2010)[160]. The persistence of this stereotype a decade later (at least among those posts) is remarkable. It would be interesting to understand how these *ʔnnū* stereotypes and the feminine persona stereotype in general developed among females and now among males and the factors that contribute to enregistering such linguistic features with them.

Interestingly, speaker F18 in her discussion of the dialect spoken in Riyadh, criticised the usage of features of the HD like *ʔnnū* by ND speakers to sound cute and stylish. *ʔnnū* is used in the HD[161] (Eifan, 2017, p.56) and many other Arabic dialects like the Lebanese and Syrian dialects (see Habib, 2021). It might also be used in other dialects in Saudi Arabia but there are no studies that confirm this finding. Based on the feedback from F18, it seems that one source of stigma could be the inappropriateness of this feature in the ND cultural context. Those who use it might be incorporating it because of the indexical properties linked to it. These could be modernity and progressiveness which is what lay people perceive about Hijazi people in general. Thus, aspiring to be modern and abandoning one's culture in favour of modernity might be the reason behind these negative perceptions. Upon examining the interview, F18 was found to be using this feature several times. This supports two aspects: first, the stigma surrounding *ʔnnū* apparently did not stop it from diffusing into the speech of many ND speakers including those who disfavour it. An example of a similar feature is the quotative *be like* which evolved around the '60s-'70s in North America (Tagliamonte et al., 2016; D'Arcy, 2017, p.145). This DPF became associated with "Valley Girl" (i.e., stigmatised) around the '80s, diffused continually along the years and is still used today among different age groups and genders (Tagliamonte et al., 2016; D'Arcy, 2017, p.145). It also supports the idea that people are not necessarily aware of what linguistic features they are using including lexico-grammatical elements which tend to be more salient than phonological features (Dines, 1980, p.16). This can be seen as potential evidence suggesting an increased diffusion of *marrah* in the future into the speech of men, despite their possible negative attitudes towards it. As we observed in RNDC (Chapter 6, Section

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[160] In this forum post, the author (female) describes *banāt al-ʔnnū,* including their linguistic style
https://boya.ahlamontada.net/t1423-topic (Accessed, January 7, 2024).

[161] HD is another widely spoken dialect in Saudi Arabia. It is spoken in the majority of the western region along the coast of the Red Sea (Eifan, 2017) (See Chapter 1, Section 1.5.1).

6.2.2), the usage of *marrah* is increasing as the speakers get younger. Similarly, linguistic forms that were associated with the *Valley Girl* image have all shown an increase over the years (D'Arcy, 2017, p.145).

ʔnnū, like the amplifier *marrah*, seems to carry a heavy social and linguistic load, which makes it a fruitful element for sociolinguistic analysis that should be further inspected in future research. It would be interesting to explore why it is generally perceived as a feminine feature and whether or not it is actually used more frequently by females in ND and what pragmatic functions this item conveys. In Syrian Arabic, for instance, Habib (2021) examined the variation of the DPF *ʔnnū* as a co-variant of *yaʕnī* in informal sociolinguistic interviews with 72 Syrian speakers. Habib (2021) found that female speakers used this variable more frequently. This suggests that this pattern might also be found in ND or SDs in general.

8.6.1.6 Slang Expressions

Slang expressions are purposeful trendy substitutions of neutral expressions intended to show contrast (Tagliamonte, 2016, p.2). They are characterised by several aspects, such as being associated with a specific age-group and having a short lifespan (Tagliamonte, 2016, p.2). Mass media can contribute to the wide dissemination and diffusion of slang terms especially among young people (Adams, 2014; Ly Ngoc Toan, 2022). Some slang terms become widely used in digital platforms or even originate for digital use such as the word "tweethearts" (Maybaum, 2013; Kulkarni and Wang, 2017). The words and phrases in this category can be considered slang expressions which became common among young people in Saudi Arabia and perhaps other GCC countries[162] and diffused as a result of communication through social media platforms. A recent study by Alshehri (2025) examined 100 posts and 300 comments from various Saudi online communities in platforms such as X and Instagram from different topics such as cultural, linguistic and social discussions which represent both formal and informal registers. She found that female users are more frequent producers of innovative and slang expressions especially those derived from the English language. These slang expressions are not given enough attention in the literature which calls for

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[162] Countries of the Gulf Cooperation Council which are six: Saudi Arabia, Bahrain, Kuwait, Oman, Qatar, United Arab Emirates.

further investigations of these lexical features and their distribution across genders. The association of slang expressions with a female identity in the replies supports the idea that the stereotype they are mocking seems to have a progressive and urban persona.

8.6.1.6.1 *txaṭṭā*

Three tokens of the verb *txaṭṭā* 'get over' are found in the data (example 13). This variable is a recent slang term that is becoming trendy in the speech of young females nowadays, based on my personal observation.

13)   mānī gādr ***ʔatxaṭṭā*** kalāmk
         I cannot ***get over*** what you said

8.6.1.6.2 *ṣanaʕ yōmī*

The expression *ṣanaʕ yōmī* 'made my day' is mentioned once in the data, which like the verb *txaṭṭā*, is a recent feature used commonly by young speakers (example 9a). This expression specifically is likely an influence of the English language (i.e., calquing) (Mahmoud, 2013) (see Chapter 4, Section 4.4.7) since it is a word-for-word translation of the English expression 'made my day'.

8.6.1.6.3 *yfūz*

The verb *yfūz* 'lit. wins', which typically describes great things with great quality, is mentioned once by a user among the words he dislikes (example 2b). The verb *yfūz* is not used to refer to literal winning or succeeding in a competition; instead, it indicates that something is winning because of its great quality. It is especially popular among young social media influencers especially in the context of testing products and food. It diffused as the social media influencers frequently used it in their advertisements to the public.

8.6.1.6.4 *la(ʔ)* as an adjective

Two tokens of the negator *laʔ* 'no' are found in the data. Only one co-occurred with *marrah* (example 8i). The usage of *la(ʔ)* in the context of an adjective seems to be pointing towards an exaggerated hyper-feminine persona. I am aware of its usage by Saudi women, but it seems to be conditioned by age. Young women possibly use it more than older women which again suggests that those men are possibly representing a young female persona.

8.6.2 Orthographic Features

Studies on orthographic patterns generally agree that they reflect a high level of playfulness, creativity, innovation and manipulation (Alothman, 2012, p.169; Androutsopoulos, 2000; Tagg, 2012, p.151). This could be a result of the limitedness and brevity of the affordances of digital discourse and the lack of paralinguistic features, which are available to speakers in face-to face interactions, which lead the user to focus on available contextualisation cues (Tagg, 2012, p.176; Androutsopoulos, 2013, p.3). At the same time, creativity and innovation are considered an interpersonal means that modulates the construction of online identity (Tagg, 2012, p.180; Kalman and Gergle, 2014). Expression of the feminine style which is achieved through writing is not an aspect that is addressed by Lakoff (1985). It reflects the digital media and the development of online communication, which were not available at the time of Lakoff's work. In the following section, I will present the orthographic features found in the posts.

8.6.2.1 Repetition of Letters

Authors of these posts used orthographic repetition of letters - also known as flooding Hilte et al., (2016) - in several words in the dataset with *marrah* and without. Some of these words are مرره 'very, so', بمووت 'I'm gonna die', اممممم'em', وااااي 'oh my, wow', كيووووووت 'cute', خييييررررر 'what in the world', أحسسس 'I feel', ابنهااااااااررررر 'I will collapse' and 'cute'. The repetitions are both of vowels and consonants. This feature is observed by other Arabic language users in online discourse (e.g., Alothman, 2012, p.327; Bassam, 2017, p.118; Schulthies, 2014, p.49). These are not considered spelling errors but deliberate manipulations by the speakers (Alothman, 2012, p.327; Eisenstein, 2015). Some researchers propose that these are "speech-like" phonological features (e.g., Tagg, 2012, p.176) although as mentioned in Section 8.6.1.4, digital language is now viewed as a distinct form which does not necessarily emulate features in spoken or typical written genres (Walther and D'Addario, 2001; Crystal, 2006, p.31). Floodings of letters are also considered expressive devices reflecting feelings of cheerfulness, enthusiasm, humor, etc. (Alothman, 2012, p.327; Schulthies, 2014, p.49; Bassam, 2017, p.118; Arafat and Hamamra, 2021; Scheffler et al., 2023, p.13). Hence, these duplications can be viewed as *italics* (i.e., a way of adding emphasis to language) which is a feature identified in Lakoff (1975) as a marker of women's language. Overall, this

feature can be seen as a method of expressing heightened emotions, which has traditionally been associated with women's language use in some classical studies (e.g., Lakoff, 1975). Flooding has often been associated in the literature with women (Bassam, 2017, p.118; Arafat and Hamamra, 2021). Arafat and Hamamra (2021) found that although both Palestinian men and women use word elongation in their instant messaging, in mixed-gender conversations, females use it more which they believe to be an effect of traditional perception of genders since men are not traditionally expected to express their emotions. It is also favoured between people of closer relationships (Arafat and Hamamra, 2021). In other words, this feature can be used to express affective stances because it is a method of emphasising augmented emotional engagement. Hence, those users appear to use it to evoke a traditional, stereotypical feminine style.

8.6.2.2 Letter Representing a Word

Several replies contained a spelling pattern which replaces a word, such as the preposition في 'in' with the letter ف or the negator ما with م, where users would omit the vowel and only keep the consonant (examples 6a and 14). This feature appeared in three posts. Two users in these posts used it and one user commented on it. This feature has been observed in several Arabic language studies (Gordon, 2011, p.22; Avallone, 2015; Abu Alnaja, 2019). Although it has been associated with young speakers (see Abu Alnaja, 2019), there are no studies that suggest that it is favoured by females like elongated words. Yet, since men deploy it in the current dataset and explicitly refer to it, their perceptions could possibly be reflecting the actual pattern used by females, like their perceptions of elongated words. This requires further research to confirm this association. Its link to younger speakers also suggests that the stereotype being portrayed and mocked is a young female.

14) *wa-ʔadḍunn kaḏālik miṯil al-ʔiqtiṣār ʕalā al-ʔaḥruf faqaṭ miṯil f[163] al-makān al-flānī y flān ṣarāḥah ʔarā fī hāḏā al-ʔuslūb šayy min al-muyūʕah wa-yajib al-ʔibtiʕād ʕanh*

   I also think that using just letters (i.e., instead of full words), like: '*i[164]* place x,' '*o* so and so,' frankly, I think that in this style there is some softness (i.e., in a feminine way) and it should be avoided.

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[163] f here represents the letter ف as written by the user while y represents ي.

[164] The letter *i-* is an abbreviation of 'in' and *o-* is an abbreviation for 'oh'.

8.6.2.3 Changing Emphatic /ṭ/ to Non-emphatic /t/

In one post, an author used the non-emphatic /t/ to replace what is supposed to be emphatic /ṭ/ (*tayyib* 'ok' instead of *ṭayyib)* in SD. There appears to be little to no research on this specific feature in the speech of female speakers and its use to index femininity. Although studies in this area seem to be scares, based on my own knowledge as a native ND speaker, the change from emphatic /ṭ/ to non-emphatic /t/ is commonly used in the stylisation of feminine figures. Additionally, on social media platforms, some well-known female influencers seem to use this feature. This observation, of course, needs to be substantiated with empirical data. However, this observation, although not confirmed empirically, can be used to partly explain the utilisation of this feature in these mimicry posts.

8.6.3 Semantics

8.6.3.1 Empty adjectives

One of the features that co-occured with *marrah* in these posts is the usage of empty adjectives like *cute* and *nice* (Table 8.9; examples 8a and 8e).

Table 8.9 Empty Adjectives in the Data	
Adjective[165]	**N**
Cute	2
Nice	1
ʔōkēh 'okay'	1
Total	4

Lakoff (1975, p.53) recognised such words (e.g., *divine*, *charming* and *cute*) as constituents of women's language. Carpenter et al., (2017) collected 100 random Twitter posts from 3000 authors. Their goal was to measure the accuracy of identifying one's gender based on their writing in X using crowdsourcing tasks. They found that when men used words like *cute, okay* and *lovely,* they were mistakenly identified as female. Some of the elements that will be mentioned later in the chapter are also highlighted such as the emotion words: 'love', 'heart', 'feelings' and the verb 'feel'. In another study, Qadi (2020), in The Blog Authorship Corpus, which consists of 140 million words of posts from 19,320 bloggers, found that many empty adjectives like *nice,*

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[165] These words are written in the posts in Arabic orthography.

gorgeous, beautiful, and *cute* are frequently used by females while some others like *sweet, divine* and *charming* were more balanced across male and female speakers. Hence, Qadi (2020) concludes that the proposition of Lakoff (1975) is partly supported by the results. These two studies indicate that gendered linguistic stereotypes might not always reflect an accurate view of the actual usage of linguistic features.

8.6.3.2 Expressions of Affection and Emotion

8.6.3.2.1 Verbs of Affection

marrah co-occurred once with a verb that expresses love and admiration (example 8j). As depicted in Table 8.10, 12 other tokens of similar verbs are also mentioned in posts in the dataset where *marrah* is not used (e.g., example 15).

<div align="center">

Table 8.10 Verbs of Affection in the Dataset

Verb	N
ḥabbēt 'I loved'	9
Ɂaḥbbk 'I love you'/ *Ɂaḥbb* ' I love'	1
fdētk 'I adore you'	1
Ɂaštāglk 'I miss you'	1
Total	12

</div>

15)
    wah ***ḥabbēt*** ṭarḥk al-ḏukūrī
    oh I ***love*** your masculine allusion

It must be noted that while semantically they seem to be relevant, the verb *ḥabbēt* 'I loved' specifically, which co-occurred with *marrah* in the posts (i.e., used by one user in their reply), can be considered a slang word which gained popularity among social media influencers in their advertisements for different products and foods, especially by social media influencers on platforms like Snapchat. Nowadays, many people use it in various contexts, not only in contexts of tasting food or product testing[166]. Hence, we can compare the co-occurrence of this verb with *marrah* to the occurrence of *marrah* with other trendy slang expressions and innovations like *ḥarfiyyan* and the DPFs *Ɂnnū* and *taxayyal*. This suggests that men perceive females to be the frequent adopters of new linguistic innovations regardless of the linguistic level of these linguistic features. Example 15 specifically deploys an interjection with *ḥabbēt* in a comic representation

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[166] This is based on personal observation.

and adds *ṭarḥk al-ḏukūrī* 'your masculine allusion' as a parodical response to the professor's call to be more masculine.

In a relevant study, Barbara (2008) asked 100 Polish adults (50 men and 50 women) to describe their reactions to a photograph of a couple hugging in a narrative discourse. She found that women used significantly more emotional words in their narratives compared to men, and their stories were almost twice as long. This finding aligns with the proposed feature in Lakoff's work that women are more emotionally expressive and that women and tend to express their feelings more elaborately than men. Hence, verbs in Table 8.10 additionally add to the stereotypical construction of gender, where females are expected to be using expressions of intimacy more frequently and expressing their feelings and emotions in a noticeable manner.

8.6.3.2.2 Terms of Endearment

In eight posts, male users mentioned endearing expressions (Table 8.11; example 16). In the Arabic context, these expressions can show one's feelings and love towards the interlocutor or can be seen as a marker of emotive politeness (Khalil and Larina, 2022). Linguistic elements conveying these functions have been enregistered as features of women's language in Western culture in earlier sociolinguistic research (Lakoff, 1975, p.55; Coates, 1993, p.20). This perception seems to be prevalent in the Arabic context as well. For instance, Khalil and Larina, (2022, p.37) found that female characters used more terms of endearment in their analysis of 25 hours of a Syrian TV Drama series, 'Rouzana'. Hence, those terms conveying affective stances represent a typical feature used in a stylised performance of a feminine identity like those performed in the posts.

Table 8.11 Terms of Endearment in the Dataset

Term	N
ḥubbī 'my love'	1
ḥabībī 'my love'	1
gaḷbi/gaḷbū 'my heart'	5
ḥabīb gaḷbī 'the love of my heart'	1
Total	8

16) ṣaḥīḥ ʔatqazzaz mn rajul yaktb fī rdūdh ʕawāfī **ḥabīb gaḷbī** tslam **gaḷbi** w- ġērhā
     Correct I am disgusted when a man writes in his replies blessings to you ***my sweet heart*** thank you ***my darling*** and other expressions

8.6.3.3 Admiration Verbs

Some verbs expressing admiration are used in the posts (Table 8.12). These verbs in ND can be seen as parallel to empty adjectives in the English language (example 17). Because they express the speaker's affection, they are generally associated with the stereotypical view of women using more emotional language and also offering complements (Coates, 1993, pp.20, 98; Barbara, 2008).

Table 8.12 Admiration Verbs in the Dataset

Verb	Replies
	N
yjannen 'amazing, impressive'	3
yhabbl 'amazing, impressive'	1
Total	4

17) taġrīdah **thabbl tjannen** yā mawlānā ḥarfiyyan ḥabbētk
     the tweet is **amazing impressive** o'our master literally I loved you

8.6.3.4 English Expressions

The adjectives "cute", "nice", "okay", and "over" (examples 8a, 8e, 8k and 18) point towards the association between these English adjectives and perceptions of feminine linguistic style.

18) Ɂaḥiss **over**
     I think/feel that you're **overreacting**

It is well-known that the English language is linked to modernity, urbanism and elitism (Kachru, 1982, p. 42; Alhejely, 2020, p.171). Moreover, English-Arabic code-switching has been identified as a feature in the language of the younger generations (Abu Alnaja, 2019, p.286). Thus, deploying code-switching in projecting a female persona could be their portrayal of this persona as being young, urban and cosmopolitan parallel to the portrayal of *banāt al-Ɂnnū* 'Ɂnnū girls', whose linguistic style is characterised by frequent English-Arabic code-switching (Section 1.6.1.5). Ismail (2015, p.106) found that Saudi females overall preferred code-switching over Saudi males and perceived it positively. Ismail attributed this to the prestige females aspire to be associated with and their aspirations to appear as a "progressive persona". Women seem to be aligning themselves with the same high socio-economic status and educational levels of English-speaking communities (Ismail, 2015). In Saudi Arabia, even though many middle- and

lower-class citizens are proficient in the English language, many higher-class citizens enroll their children in English-based private (called *international*) schools which has created a connection between being proficient in English and the class you belong to. In Lebanon, which is a less conservative Arabic-speaking country, Bassam (2017, p.90) also found that female undergraduates code-switch to English and French significantly more than male undergraduates in SMS messages. Both male and female undergraduates used code-switching more frequently with younger speakers and with women compared to their switching with older speakers and male speakers. This suggests that those speakers strategically use it as an in-group code between young adults. The results in Ismail (2015) and Bassam (2017) suggest that women use this feature more than men, thus, it is not surprising that men are aware of the association that exists between females and code-switching. Based on the findings in Bassam (2015), it seems that those posts are invoking a young feminine persona through the use of code-switching as part of the performative style.

The social conditions of genders in Saudi Arabia, and perhaps in other Middle Eastern countries, have influenced the construction of distinct gendered linguistic styles based on traditional gender roles (Chapter 5, Section 5.6). Therefore, viewing the usage of code-switching to English in Saudi Arabia and the Arab world in general as a feminine phenomenon is not surprising given its link to prestige and higher socio-economic status. Traditional feminine linguistic style influences the expectations of speaking in an elevated and elegant way which is met by the usage of the English language. We can see in those posts, such as example 8k, that the authors are being satirical because such performances often involve parody and exaggerations (Coupland, 2007, pp.174–175).

8.7 Discussion

The persona portrayed by these posts, as explained in Section 5.6, seems to reflect the image of a young female. This is represented in the usage of some forms that are typically associated with young speakers, like code-switching (Bassam, 2017), the usage of a letter to reflect a word (Gordon, 2011, p.22; Avallone, 2015; Abu Alnaja, 2019), the usage of trendy slang expressions of social media influencers like *yfūz* and *ḥabbēt,* DPFs heard more frequently by young speakers, like *ʔnnū* and *taxayyal* and the usage of hyper-feminine features that match the typical young female talk like the adjective *laʔ*

and softening the emphatic /ṭ/. In Chapter 6, we have observed that it is young females who are frequently using the booster *marrah* to intensify adjectives. Linguistically, the stylised performances seem to demonstrate a very simple and humble representation of the perceived linguistic style of females (see Agha, 2007, pp. 162–163). Nevertheless, there appears to be some similarity between what the performances are portraying and the usage of those features by young women. It would be interesting to investigate other enregistered feminine features to confirm if there is a resemblance between the perceptions and the actual usage by female speakers.

Another aspect we can infer from these replies is their depiction of those females as excessively emotional, less assertive and extra feminine. This depiction can be compared to the Valley-Girl persona that became popular in the United States (Habasque, 2019, 2020). Further, as we already mentioned, many of the features outlined, align also with the elements identified in the Lakoffian traditional feminine style (Lakoff, 1975). It seems that there are shared gendered stereotypes that are cross-cultural (e.g., Carpenter et al., 2017). The close analogy between these representations cross-culturally is a valuable observation. This finding calls for investigations to uncover possible reasons behind this resemblance. A possible reason is the circulation of these stereotypes via traditional and new mass media, which strongly influence the population especially the young generation in Saudi Arabia. We have seen how the media influenced the creation and reinforcement of stereotypical personas in the West, like "Valley-Girl" (Habasque, 2019; Habasque, 2020), "Sassy Queen" or "Diva" (Ilbury, 2020; Podesva, 2007), "the Hun"[167] (Ilbury, 2022b) and "Roadman"[168] (Ilbury, 2023). Hence, this universality in the observed features along with the trendy social media-related lexis found in the data underscores the fundamental role of new media platforms and Western pop culture in shaping folk perceptions.

Many of these linguistic features convey affective stances which are often a core resource in building gender identities (Podesva and Kajino, 2014, p.117). Men in the replies utilised what they believe to be stylistically feminine features and utilised available digital features to project a feminine persona, even though the post itself does not assume or suggest any specific style. Thus, the linguistic style employed in the replies

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[167] A stereotype of a typical working-class British White woman involved in typical everyday activities like drinking wine, relationships, diet and exercise (Ilbury, 2022b).

[168] A stereotype of young working-class multicultural (often Black) Londoners living in inner-city characterised by being hypermasculine and involvement in criminal actions (Ilbury, 2023).

is a strategic inauthentic linguistic style laying outside the habitual conventional masculine linguistic style (cf. Rampton, 2009, p. 149) which does not align with the style expected from men.

The performance in the posts is intended for an audience who is familiar with the social and cultural cues being employed to project the personas. For instance, a response that support the audience's understanding is example 19a where a female user comments on these performances as a practical mirroring of the post expressing the professor's discontent with the emergence and diffusion of feminine linguistic styles in the writings of men. Another relevant reply is example 19b, where the female user wonders whether these replies are supposed to be mocking women or actual responses to the post. Further, in example 19c, a female speaker is commenting on the exaggerations made in those parodical mimicries. This example also suggests that authors of those replies are exaggerating (cf. Rampton, 2009, p.149) in their employment of what appears to be hyperfeminine features, such the non-emphatic /t/ instead of the emphatic /ṭ/. These exaggerated performances may be influenced by the comment in the original post and also because they are aware of the audience of this post who are reading their comments, in addition to their own followers who can view their writings.

19)

a.   al-minšin taṭbīq ʕamaliyy li-al-taġrīdah
   The mention (i.e., replies) is a practical application of the tweet

b.   al-rudūd mādrī hī ṭagṭagah ʕalēnā wallā fiʕliyyan hum kiḏā yrddūn 😂😂😂😂👀
   I don't know if the replies are roasting us or they are actually responding like
   that 😂😂😂😂👀

c.   ally b-al-minšin tarākum ooovvvvverrrr
   To those in the mention (i.e., replies) you're exaggerating

All these are confirmations of the awareness of the audience of those indexical forms used in the replies and the exaggerated nature of these satirical reproductions. Therefore, explaining the linguistic features in these posts by referring to macro-level factors like gender would be challenging because the gender of the speakers does not align with the observed repertoires (Ilbury, 2020).

In a relevant study, Ilbury (2020) examined the orthographic representation of typical African American Vernacular English (AAVE) features in all linguistic levels in

15,804 posts in X. These posts were collected from ten White gay men in the UK who consistently used those features. Some of the features of AAVE found in the study are lexical like *Y'all,* morphosyntactic like copula absence, and phonological like using *-in* instead if *-ing.* AAVE features were used in 307 posts, 60% of them (N=187/307) were employed in directed posts (i.e., reply to a specific user) and 90.0% of these replies were to other gay men. Ilbury (2020) argues that understanding the communicative context of these stylised posts which oppose the habitual linguistic style of the white men is essential. Ilbury (2020, p.260) postulates that white men are strategically using AAVE features in an inauthentic style not to present themselves as speakers of AAVE but to invoke a persona of 'sassy' and 'fierce' black female. This sassy persona became a cultural norm among the community of gay men. It is based on a popular meme depicting black women as strong and independent which influenced the enregisterment of this stereotype in the cyberspace. Another study is that of Podesva (2007) who reports the results of a speaker named Heath who strategically employs the voice quality variable falsetto more frequently, in a longer manner and higher fundamental frequency when with his group of friends to project a 'diva' persona. Podesva (2007) postulates that this linguistic feature conveys expressiveness and that it might be a way to construct the gay identity for Heath. The previous examples underscore the significance of stylised performances that involve the intentional adoption and manipulation of non-habitual or inauthentic linguistic style features to invoke certain personas (Agha, 2007, pp. 160–161; Coupland, 2001, 2007, p. 149; Drager et al., 2021; Rampton, 2009).

Going back to the research questions, it appears from the previous analysis that *marrah* functions as an indexical cue because it is used in the formation of the feminine persona in these posts. There are also several other linguistic features which co-occurred with *marrah* or occurred in other posts within the same compilation of replies. From the explicit posts, we understand that the stigma possibly arises as a result of religious beliefs and the cultural context in which those beliefs are embedded and seems to be towards linguistic appropriation when men adopt features of feminine style. In the posts with performances, as explained before, their opinion towards the original post is not very clear. Their performance of the feminine persona as we have seen is exaggerated because they are showcasing their humorous skills or putting on a show for the author and the imagined audience which requires a heightened focus on markers of the intended identity (Coupland, 2007, p.149). Accordingly, they might be interpreted

as a light-hearted, playful and humorous comedy which is created to make the audience laugh with the performers not at them (Coupland, 2007, pp.174–175).

In online engagements, specifically, individuals enjoy more freedom, which triggers them to be playful in their construction of their identities (Deumert, 2016). Thus, the inherent nature of playfulness in online communications mobilises or facilitates the construction of a "lucid-self"[169] where speakers engage in high-spirited activities like joking, gaming and flirting (Deumert, 2016). We already mentioned in the introduction that Saudi users enjoy making humorous comments in cyberspace. Thus, based on the previous information, we can suggest that those performances are harmless and not stigmatising the feminine linguistic features. Yet, their role in propelling stereotypes is undeniable (Ilbury, 2022b). Stylised performances trigger re-evaluations by the audience of the represented identity (Coupland, 2007). These deliberate stylised appropriations of feminine forms can function collectively along with other available memes, jokes, etc. to reinforce misogynistic stereotypes and anti-feminine attitudes (cf. Ilbury, 2022b, 2023). Researchers have found that guarding the asset of masculinity is achieved by either reinforcing facets of traditional masculinity or through expressing "antipathy to anything feminine (antifemininity)" (Taywaditep, 2002, p.16), which is similar to what those authors are doing. Arguably, as some of the comments suggested (examples 4a and 4b), the mockeries in the replies might be downgrading the speech style of women. Al-muneef (2015) believes that similar practices of roasting are harmful for those people being ridiculed:

> The strange paradox is that this derogatory trait is taken in the context of humour and is well-received by societal groups who consider it a suitable way to entertain themselves at the expense of diminishing the value and respect of others, 'making fun of them'.

Within the linguistic context, researchers defined similar linguistic behaviors as "linguistic misogyny" which is "stigmatizing an individual's linguistic practices because they are (possibly wrongly) perceived as feminine." (Habasque, 2020). Linguistic misogyny is present even if such folk perceptions are proved to be correctly more frequent in feminine usage (Habasque, 2020). It can have implications for sustaining these attitudes and stereotypes. These kinds of posts may reinforce the enregisterment of *marrah* and related features as feminine forms.

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[169] Deumert (2016) based his explanation on the concept of "lucid self-construction" by De Mul (2011).

Hence, to answer the second question, based on the posts, *marrah* seems to be unfavored and stigmatised when used by men. However, based on the current data, determining whether it is also stigmatised for females seems challenging. Nevertheless, what we can confirm is their potential influence in perpetuating misogynistic stereotypes (Habasque, 2020). Thus, further research is needed to explore the perceptions of male speakers towards *marrah* and other enregistered feminine forms. Regardless of this uncertainty, the potential stigma surrounding *marrah* in the speech of men can help us explain the low usage rate in the main study of amplifiers (see Chapter 6, Section 6.2.1) in a society that regulates based on religious and cultural norms.

An aspect that must be taken into consideration is the age of X users. In a recent study, Ilbury (2022a) suggests that social media platforms like Facebook and X are being replaced by "image-first" platforms for the younger generation. This may also apply to the Saudi younger generations who are gradually shifting their interests toward apps like TikTok and Snapchat. In the main study, it is the younger generation of men who use *marrah* the most among male speakers (Chapter 6, Section 6.2.3). This could indicate that younger men are possibly insensitive to this social stigma. Future attitudinal studies should uncover the opinions of the younger generation of men. It could also indicate that the values and attitudes of men are shifting. In addition, these platforms might also contribute in a certain way that is different from X to spreading and reinforcing linguistic stereotypes including those about the feminine style. Users in platforms like TikTok and Snapchat will have the ability to associate not only text but also image and voice with certain social groups. Further, the method of interactions on those platforms and how images and videos are viewed are different. In TikTok, for instance, algorithms tend to view videos with higher engagements more frequently, which contributes to rapid and repeated dissemination of stereotypes to a wider audience.

8.8 Conclusion

Even with the limited size and somewhat patchy nature of the data, the replies by male users in these posts still show that they engaged deliberately and thoughtfully with the topic in the original post. Thus, their responses seem to be both intentional and reflective. Authors of those posts willingly and voluntarily decided to participate based on genuine interest in the topic of the discussion. Obtaining a similar input would have

been challenging if we used other available data collection methods resulting in biased or less credible answers about these features.

The current analysis suggests that *marrah* is a salient and well-recognised linguistic feature among Saudi men and associated with the linguistic style of females. Understanding the religious and cultural context involved in its usage can help in resolving an aspect of the complexity observed in the variational pattern of *marrah* in Chapter 6. Therefore, there is a possibility that the lower usage of *marrah* in the main data is potentially a result of avoidance because of its link to femininity. Combining results from perceptual research with sociolinguistic studies assists in obtaining a well-rounded picture of the linguistic context (Agha, 2007, pp.246–250). Hence, this case study despite the small size of its data, represents an example of a micro-level pragmatic-stylistic analysis in digital discourse, which offers valuable insights for macro-level analyses that enrich studies of ND and Arabic vernaculars. Data collected from digital discourse can be used alongside spoken language data for this purpose. This chapter unlocks a whole list of linguistic features with similar profiles that bundle together. Thus, this analysis reveals that *marrah* is part of a linguistic style that ought to be explored. Therefore, this study represents a pivotal transition and lays the ground for future research in gendered linguistic styles and perceptions in the ND and Arabic context. Analysis of these ridiculing performances also aids in uncovering ideological forces that could shape linguistic behaviours.

Chapter 9 Conclusion

In this study, I sought to answer two primary questions, within each were specific sub-questions. The first section in the conclusion is structured around those questions. Within each section, the questions are repeated for reference. Throughout my discussion of those questions, I underscore some limitations and recommendations for future research. After that, I present some methodological reflections and insights.

9.1 Summary, Limitations, and Recommendations for Future Research

The first primary question was: **What does the intensification system of adjectives in the speech of ND speakers look like?**

In order to answer this primary question, I explored several areas within the adjectival intensification system of ND speakers, and these key points are presented and discussed below.

1.1 The taxonomy of intensifiers according to their semantic effect on the modified adjectival head (based on the classification of Quirk et al., 1985).

1.2 Number of forms used in the system and the proportions of these forms within the system.

1.3 Frequency of adjective intensification, including: the overall size of the system (i.e., rate of intensified vs. unintensified adjectives), adjective amplification (including the comparison between categories of boosters and maximisers), frequency of adjective moderation, frequency of adjective emphasis, difference between adjective amplification, moderation, and emphasis in terms of frequency.

1.4 What are the patterns of co-occurrence and repetition of ND intensifiers

1.5 Which intensifiers used by ND speakers which are shared with CA and which are not.

1.6 Possible linguistic origin of common adjective intensifiers in ND and possible grammaticalisation processes that these forms went through.

The current study is the first comprehensive study which elicits and documents the adjective intensification system in ND, categorises the devices according to their semantic function of intensification and calculates the frequency of this phenomenon in ND. This is important because of the long period of stigmatisation of Arabic varieties,

while most of these varieties were oral until the advent of online communications. As such, research on Arabic vernaculars still lags behind in many linguistic research areas. Hence, this study contributes to the development of Arabic vernaculars research and highlights its cultural and communicative value.

In the analysis, with regard to the first key point (1.1), I found that the taxonomy of Quirk et al. (1985) developed for English language intensifiers fits well with my ND data despite the linguistic differences between English and Arabic (see Chapter 4, Section 4.2.4). This acknowledges the significance of Quirk et al.'s model, specifically its semantic-pragmatic potential for cross-linguistic applicability, which enables cross-linguistic comparisons. For example, this model was implemented to categorise intensifiers (or amplifiers) in German (Stratton, 2020), Oslo Norwegian (Stratton and Sundquist, 2022), EA (Abou Shaady, 1995) and ND (Almossa, 2024). It also accounts for the expressive discursive function of intensifiers by underscoring how marking of stance, attitudes and emotions are manifested in linguistic systems. This knowledge is particularly relevant for the area of language typology and comparative research that explore how languages are similar or different in their methods of expressing intensity.

In terms of the points (1.2), (1.3), and (1.4), the analysis showed that adjective intensification is infrequently used, in comparison to the findings of other language studies. This naturally leads us to question the availability and frequency of other adjective intensification tools in ND other than the lexico-grammatical devices analysed in this study, such as the employment of phonological features like stress and intonation, and syntactic-stylistic features such as adjective repetition. However, the patterns in terms of the forms and functions within the system are similar to other languages. Amplifiers are more frequent than downtoners and boosters are more frequent than maximisers. Similar to the pattern that has been observed in other adjective intensification systems in Arabic and other languages (e.g., D'Arcy, 2015; Stratton and Sundquist, 2022; Almossa, 2024), two forms dominated each sub-category of intensifiers. The forms *marrah* and *jiddan* 'very' dominated the category of amplifiers; *šwayy* 'a little' and *kiḏā* 'kind of' dominated the category of downtoners; while *ṣarāḥah* 'honestly' and *waḷḷah* 'truly' dominated the category of emphasisers.

The findings in this study are valuable for studies of first and second language acquisition and these studies can utilise the findings to inform their methods and

interpretations. The findings can also inform language teaching and curriculum design especially with the growing interest in teaching SDs.

The scope of this study was geographically limited to Riyadh city. Future research could gain further insights by exploring other regions within the Najd area. In addition, as mentioned in Chapter 3 (Section 3.3.1) future research would benefit from adopting a more inclusive definition of ND. The study is contextually focused on adjective modification and the lexico-grammatical devices with the function of intensification. Consequently, the data presented does not encompass all forms of intensification in ND. Other syntactic environments in ND like verb intensification and forms like syntactic and phonological means of intensification still need to be uncovered. Even for adjective intensification devices, some known forms, such as those identified in the pilot study and those observed in Almossa's (2024) study, were not observed in the data; an issue that might be mitigated by the availability of large corpora. Further, the current sample did not include speakers who are older than 75 years old or younger than 18 years old. Hence, there could be some forms of features in the amplification systems of older or younger speakers that the current study did not capture. Because of the current developments undergoing in ND and other SDs and the scarcity of older data of these spoken varieties, collecting more data from the older generations would be of great value to reflecting how the intensification system in ND used to be by relying on the mechanism of apparent-time. This is critical given the age distribution that we observed in Chapter 5, where adjective unintensification was found to be practiced more by older speakers. It would also contribute to a better understanding of the age-related distributions that were observed, especially in deciding whether the observed patterns are actually a change-in-progress or an age-grading pattern.

Regarding key points (1.5) and (1.6), we have seen that many of the forms in the speech of ND speakers are also used in CA like *jiddan* 'very'. Using a corpus of CA proved beneficial in identifying forms which are probably shared with CA and those which are restricted to ND (see Chapter 4, Section 4.3). Forms like *bilmarrah* and *jiddan* were even found in a corpus of the seventh to eleventh century CA.[170] Tracking the historical developments of these forms constitutes a ripe area that needs to be uncovered given the availability of old CA data. The usage of CA variants by ND speakers also enabled

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[170] This roughly corresponds to the years 1- 442AH in the Islamic calendar.

cross-dialectal comparisons of forms that are used in CA which can be considered pan-Arab variants. We observed that there was a striking degree of similarity between some of the forms found in English and CA (e.g., *nawʕan mā* 'sort of'; see Chapter 4, Section 4.4.7). This underscores the possibility of influence from the English language through the process of calquing which opens up an area for further exploration in future research. Additionally, since the current study is based on spoken data, utilising other data sources such as written forms of ND in digital discourse could help uncover variations in the use of adjective intensifiers in these distinct discourses, which is what this study utilised in Chapter 8.

The second primary question was: **What is the role of linguistic and extralinguistic factors in the selection of adjective amplifiers and downtoners by ND speakers in Riyadh?** In this regard, amplifiers were found to be highly sensitive to social factors. Like the findings in previous research of other languages and speech communities, amplifiers in RNDC were more frequently used by female speakers and younger age groups. The segregated gender-based social networks in Saudi Arabia and the persistence of traditional gender roles, are likely explanation for the prevalence of distinctive linguistic styles among male and female speakers. These linguistic differences appear to persist even in the face of cultural change (e.g., English-speaking communities with less patriarchal social structures). Affective stance expressions, including the usage of amplifiers, are among the distinct characteristics of traditional feminine linguistic style (Carli, 1990; Podesva and Kajino, 2014; Fuchs, 2020) which is probably why the previous pattern was observed in the data. In terms of downtoners, they seemed to be more susceptible to linguistic factors than social factors. The pattern of *marrah* in RNDC is in line with the proposition that non-phonological variables are sharply stratified across social groups, which suggests that the principles which govern the variation of non-phonological variables is persistent cross-linguistically.

Within the second primary question, I sought to focus on the two frequent forms by answering the following sub-question: **What is the role of linguistic and extralinguistic factors in the selection of the adjective amplifiers *marrah* and *jiddan*?** In the analysis of these two forms, it was important to look at them as counterparts which could influence each other's distribution. This approach, which looks at these forms as two members in one system, facilitated the interpretation of the observed patterns. In the analysis of *marrah*, I found that female speakers used it significantly

more frequently than male speakers, and younger speakers produced it at a significantly higher rate compared to older age groups. In terms of the educational level of speakers, highly educated male speakers used *marrah* more frequently compared to males with lower education while highly educated female speakers used *marrah* less frequently than the low education group. The collocational behaviour of *marrah* based on the semantic context of the modified adjectives in the data and the age of the speaker suggested a semantic expansion (Chapter 6, Section 6.2.14.1). This was based on the increase in the semantic context of *marrah* over the age groups which was accompanied by a gradual increase in frequency. In terms of position, older speakers used *marrah* at a higher rate post-adjectivally while younger age groups used *marrah* at a higher rate pre-adjectivally. The pattern found in the variation of *marrah* suggests that there is a possibility of change in-progress which seems to be led by females and younger speakers. This may be the resolution to the conflicting findings and arguments about the canonical position of intensifiers in SDs. Therefore, this study is among the first explorations which draw attention to the change that could be taking place in the ND adjective intensification system (and perhaps other Arabic varieties). This area specifically should be further investigated using more data of ND and other SDs to uncover if this pattern is taking place across the Najd region and in other areas in the country, and the possible reasons behind this shift. It is also important to analyse the implications of this change in how people communicate in different contexts and express their social identities.

The finding that young male speakers are the ones who are using *marrah* at a higher rate can be interpreted in light of the social changes unfolding in the kingdom, which seem to be influencing the language of young individuals to a greater degree. These transformations might be propelling linguistic change by disassembling the traditional gender-based social networks. This is a significant insight into understanding the impact of the cultural changes, through the lens of language change.

This research offers insights by interpreting the observed variations through the lens of gender-based social networks and underscores the importance of examining their roles. Gender-based networks are particularly influential in conservative communities like the Saudi Najdi community, especially concerning linguistic variables expressing affective stances that are pivotal for constructing gender identities. Future research in similar cultural contexts should continue to explore this framework to

explicate and dismantle the social dynamics which influence linguistic behaviours in these contexts. Hence, these studies should pay particular attention not only to the mobility of individuals in general but also the degree of exposure to gender-based networks. Another aspect related to the age of speakers is the low usage of *marrah* (and other amplifiers) by older speakers overall. This could be an indication that perhaps lexico-grammatical intensification was rarely used in older varieties of ND; as mentioned above, the questions that should be raised are what intensification means other than these devices older speakers are using, and whether or not the increase in the frequency of adjective amplifiers affects those means. This study offered significant insights by applying the apparent-time mechanism to reflect on the past through the inclusion of older speakers. Given the absence of older ND data to explore the development which the dialect is undergoing, the variationist paradigm represents an ideal approach to compensate for the lack of such data when studying language change in Arabic varieties.

The changes that are taking place in the social structure of the Saudi community especially in Riyadh, necessitate tracking linguistic changes that might be occurring or will occur as the community undergoes the dismantling of traditional segregated networks. Hence, there is a need to conduct more variationist research in ND on variables of different linguistic levels to uncover the changes that could already be taking place. In this process, it is also essential to conduct research that foregrounds gender-based linguistic differences in ND and other SDs, so that we have a better understanding and interpretation of linguistic changes and their trajectories. Moreover, as researchers pointed out (Al-Rojaie, 2021; Alkhamees, 2023), a process of koineisation appears to be underway in Riyadh and the variationist approach is the most effective method to uncover these changes given the paucity of historical data.

In the distribution of the booster *jiddan*, middle-aged and older speakers exhibited the highest frequency of usage. Further, among the high education group, male speakers showed a higher frequency compared to highly educated females while individuals with lower educational levels showed a relatively comparable pattern of usage across genders. Linking this pattern to the segregated nature of Saudi society and the pattern that we observed for *marrah*, it appears that *marrah* is probably further advanced in its expansion and more established for females than males, which is the mechanical force behind this pattern. This is to say that females use it for various contexts whereas *jiddan* appears to play a minor role in fulfilling their contextual

requirements. For male speakers, contrastingly, *jiddan* might be more accessible given its pan-Arab nature and irrelevance to gender-based networks in the area. At the same time, there are implications through this sharing with CA that are linked to education which indicate that other kinds of gendered networks are at play, at least for older generations. This might be because men in Saudi Arabia used to have higher access to education (i.e., CA and its linguistic forms) compared to women of the same age. Another possible reason based on the observed patterns of aggregate data might be linked to the less personal affective stance of *jiddan* compared to *marrah* that aligns with the traditional masculine role of males in the Saudi community (Chapter 6, Section 6.4.2).

An essential area which remains to be explored in future research, is the influence of the gender of the interviewer, which, as previous research has suggested (Carli, 1990; Fuchs, 2020), may influence the usage of intensifiers, particularly in societies with traditional gender roles. Therefore, examining the impact of being interviewed by the opposite gender would be insightful, allowing for a comparison between the two interview settings. In addition, the effect of the relationship between participants in the data was not measured. It would be informing to see if, for instance, closer relations results in increasing the number of devices that are expressions of affective stances, which typically increase between interlocutors with higher alignment and vice versa (see Podesva, 2018). It might also affect the participants' choice of the amplifiers *marrah* or *jiddan* based on the formality between them. Further, the participants in the current study were not categorised based on their background in terms of their being Bedouin or sedentary, which could reveal variation not covered in the current study. Additionally, because the current data is not completely balanced in terms of educational backgrounds, having a more balanced sample would allow for explorations of further aspects such as, for example, the interaction between educational level and age of speaker.

Within the previous sub-question, I sought to answer the following question: **How are *marrah* and *jiddan* utilised by outliers in the data? And to what extent is their usage similar to or different from the observed social and linguistic patterns in the variationist analysis?** After outlining the linguistic patterns and trajectories of possible changes based on the collective results of all the speakers, it was necessary to use the outliers to present cases of individual styles in the usage of amplifiers. Analysis of

individual stylistic choices allowed for a thorough exploration of the data and underscored the agency of individual speakers in selecting certain amplifiers and possible meanings behind alternating between different forms. In addition to applying the social network framework, this study used Chambers' (2003) model of linguistic outliers which provided valuable explanatory power to the current contemporary ND data. This underscores the theoretical value of Chambers' model and demonstrates its cross-cultural and cross-temporal applicability. Therefore, this study sets an example for future research in ND, other Arabic varieties, and other languages which should explore the applicability of this model to add more insights to its cross-cultural implementation.

Based on the analysis of *jiddan* outliers (in addition to *marrah* outliers) we can conclude that education cannot be simply equated with social mobility or higher functional knowledge of CA especially for variables shared with CA. In addition, both *jiddan* outliers had one significant common factor regardless of the language or variety they utilised in their education and/or work, and regardless of their level of mobility: their senior leadership and administrative roles at their workplaces. In the Arab world, CA tends to align with the authoritative voice (Holes, 1993; Bassiouney, 2006) and is often associated with elites and well-read, educated people. Consequently, the usage of *jiddan* by these outliers likely enhances their authority, leadership, and professionalism. Hence, their amplification practices likely reflect a linguistic capital that reinforces their social status and prestige and distinguishes them within their communities. This observation is crucial because it adds another layer of understanding to the interpretation in Chapter 6 about the suggested objectivity and less expressive stance of *jiddan* and its possible alignment with the traditional masculine role. The observed amplification practices may be in fact a linguistic capital that both male and female can speakers adhere to. This could also interpret why male speakers used this form more frequently which is a result of their higher access to these leadership roles in the Saudi community. Further research should unpack these gendered patterns in similar communities.

The intensification system of the female outlier F7 reflects her access to female-based networks through the usage of *marrah* and her professional and educational background through her employment of *jiddan*, which differentiates her from most female speakers in the data. This analysis emphasises an important aspect that the current study underscores which is the importance of exploring intensifiers together

within a single system almost like oppositional poles (Ito and Tagliamonte, 2003). In the analysis of *marrah* and *jiddan* in Chapters 6 and 7, the interpretation of the distributions observed for *marrah* and *jiddan* was more comprehensible when we looked at them side-by-side. This method allowed for a thorough understanding of the system and the complex factors influencing the variation of amplifiers which is in-line with the approach third-wave variationists are implementing. Third-wave variationists do not just view linguistic variations as a result of external forces, but also a result of speakers' choices to construct identities and social meanings, which are influenced by how listeners will perceive and interpret their linguistic choices (Acton, 2021). This means that the choice of one amplifier rather than another in the system might be motivated by the social weight of these amplifiers. It would be also interesting to investigate in future research, in the current dataset or other data, the stylistic differences in the usage of amplifiers or intensifiers in general between speakers of the same gender and age but with different educational levels and professional backgrounds.

For all outliers, their personal interests seemed to influence the context of their employment of amplifiers. Therefore, categorising the topics into serious and light-hearted may be partly beneficial in predicting shifting tendencies towards CA or a formal register. However, increased usage of amplifiers in general might be better identified by using a method that captures additional elements of linguistic behaviour. This may be done, for example, by measuring positive non-verbal affective stances which indicate engagement such as: body movement and smiling and verbal affective stances such as: laughing and variation in pitch or intonation, faster speech rate and stress (see Podesva, 2018).

Overall, this study, through the exploration of *marrah* and *jiddan* using macro-level and micro-level analysis, underscores the necessity for conducting further variationist analysis of DPFs. This is because the distribution of DPFs informs the mechanism of language variation and change in Arabic variationist studies. In the current study, we have seen that CA, and its social and professional contexts, played a crucial role in interpreting the findings in the current study, and more studies can explain the best practices in handling the usage of CA variants within Arabic vernaculars. In previous investigations of phonological variables, CA variants were dismissed as irrelevant to the sociolinguistic environment. In the study of DPFs however, this study proposes that CA and its social weight must be brought to the scene. Further, the

analysis of individual stylistic amplification in the speech of outliers enabled the verification and enhancement of conclusions derived from traditional variationist analysis. Consequently, conducting further analyses of the style and idiolects of speakers when examining the variation of DPFs, and other types of linguistic variables, would help advance variationist studies not only in relation to Arabic varieties but also in other languages which is what third-wave variationists are calling for (Acton, 2021).

To further explore the social value of *marrah*, I sought to answer the following sub-question: **What are the linguistic features which are enregistered as part of the feminine linguistic style in the SD?** To answer this question, I conducted a case study of how certain linguistic features acquired specific social values in the Saudi community, including the amplifier *marrah*, based on data collected from social media platform X (formerly Twitter). The original post, as we have observed, is rooted in religious and cultural grounds which advise against resembling the opposite gender. This post triggered various stylised responses by male authors who presented parodies mocking feminine styles in their responses to that post. Other responses identified the features they perceived to be part of the feminine style and disliked men's usage of them. These responses demonstrate how linguistic features are used to perform and guard gender identities. This case study is particularly valuable because the data it relied on is digital discourse, which would not have been available to us in pre-social media era, especially for ND and other Arabic varieties, which are primarily oral forms. Digital advancements have transformed how people communicate and interact. This means that it is essential now to begin incorporating these distinctive twenty-first century modes of communication into our theoretical frameworks so that we are be able to deeply understand the processes of language interactions and associated ideologies. Social media platforms offer unparalleled opportunities for advancing the field of sociolinguistics by providing a valuable resource that bridge gaps in the literature. This is deemed significant especially to Arabic varieties, as well as under-studied languages in general. The case study highlights the value of utilising similar stylised performances to unlock enregistered linguistic forms and the ideological forces influencing them. Hence, adopting this approach not only uncovers how language forms may be used but also how they are employed to embody and perpetuate social ideologies. Digital discourse constitutes a fertile platform for such types of investigations.

Using Lakoff's (1985) identification of feminine language as a starting point, this case study presented the linguistic features mentioned or mimicked in these posts. Overall, the features being ridiculed in the posts seemed to point toward one common aspect which is that they reflect a style of a young, urban, female speaker with a progressive personality, and almost all are affective stance expressions. The current study is crucial because it unlocks a whole list of bundling linguistic features which together constitute part of feminine linguistic style. It was interesting to observe *marrah* bundling with trendy slang expressions and other recent innovative linguistic forms in ND, despite the fact the history of *marrah* dates back to at least 60 years based on available literature (see Abboud, 1964). The majority of these features are under researched in the wider area of the Arabic language which underscores the significance of the current investigation. It also underscores the need for further exploration which investigates the socio-pragmatic value of these features and their specific attachment to feminine language. Further, it would be insightful to conduct further investigations of people's attitudes toward *marrah* to validate the observations in Chapter 8. This could be through direct methods like asking individuals from various demographic backgrounds about their perceptions of *marrah*, or indirect methods such as exploiting the matched guise technique or other adaptations of this method. The literature also lacks studies that investigate whether the patterns of these features are reflected in the actual speech of ND female speakers as observed in Chapter 6 with the booster *marrah*.

This study underscores the significance of *marrah* as a multifunctional DPF which carries a heavy social weight and requires additional investigation to explore all its socio-pragmatic functions, as observed in Chapters 6, 7 and 8. A comprehensive approach of this variant which explores all its contextual functions would be beneficial for understanding more about its social and linguistic values including its grammaticalisation. This investigation approach would also be valuable for other frequent multifunctional intensifiers in the data like *jiddan* and *šwayy.* Also, the social value of *marrah* is a fertile area for future research in further data of ND and other SDs. As we also observed in Chapter 8 (Section 8.6.1.1), there appears to be another variant used in ND or other SDs featuring a long vowel *marrā*, which could be linked to the phonological phenomenon of final *-h* deletion in ND, which based on non-linguists' perceptions, seems to be on the rise. Thus, studying the phonological alternation between these two forms in relation to social and linguistic features in future research

is crucial for obtaining a comprehensive understanding of this variable. This also highlights the importance of incorporating phonological aspects in the variation of intensifiers and other DPFs.

9.2 Methodological Considerations and Reflections

Based on the current research, it appears that amplifiers are the most suitable for variationist analysis compared to downtoners and emphasisers because they are more frequent and they are more susceptible to social conditioning. There are certain amplification forms that were not frequent enough for statistical analysis (Chapter 4, Section 4.2.4). For these forms, using large corpora would enable deeper understanding of their social and linguistic patterning. Similarly, the variationist analysis of downtoners, which are less frequently used compared to amplifiers, might require larger corpora to get a deeper understanding of their patterns. Nonetheless, another approach that could be more appropriate for downtoners and infrequent amplifiers is a micro-level stylistic analysis, which investigates the employment of individual tokens of these devices in the speech of individual speakers. This is because the lower frequencies of these elements does not eliminate their potential significance (Moore, 2021, pp.54–55). Another significant methodological insight is whether or not the variable rule can be extended to the variation of emphasisers (Chapter 5, Section 5.2). The fluidity of their functional scope makes the application of the variable rule an inappropriate methodological approach. A corpus-based frequency analysis which does not necessarily restrict their context would be a more appropriate method. Hence, although the current project initially aimed at covering all sub-categories of intensifiers, it adapted significantly with further exploration of the data. A data-driven focus shaped the study into its current form.

The method used to circumscribe the variable context in this study, although it identifies the zero variant as explained in Chapter 3 (Section 3.10), involved a certain level of subjectivity in measuring the extent to which a specific adjective can be intensified, especially in the case of non-gradable adjectives. This may have had an effect on the proportion of the zero variant in the data which may result in discrepancies in cross-dialectal or cross-linguistic comparisons although the scope of variability will be limited to certain non-gradable adjectives. A possible alternative approach would be

adding all adjectives and then coding their gradability as a factor. However, this would also entail subjectivity in coding the gradability (see Chapter 3, Section 3.10) since gradability is a fluid and a complex concept that is dependent on many factors like the context and the language. This approach would also involve adding adjectives which are not typically intensified, breaching the principle of accountability. Another possible approach is to first extract all adjectives in the data regardless of their gradability, then in a second step compile a list of amplifiers based on the ones used in the data. This would be appropriate with part-of-speech tagged corpora. Hence, although this approach does not include the zero variant, it does not overlook some infrequent amplifiers. In the circumscription of variation context of other types of DPFs, the null-variant is not necessarily identified (see Waters, 2016) as seen in utterance-final tags (Denis and Tagliamonte, 2016) and general extenders (Tagliamonte and Denis, 2010; Pichler and Levey, 2011). Hence, future research should choose their elicitation method based on their goals and the questions that they aim to answer. In the present study, having a comprehensive overview of the whole system helps in answering the overarching research question, which explores what the adjective intensification system in the speech of ND speakers looks like. Therefore, identifying and measuring the frequency of the null-variant accommodates this purpose. Overall, extending the variable rule to include DPFs variation, may sometimes require the prioritisation of closing the variable context over the inclusion of the null-variant which may not always be possible or might involve certain limitations.

The semantic categorisation of adjectives in this study and other variationist studies of intensifiers followed Dixon's (2004) categorisation. This factor is used to assess and measure the diffusion of intensifiers across semantic contexts, which when cross-tabulated with age can give an indication of the development of intensifiers on the cline of grammaticalisation. In the ND data, I added further categories from Dixon (2004) to adapt for the wide semantic categories in the current non-English dataset. Further, it must be noted that categorising adjectives involves a certain level of subjectivity. Dixon's (2004, p.5) definition of each category is simple, and available literature on the variation of intensifiers provided some examples for each category. Hence, there remains a wide scope for personal judgment. To mitigate this aspect, in the current study I provided a list with all the adjectives in the data in each category which can function as a guide for future research. Other factors like adjective emotionality and polarity, which are less

critical to interpreting the level of grammaticalisation of intensifiers, may also involve a certain level of personal judgment. Future research should look into mitigating the subjectivity by utilising computational tools of Natural Language Processing that can automatically and objectively categorise adjectives according to their semantic category, polarity, and emotionality. This will make the coding process less time-consuming, less challenging, and more consistent, making replicating the results more accessible.

Another aspect that was investigated in other variationist studies of intensifiers is the syntactic function of the adjective into predicative and attributive functions. This factor was added as an indication of grammaticalisation based on studies of the English language. Yet, this factor in RNDC does not reflect grammaticalisation. Instead, we can use this factor as an indication of a formal register since, for instance, attributive adjectives are typically used more frequently in that register (Biber and Conrad, 2005, p.518). Finally, the position of intensifiers in RNDC is a significant factor and future research on Arabic intensifiers should continue exploring its influence, especially in ND which has been found to be undergoing changes. Overall, parameters that were found to be significant and relevant to the distribution of intensifiers in English data, which constitute the bulk of available literature, may not necessarily be relevant to non-English data. To advance the study of intensifiers in the Arabic language or other non-English languages, linguists must look beyond English literature and aspire to incorporate those with greatest relevance to their data. For intensifiers of Arabic adjectives, other aspects such as the morphological pattern may be significant. As noted in Appendix A, some patterns express intensity while others do not, which may, for instance, be relevant to the collocational behaviour of intensifiers.

Further, the high similarity between the results of the current project and Almossa (2024), despite the distinct approaches to data collection, especially in terms of the social factors, carries methodological significance. This suggests that collecting language data through interviews is effective in reflecting broader linguistic patterns. Finally, using online data collection in the current study proved to be beneficial in many ways despite the some limitations experienced throughout the process. Future research should continue to benefit from this method, especially within conservative environments like Saudi Arabia, and especially for studying variables that do not require specific conditions for the voice recordings like phonological variables. The current study

sets an example of how we can tailor data collection methods to align with the values of a targeted community, which might be different from the Western values in relation to which most of the methodological principles in the relevant literature are established. Turning-off the cameras during interviews to maintain the privacy of individuals was an adaptation employed in the current study to meet the conservative nature of the Saudi community.

9.3 Concluding Remarks

Throughout this project, which emerged from my interest in the function and sociolinguistic variation of DPFs in ND, I aimed to explore the nature and complexities of ND adjective intensifiers including the social and linguistic parameters that condition their usage. The research offers methodological and theoretical insights which contribute generally to enhancing future investigations of these devices and other DPFs, especially in relation to the interplay between local and standard variants. This can be implemented in other similar contexts with diglossic environments by reflecting on the pragmatic context and the social structure of those settings. Finally, this study contributes to documenting intensifiers in ND, enhancing our understanding of sociolinguistic variation in non-Western environments, especially variation of DPFs and developing socio-pragmatic theoretical frameworks based on spoken and digital discourses.

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Appendices

Appendix 1: Ethical Approval

FAHC 21-116 - Study Approval Confirmation

AR

○ AHC Research Ethics <AHCResearchEthics@leeds.ac.uk>

Friday 24 June 2022 at 13:13

To: ● Randah Alfuhaydi

Cc: ○ Mel Evans ⌄

Dear Randah

FAHC 21-116 – The use of Adjective Intensifiers by Najdi Dialect Speakers in Riyadh

NB: All approvals/comments are subject to compliance with current University of Leeds and UK Government advice regarding the Covid-19 pandemic.

I am pleased to inform you that the above research ethics application has been reviewed by AHC Committee and I can confirm a favourable ethical opinion based on the documentation received at date of this email.

Please retain this email as evidence of approval in your study file.

Please notify the committee if you intend to make any amendments to the original research as submitted and approved to date. This includes recruitment methodology; all changes must receive ethical approval prior to implementation. Please see http://ris.leeds.ac.uk/downloads/download/179/amendment_form or contact the Research Ethics & Governance Administrator for further information (ahcresearchethics@leeds.ac.uk) if required.

Ethics approval does not infer you have the right of access to any member of staff or student or documents and the premises of the University of Leeds. Nor does it imply any right of access to the premises of any other organisation, including clinical areas. The committee takes no responsibility for you gaining access to staff, students and/or premises prior to, during or following your research activities.

Please note: You are expected to keep a record of all your approved documentation, as well as documents such as sample consent forms, risk assessments and other documents relating to the study. This should be kept in your study file, which should be readily available for audit purposes. You will be given a two week notice period if your project is to be audited.

If you require this confirmation in letter form, for example to show to external funders, then please do email me. I am happy to provide this if required.

It is our policy to remind everyone that it is your responsibility to comply with Health and Safety, Data Protection and any other legal and/or professional guidelines there may be.

I hope the study goes well.

Very best wishes,

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Dear Randah

FAHC 21-116 Amendment 1 – July 2023 - The use of Adjective Intensifiers by Najdi Dialect Speakers in Riyadh

NB: All approvals/comments are subject to compliance with current University of Leeds and UK Government advice regarding the Covid-19 pandemic.

We are pleased to inform you that your amendment to your research ethics application has been reviewed by the Faculty of Arts, Humanities & Communications Research Ethics Committee (AHC REC) and we can confirm that ethics approval is granted based on the documentation received at date of this email.

The reviewers had some comments for your consideration which are below, these do not impact your approval. If you decide to update any documents in response to these comments please submit these to this email address for storage.

Please retain this email as evidence of approval in your study file.

Please notify the committee if you intend to make any further amendments to the research as submitted and approved to date. This includes recruitment methodology; all changes must receive ethical approval prior to implementation. Please see https://ris.leeds.ac.uk/research-ethics-and-integrity/applying-for-an-amendment/ or contact the Research Ethics & Governance Administrator for further information ahcresearchethics@leeds.ac.uk if required.

Ethics approval does not infer you you have the right of access to any member of staff or student or documents and the premises of the University of Leeds. Nor does it imply any right of access to the premises of any other organisation, including clinical areas. The committee takes no responsibility for you gaining access to staff, students and/or premises prior to, during or following your research activities.

Please note: You are expected to keep a record of all your approved documentation, as well as documents such as sample consent forms, risk assessments and other documents relating to the study. This should be kept in your study file, which should be readily available for audit purposes. You will be given a two week notice period if your project is to be audited.

It is our policy to remind everyone that it is your responsibility to comply with Health and Safety, Data Protection and any other legal and/or professional guidelines there may be.

I hope the study continues to go well.

Best wishes

Appendix 2: (Questionnaire) Information of the Participants (Arabic Version)

استخدام متحدثي اللهجة النجدية في مدينة الرياض لصيغ توكيد الصفات

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معلومات المشاركين: Page 5

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معلومات المشاركين في الدراسة

أرجو تعبئة المعلومات بأكبر قدر ممكن من الدقة

17. الجنسية ✳ *Required*

○ سعودي
○ غير سعودي

18. العمر ✳ *Required*

Please enter a decimal number, for example: 9.63.
The number should be 18 or greater.

19. الجنس ✳ *Required*

○ أنثى
○ ذكر

20. المرحلة التعليمية ✳ *Required*

○ ابتدائي
○ متوسط
○ ثانوي
○ دبلوم
○ بكالوريوس
○ ماجستير
○ دكتوراه

21. هل درست في مدارس حكومية أم أهلية؟

○ حكومية
○ أهلية

a. ماهي المراحل التي درستها في مدارس أهلية وماهي المدرسة/المدارس التي درست فيها؟

```
┌─────────────────────────┐
│                         │
│                         │
│                         │
└─────────────────────────┘
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22. هل تملك المسكن الذي تسكن فيه؟ ✳ *Required*

○ ملك
○ إيجار
○ آخر

23. مانوع المسكن الذي تعيش فيه؟ ✳ *Required*

○ فله كبيرة
○ دوبلكس ـ فلة صغيرة
○ شقة
○ آخر

24. المهنة ✳ *Required*

```
┌──────────────────┐
└──────────────────┘
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25. مهنة الأب ✳ *Required*

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┌──────────────────┐
└──────────────────┘
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26. مهنة الأم ✳ *Required*

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┌──────────────────┐
└──────────────────┘
```

27. مكان الميلاد- المدينة والمحافظة ✳ *Required*

```
┌──────────────────┐
└──────────────────┘
```

28. هل أنت من سكان مدينة الرياض؟ ✳ *Required*

○ نعم
○ لا

29. في أي حي تسكن في مدينة الرياض؟ ✳ *Required*

[   ]

30. القبيلة *Optional*

[   ]

31. جنسية الأب ✳ *Required*

○ سعودي
○ غير سعودي

32. مكان ميلاد الأب ✳ *Required*

[   ]

33. جنسية الأم ✳ *Required*

○ سعودية
○ غير سعودية

34. مكان ميلاد الأم

[   ]

35. هل أصل والدك من منطقة مختلفة عن منطقة نجد مثلا من المنطقة الجنوبية مثل أبها والباحة،أو المنطقة الغربية، مثل مكة وجدة والمدينة المنورة، أوالمنطقة الشرقية مثل الأحساء أو الخبر ✳ *Required*

○ نعم
○ لا

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36. هل أصل والدتك من منطقة مختلفة عن منطقة نجد مثلا من المنطقة الجنوبية مثل أبها والباحة،أو المنطقة الغربية، مثل مكة وجدة والمدينة المنورة، أوالمنطقة الشرقية مثل الأحساء أو الخبر ❋ *Required*

- ○ نعم
- ○ لا

37. الحالة الإجتماعية ❋ *Required*

- ○ أعزب
- ○ متزوج
- ○ أرمل
- ○ مطلق

38. الايميل ❋ *Required*

[   ]

39. رقم الجوال ❋ *Required*

[   ]

40. أفضل طريقة للتواصل معي هي عن طريق ❋ *Required*

- ○ الايميل
- ○ الجوال - واتساب

< Previous   Finish ✔

Appendix 3: (Questionnaire) Information of the Participants (English Translation)

The Use of Adjective Intensifiers by Najdi Dialect Speakers in Riyadh

75% complete

Page 4: Participants Personal Information

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Participants Personal Information

(please fill the information below with accurate information)

17. Nationality ✳ *Required*

- ○ Saudi
- ○ Non-Saudi

18. Age ✳ *Required*

[   ]

19. Sex ✳ *Required*

- ○ Female
- ○ Male

20. Educational Qualification ✳ *Required*

- ○ Elementary
- ○ Intermediate
- ○ High School
- ○ Diploma
- ○ Bachelor's
- ○ Masters
- ○ PhD

21. Place of living ✳ *Required*

- ○ Owned
- ○ Rented
- ○ Other

22. What is the type of place do you live in? ✳ *Required*

- large house
- small house (duplex)
- Flat
- Other

23. Occupation ✳ *Required*

24. Father's Occupation ✳ *Required*

25. Mother's Occupation ✳ *Required*

26. Place of birth (city) ✳ *Required*

27. Do you live in Riyadh? ✳ *Required*

- Yes
- No

   a. Did you spend your whole life in Riyadh? ✳ *Required*

   - Yes
   - No

28. Which neighborhood do you live in? ✳ *Required*

29. Tribal affiliation

30. Father's nationality ✳ *Required*

- ○ Saudi
- ○ Non-Saudi

31. Father's place (city/twon) of birth? ✳ *Required*

[   ]

32. Mother's nationality ✳ *Required*

- ○ Saudi
- ○ Non-Saudi

33. Mother's place (city/twon) of birth? ✳ *Required*

[   ]

34. Is your father originally from an area other than Najd area? such as the Western Reagion (e.g. Jeddah, Makkah, Madinah), the Eastern Region (e.g. Ahsa or Khobar) or the Southern Region (e.g. Abha, Baha)? ✳ *Required*

- ○ Yes
- ○ No

35. Is your mother originally from an area other than Najd area? such as the Western Reagion (e.g. Jeddah, Makkah, Madinah), the Eastern Region (e.g. Ahsa or Khobar) or the Southern Region (e.g. Abha, Baha)? ✳ *Required*

- ○ Yes
- ○ No

a. What is their area/city of origin? ✳ *Required*

[   ]

36. Marital Status ✳ *Required*

- ○ Married
- ○ Single
- ○ Divorced
- ○ Widow

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37. Email ✳ *Required*

[   ]   348

38. Cell Phone number ✳ *Required*

[   ]

39. Preferred way to contact me is by ✳ *Required*

○ email
○ Phone - WhatsApp

< Previous   **Finish ✔**

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Appendix 4: Interview Questions (Arabic Version)

1. هل تعتقد أن المجتمع السعودي يعاني من العنصرية؟ 2. كساكن في مدينة الرياض، هل تعتقد أنه يوجد فرق في الطبقة الاجتماعية بين أحياء مدينة الرياض؟ 3. ما أكثر شيء تنتقده أو تود تغييره في المجتمع السعودي؟ 4. هل دور المرأة في المجتمع السعودي الآن مثل ما كان في السابق؟ 5. ما رأيك في التعليم الإلكتروني؟ ماهي إيجابياته وسلبياته؟ 6. هل تعتقد أن دمج المقررات الإسلامية قرار صائب؟ 7. هل تعتقد أن تمكن الناس الآن من اللغة العربية الفصحى في المملكة مثل مستوى تمكنهم في السابق؟ 8. ما رأيك بإعادة مقرر الخط العربي للمناهج السعودية؟ 9. هل تؤيد استخدام اللهجة السعودية في مجالات معينة مثل الإعلانات والتسويق والسياحة؟ 10. هل تعتقد انه من المناسب تدريس اللهجة السعودية للأجانب (بالإضافة للغة عربية الفصحى)؟ (إذا كان جوابك نعم فأي لهجة نختار للتدريس؟) 11. هل تعتقد أن الناس يتأثرون بمشاهير السوشل ميديا؟ 12. كيف تواجه غلاء الأسعار؟ هل تقاطع المنتجات التي ارتفع سعرها؟ 13. هل سبق ومررت بموقف اقتربت فيه من الموت؟ 14. هل سبق وكتبت تعهد أو حصلت لك مشكلة في المدرسة؟ 15. ما لشيء الذي ستتذكره دائما عن أزمة كورونا؟ 16. ما هو أصعب قرار اتخذته في حياتك؟	أسئلة جدية
1. وش أكثر شي تحبه /تكرهه في الرياض؟ 2. هل حصل لك موقف ما تنساه مع اوبر؟ وش حصل؟ 3. هل فيه 'مثل' دايم تردده (أو أحد من أفراد عائلتك يردده)؟ متى تقولونه؟ 4. وش روتينكم في الأعياد؟ هل روتينكم الآن نفس لما كنتوا صغار؟ 5. وش اللعبة اللي كنت تحب تلعبها يوم كنت صغير؟ 6. هل تحب التسوق الالكتروني؟ لماذا؟ وش أكثر شي تشتريه أون لاين؟. 7. وش أفضل وقت عندك في اليوم؟ وش تسوي فيه عادة؟ 8. هل فيه عادة ودك مره تكتسبها؟ حاولت؟ ليش هذي العادة بالضبط؟ هل فيه عادة ودك تتخلص منها؟ 9. هل عندك هوايات؟ وش تسوي في وقت فراغك ؟ 10. هل تحب الأكل في المطاعم؟ ماهو مطعمك المفضل؟ لماذا؟ صف لنا شكل المطعم. ما هو طبقك المفضل في ذلك المطعم. 11. هل انت من النوع اللي عنده أصدقاء كثير أو تفضل يكون عندك عدد محدود جدا من الأصدقاء؟ لماذا؟ 12. من كان آفضل/ أسوأ أستاذ في المدرسة ؟ ليش؟	أسئلة غير جدية

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Appendix 5: Interview Questions (English Translation)

Formal/Serious	1. Do you think Saudi society suffers from racism? Give examples, and if yes, how can we eliminate it? 2. As a resident of Riyadh, do you think that there is a difference in the social class of people based on their neighbourhood? 3. What is the one thing that you would like to change in Saudi society? 4. Is the role of women in the society now the same as it was in the past? 5. What do you think about online learning? What are its advantages and disadvantages? 6. Do you think combining the Islamic courses into one book was the right decision? 7. Do you think that people's competence of MSA is the same as that of previous generations in Saudi Arabia? 8. What is your opinion about re-introducing the orthography course in the Saudi curricula? 9. Do you support using the Saudi dialect for specific purposes, such as marketing, advertisements and tourism? 10. Do you think that teaching the Saudi dialect to foreigners (in addition to MSA) is appropriate? (If yes, then which dialect should be taught?) 11. Do you think that people are affected by social media influencers? 12. How do you face the increase in prices? Do you stop buying the goods with an increased price? 13. Have you ever been in a situation where you almost died? 14. Have you ever got into trouble in school? 15. From your experience, what is the one thing that you will always remember about this pandemic? 16. What's the most difficult decision you have ever taken?
Informal/non-serious	1. What do you like/hate the most about Riyadh? 2. Is there any Uber trip that you cannot forget? Tell us about it. 3. Is there a certain proverb that you (or any member of your family) always use? When do you use it? 4. What is your routine during Eid? Is your routine now similar to when you were kids? 5. What was your favourite game as a kid? 6. Do you like online shopping? Why? what do you usually buy? 7. What is your favourite time of the day? What do you do at that time? 8. What is the habit that you would like to develop? Did you try? Why this habit specifically? 9. Do you have hobbies? What do you like to do in your free time? (if you have any) 10. Do you like eating out? What is your favourite restaurant? Why? Describe it. What is your favourite dish at that restaurant? 11. Do you like to have many friends, or you are the kind of person who prefers to have limited number of friends? 12. Who was your favourite/least favourite teacher in school? Why?

Appendix 6: Amplifiers in CA (from arTenTen18 and Timestamped JSI Arabic Web Corpus 2021-04 Using Sketch Engine)

CONCORDANCE

Arabic Web 2018 (arTenTen8) • 1,390,357

simple • 2,237,308
418.82 per million tokens • 0.042%

context [tag="adj" ""] {-1..1,.KWIC}
260.27 per million tokens • 0.026%

Get more space

KWIC ▼

Details	Left context	KWIC	Right context

(Concordance lines — domains listed left to right:)

1. pcu.ps
2. pcu.ps
3. mhk.sa
4. m9c.net
5. tnmv.ma
6. tnmv.ma
7. tnmv.ma
8. tnmv.ma
9. 8hwa.com
10. 6pc9.com
11. 6pc9.com
12. monir.ly
13. monir.ly
14. monir.ly
15. ip4s.com
16. s7te.com
17. s7te.com
18. s7te.com
19. s7te.com

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CONCORDANCE

Timestamped JSI web corpus 2021-04 Arabic

simple سبب • 22,782 • 0.025%
248.08 per million tokens • 0.025%

context [tag="(DT)?JJ.*"] (-1,-1,-KWIC) • 20,618
224.52 per million tokens • 0.022%

KWIC ▶

Left context   KWIC   Right context

#	Details			
1	youm7.com	ات/الاحتياجات تتطلب هذه المغذيات ب كمية	**صغيرة**	**جدا**	بعد نقص البروتين نادرا ان احساسنا
2	misrday.com	و الصغيرة و المتوسطة الحجم ل تعزيز الوظائف ، في تونس	**الصغيرة**	**جدا**	المدنية منحة مالية ب قيمة 25 مليون يورو ل صالح البرنامج ل المؤسسات
3	misrday.com	امام جذر القمر قرار جيد من حب	**القبان** ">/s></s>	**جدا**	د ل ضيف الوقت ، و الوئش و محمد هاني و عبد الله جمعة و عمر جابر ظهروا ب مستوى
4	misrday.com	6 لاعبين ضم ل اللاعبين وائل القبان	**</s></s>/> اضعاف**	**جدا**	. افضل لعب خط وسط مدافع في مصر و هو سليم ، و ل العالم حمدى ف تحى لاعب
5	dostor.org	بعد خسارة هم ل المباراة. <s></s>/>	**متدني**	**جدا**	برنامج "أوضة اللبس ، المذاع على قناة "النهار ، مع احترامي ل الجيل الحالي ف هو
6	echoroukonline...	ب ان هم يقومون ب التقاط الصور مع الخصم	**كبيرة**	**جدا**	تونسا المباراة ب شكل جيد ل الغاية ، <s></s>/>العرض الذي اوجدت ها فرنسا في الواقع
7	echoroukonline...	مفضلة جدا ، ف ان فرنسا ايضا	**خطيرة**	**جدا**	د ل الغاية ، و ان لم تكن خطيرة جدا <s></s>/>العرض الذي اوجدت ها فرنسا في الواقع
8	echoroukonline...	ل فرنسا ل تتمكن من اقتحام مرمى البوسنة و ال	**مفضلة**	**جدا**	بيرة جدا ، و ان لم تكن خطيرة جدا <s></s>/>من حيث حيازة الكرة ، ف ان فرنسا ايضا
9	akhbarelyom.com	خدمة المواطن المصري البسيط ، مضيفا ان ه عند توني	**محا**	**جدا**	ل الوطن و افني الكبير من عمر ه في الجنزوري كان
10	gulf365.com	محمد يوسوفو و المرتقب الخميس <s></s>/> و يحتج منافس ه	**المقرب**	**جدا**	من الرئيس المنتهية ولاية ه محمد بازوم الرئيس الجديد محمد
11	masrawy.com	التي تغطي الحدث على مدار اليومين السابقين ب طريقة شبه	**سعيد**	**جدا**	ب ، تاريخ بلد هم و ل ذلك ان القابلية تحظى ب اهتمام عالمي غير عادي
12	echoroukonline...	جوى على اللاعبين ب حرمان هم من ك	**خاصة**	**جدا**	سابقة . <s></s>/>تتواصل تحضيرات شبيبة القبائل ل نهائي كاس الجمهورية في اجواء
13	echoroukonline...	، نتنقم ب ها من اله	**صعبة**	**جدا**	حيث قال محمد ب خصوص توقعاته حول المباراة "حقيقة ، المواجهة بين الفريقين و شائي من تسجيل جالبت
14	echoroukonline...	بيع التذاكر الخاصة ب نهائي الطبعة الـ	**متدفقة**	**جدا**	نة في تاريخ النادي و محو اختفاق الموسم الماضي <s></s>/> و كانت ادارة "العميد
15	alaraby.co.uk	، و استاذ في الاعلام ب سبب احمد موسى	**ضخمة**	**جدا**	ت مدهش ب الطبع و شبه متفق على ه <s></s>/> و لكن من يومين يتم ترويج معركة
16	albiladpress.co...	ما بين احمد موسى ، و استاذ في الاعلام ب سبب	**خطيرة**	**جدا**	مركز الوروبي ل السلام و حل النزاعات ، ان الاختراق الاخواني في المانيا بلغ مستويات
17	gulfeyes.net	و هم من يقوم ب العمل في كافة هذا المركز و هذا شيء مقر	**سعيد**	**جدا**	عربيين و ممرضات في كافة انحاء المملكة ، ف هم عملوا عمل جبار و مثال ، و ان ني
18	almasryalyoum.c...	التي تعرض المظاهر الحضارية المصرية المختلفة على مر العصور ، <s></s>/> و يعرض موقع الـ	**القابلة**	**جدا**	بن المتاحف العالمية على المستوى الاقليمي و الدولي ، حيث ان ه من بين المتاحف

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CONCORDANCE

Get more space

simple كبير ● 11,787
128.35 per million tokens ● 0.013%

Timestamped JSI web corpus 2021-04 Arabic

context [tag="(DT)?NN.*"] ([-1..1,_KWIC]) ● 920
10.02 per million tokens ● 0.001%

filter (#1818102|#117294|#3405368|#2188692|#4635135|#... ● 24
0.26 per million tokens ● 0.0000026%

Details		Left context	KWIC	Right context

1. beirutobserver....
2. elmogaz.com
3. al-sharq.com
4. turess.com
5. aleqt.com
6. al-madina.com
7. elmaouid.dz
8. alarab.co.uk
9. youm7.com
10. akhbarelyoum.com
11. alquds.co.uk
12. almashhad-alyem...
13. raya.com
14. ahlmasrnews.com
15. alaraby.co.uk
16. alaraby.co.uk
17. gulf365.com

CONCORDANCE

Arabic Web 2018 (arTenTen18)

simple [لفظ] كثير • 1,108,675
207.54 per million tokens • 0.021%

context [tag="adj.*"] (-1...,-KWIC) • 72,471
13.57 per million tokens • 0.0014%

filter [#171511111#1459381|#14557571|#1973041|#2099602|... • 20
less than 0.01 • 3.7e-7%

Get more space

KWIC ▼

	Details	Left context	KWIC	Right context
1	alrumi.com		كثيراً	محظوظين
2	alrumi.com		كثيراً	مختلفاً
3	mesh3l.net		كثيراً	ومثقّفاً
4	ghrebaa.com		كثيراً	مميزة
5	fajr.sa		كثيراً	الساطع
6	a3lanat.org		كثيراً	متوفرة
7	sooqukaz.com		كثيراً	خطير
8	hotline6.net		كثيراً	مختلف
9	herbarab.com		كثيراً	مشغولين
10	hosh.ps		كثيراً	مهم
11	marrokia.com		كثيراً	ومعقد
12	daralhna.com		كثيراً	منتشر
13	ncro.sy		كثيراً	مختلفة
14	tech-fans.com		كثيراً	معروف
15	fajr.sa		كثيراً	هناك
16	own0.com		كثيراً	صعبة
17	alforiagy.com		كثيراً	الهامة
18	ncro.sy		كثيراً	المعنية
19	al3asma.com		كثيراً	متناقلاً
20	arabtx.com		كثيراً	معروف

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CONCORDANCE

#	Details	
1	ia.iq	
2	nmfy.org	
3	MokDz.com	
4	aph.med.sa	
5	aph.med.sa	
6	sh2hab.com	
7	albeet.net	
8	acakuw.com	
9	kataluj.com	
10	ghrebaa.com	
11	ency-bl.com	
12	ojuba.org	
13	aldawlea.com	
14	store313.com	
15	fajr.sa	
16	sadekeen.com	
17	agelturk.com	
18	maastaar.com	
19	kon.news	
20	elagha.net	

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CONCORDANCE

Arabic Web 2018 (arTenTen18)

simple بشكل فظيع • 1,105
0.21 per million tokens • 0.000021%

context {tag="adj","..."} (-1..1,<KWIC>) • 250
0.05 per million tokens • 0.0000047%

filter [#782880651#9321036...#334395576]#3... • 23
less than 0.01 • 4.3e-7%

Get more space

KWIC ▸

	Details	Left context	KWIC	Right context
1	3arrafni.com	...	فظيع بشكل	...
2	kifache.com	...	فظيع بشكل	...
3	takweem.com	...	فظيع بشكل	...
4	ararnews.com	...	فظيع بشكل	...
5	alhagigah.net	...	فظيع بشكل	...
6	hyaty.net	...	فظيع بشكل	...
7	uae7.com	...	فظيع بشكل	...
8	blqrm.com	...	فظيع بشكل	...
9	adenghd.net	...	فظيع بشكل	...
10	3ddab.com	...	فظيع بشكل	...
11	alarab.com	...	فظيع بشكل	...
12	al-manshour.org	...	فظيع بشكل	...
13	klma.org	...	فظيع بشكل	...
14	annachra.net	...	فظيع بشكل	...
15	albehar.org	...	فظيع بشكل	...
16	brg8.com	...	فظيع بشكل	...
17	crezeman.com	...	فظيع بشكل	...
18	sudaress.com	...	فظيع بشكل	...
19	rigala.net	...	فظيع بشكل	...
20	sudantodayonlin...	...	فظيع بشكل	...

CONCORDANCE   Arabic Web 2018 (arTenTen18)

Get more space

simple • **290** المادة غير العادة • 0.0000054%
0.05 per million tokens • 0.0000054%

context [tag="adj" ""] (-1,..1,..KWIC) • **61**
0.01 per million tokens • 0.0000011%

filter [#2071#42213]#43#43158781#54671170311#507801090..... • **19**
less than 0.01 • 3.6e-7%

Details	Left context	KWIC	Right context

1. jawallak.com — ... KWIC: **على غير العاده**
2. 7mry.com — KWIC: **على غير العاده**
3. alarabyanews.com... — KWIC: **على غير العاده**
4. lm3a.net — KWIC: **على غير العاده**
5. jnob-jo.com — KWIC: **على غير العاده**
6. ashefaa.com — KWIC: **على غير العاده**
7. yoo7.com — KWIC: **على غير العاده**
8. graaam.com — KWIC: **على غير العاده**
9. goodreads.com — KWIC: **على غير العاده**
10. rewity.com — KWIC: **على غير العاده**
11. rewity.com — KWIC: **على غير العاده**
12. swalif.com — KWIC: **على غير العاده**
13. copts-united.co... — KWIC: **على غير العاده**
14. alhilalclub.com — KWIC: **على غير العاده**
15. stories-blog.co... — KWIC: **على غير العاده**
16. uaezoom.com — KWIC: **على غير العاده**
17. altibbi.com — KWIC: **على غير العاده**
18. rabitat-alwaha.... — KWIC: **على غير العاده**
19. the-greatnews.c.... — KWIC: **على غير العاده**

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	Details	Left context	KWIC	Right context
1	vetogate.com	و على نطمئن ، فيء من المطبخ ، و كان كلما نؤمن ل استحضار شيء من المطبخ ، و	**منتشيا على غير العادة**	قد احضر نا مع ن االة تسجيل ، و وضعنا ها سرا تحت الطاولة ، و كان " المأخوط "
2	swissinfo.ch	االبريطانية الإذاعة هيئة الى (عاما 41) حمزة الامير نقل محامي ه تضمن ها تسجيل ل استقل ن ا	**حادة على غير العادة**	و استقرار " الاردن الذي " بعد خليفة رئيسا ل الولايات المتحدة >/ک<د>ک و ب لهجة
3	elwatannews.com	خارج و العمل في تنجح سوف خشيا ، ما تسبب في موت ه بعد عجز اليات ها على اعتاد ها الناس معظم ن	**جديدا على غير العادة**	كان يصنع كل شيء في البيت ه الذي اختار ان يكون ب احكام ، من ها شئت ه التي
4	alankabout.com	الامور ل تستقل ان يجب ، ف السيطرة على ذلك ل تستقل في تنجح سوف خشيا >/ک<د>ک	**قوية على غير العادة**	تلك - هكذا يكون التقدم الى الامام .>/ک<د>ک اليوم ، مهارات ال التنظيمية و الاجتماعية
5	aleqt.com	العامة في تظهر ما نادرا التي ، الصلبة الحالة ب شان موضوع ب بطاريات >/ک<د>ک ما ب	**هادئا على غير العادة**	ب شان موضوع ب بطاريات الحالة الصلبة ، الرئيس التنفيذي ل شركة صناعة السيارات الكهربائية تسلا ،
6	alghad.com	ال الدراسة تفاقم تونس >/ک<د>ک… >/ک<د>ک كورونا العالية ب السحب من درجات ، >/ک<د>ک	**دافئا على غير العادة**	، العالية ب >/ک<د>ک و بينما يطرا ارتفاع اخر على درجات الحرارة الليلية ، يكون الطقس مع ظهور كميات من
7	islamonline.net	ب ها يحظار كان ما قط على واضح شكل ب كورونا جائحة ان ارت ، و الاقتصادية و الصحية ها نبهاة خلاف ب	**مخالفة على غير العادة**	مرات و برامج >/ک<د>ک لكن الحفاظ يوم التراث العالمي هذا العام يمر ب صورة ف ،
8	youm7.com	ها ب يخطار ان في غيبة ها و وقتت ، اذ وقت في غيبة ها ب مجرد رؤية ها هذا المشهور الشيخ الذي	**مفتوحا على غير العادة و**	قريبة او دوافع ها او الجاني ، اذ هاتفت ان باب الشقة كان صرخت مستقينة ب مجرد رؤية ها و ان ها
9	albayan.ae	كوبس يقول و >/ک<د>ک.. سنوات منذ واحدة مرة الجامعة حرم دون من ان يكونوا قد ارتادوا	**يأمرة على غير العادة**	ي حي مدرسون كثر ب رؤية طلاب يعودون هم منذ وقت طويل يحققون نتائج دراسية ، من دون ان يكونوا قد ارتادوا

CONCORDANCE

Arabic Web 2018 (arTenTen18)

simple القايه • 7,278
1.36 per million tokens • 0.00014%

context [tag="adj"] [] (-1..1,.KWIC) • 4,369
0.82 per million tokens • 0.00008%

Get more space ⊕ ⊖ 🖼 ☆

KWIC ▾ + ⊙ 🖼 📊 🔲

	Details	Left context	KWIC	Right context
1	asadx.net	...	القايه مهماً	...
2	prokr.net	...	القايه وفعال	...
3	nisfo.com	...	القايه مهم <s></s>	...
4	elsaqr.com	...	القايه متعددة	...
5	elsaqr.com	...	القايه صعبا	...
6	elsaqr.com	...	القايه والمروقة	...
7	elsaqr.com	...	القايه صعبة وكبيرة	...
8	ftp192.com	...	القايه <s></s> ربما	...
9	zoohor.com	...	القايه المكافحة	...
10	boyoout.com	...	القايه هام	...
11	boyoout.com	...	القايه وسريع	...
12	a-durra.com	...	القايه تصمير	...
13	e3rfkhbr.com	...	القايه صعبه	...
14	alkarrete.com	...	القايه ورأق	...
15	elagha.net	...	القايه قوية	...
16	kuwait-adv.com	...	القايه معبرة	...
17	tadawoo.com	...	القايه طيبي	...
18	moga-comedy.org	...	القايه مزتبج	...
19	saqraldamam.com	...	القايه مزتحة	...
20	shamsallayl.com	...	القايه القدام	...

Arabic Web 2018 (arTenTen18)

simple ثابت • 785,850 • 0.015%
147.11 per million tokens

context [tag="adj.*"] (-1,1,;KWIC) [-1..1;KWIC] • 219,794
41.14 per million tokens • 0.0041%

KWIC

Get more space

	Details	Left context	KWIC	Right context
1	6pc9.com		تماماً	
2	w2q2.com		تماماً	
3	di0r.com		تماماً	
4	rdh50.ma		تماماً	
5	efhy.net		تماماً	
6	sabq.org		تماماً	
7	marxy.com		تماماً	
8	aseil.net		تماماً	
9	to0op.com		تماماً	
10	saoya.com		تماماً	
11	jilrc.com		تماماً	
12	mtwab.com		تماماً	
13	gadyd.com		تماماً	
14	relym.com		تماماً	
15	asadx.net		تماماً	
16	abahe.org		تماماً	
17	abahe.org		تماماً	
18	dxneg.com		تماماً	
19	7nan1.com		تماماً	
20	7nan1.com		بعيداً	

CONCORDANCE

Timestamped JSI web corpus 2021-04 Arabic

simple • تماما • 9,829
107.03 per million tokens • 0.011%

context [tag="(DT)?JJ.*"] (-1..1,;KWIC) • 3,644
39.68 per million tokens • 0.004%

Details

Left context   KWIC   Right context

#	Source	Right context	KWIC	Left context
1	almasryalyoum.c...	كان الرئيس يتحدث هذه الهوية **الجديدة**	**تماما**	عن سد النهضة ، و لسان حال ه يردد اية القرآن التي تقول : " كتب علي كم القتال و هو كر ه ل
2	elbashayer.com	و اعترف حسن ب ان العودة من الاردن قرار **خاطئ**	**تماما**	، موضحا ان المنتخب الاردني وفر ل هما كل السبل ل النجاح ، في ظل ادارة رائقة من الاتحاد الا
3	beirutobserver.....	الارضية الجديدة **مهيأة**	**تماما**	لاحداث النقلة النوعية في العلاقات بين البلدين فحسن الظن بين القيادتين موجود ، و القن
4	al-watan.com	و يكون تسعير اسهم الشركات المدرجة **مماثل**	**تماما**	ل تسعير اسهم الشركات المدرجة في السوق الرئيسية ، ان ما س يكون التداول ب السوق الرئيسية ا
5	albiladpress.co...	، بل ترتقي ايضا ب تجربة ناتورل المميزة نحو افق **جديد**	**تماما**	. و مع التحسينات الفريدة التي تم ادخال ها على ناتورل نسعى 2021. اصبحت السب
6	gulf365.com	ان ه سلسلة من التعميدات ، اعتقد ان ه ا **محبوبة**	**تماما**	. و هم يعمدون من الضغوط ل ما فعلوا مع الرئيسين دونالد ترامب و باراك اوباما . و قال : ان ه ا
7	alankabout.com	انتيبوديز antibodies، اي الاجسام المضادة ، التي ليست **متطابقة**	**تماما**	، لكن المرونات بين ها ضئيلة جدا . |<s></s>| كل داس تنشط مناعة الجسم و تتفاعل حتى او
8	almasryalyoum.c...	موندو ديبورتيفو" الاسبانية ، فن ان فيرناندير **بعيد**	**تماما**	عن خطط رونالد كومان في الموسم الحالي ، فن قد شارك ل مدة 17 دقيقة فقط في مباراة وا
9	okaz.com.sa	هو فاعلك بأتي بعد ها تعامل امني **مختلف**	**تماما**	عما كان علي ه العالم |<s></s>| ول ما تتطور ادوات التواصل ، تطور وسائل الاحتيال و التط
10	alchourouk.com	البروتينات التي يحمل ها او تغير سلوك ن **مختلفة**	**تماما**	، مثل الاختلاف الكبير في |<s></s>| في الوقت
11	cedarnews.net	الاحجام كانت **محدودة**	**تماما**	حتى الان . |<s></s>| و تم اعتماد زي الجيش السويسري الحالي ل المرة الاولى في منتخب الا
12	elfagronline.co...	ان يظهر محمد رمضان ب شكل **مختلف**	**تماما**	سيفاجئ الجمهور ، محارب ' ب ان ه سعيد جدا ب تجربة ه مع النجم محا
13	vetogate.com	: تعديل ما يتعلق ب الحبس الاحتياطي في القانون الهدف الاساسي من ه **مرفوض**	**تماما**	|<s></s>| و تابع :
14	beirutobserver.....	في التراخي حتى الان مع الايرانيين ل يعني ان واشنطن لن تكمل شيء ا **آخر**	**تماما**	|<s></s>| و من المفيد هنا التذكير ب ان اولى العقوبات المالية الكبيرة على القطاع المصرفي
15	beirutobserver.....	مختلف الصعد و المستويات ، بل ان المنقفين **متفاوتان**	**تماما**	على مسار ملحمة" حزب الله" على مختلف
16	gulf365.com	و كان عدنان اسعد ، الذي رافق ه ال زوجة ه ال **مغايرة**	**تماما**	، هذه صناعة و هذه صناعة |<s></s>| ما في الفيديو ه لا الوضع بات
17	al-ayyam.ps	ب انفعال الأمور بات **مغايرة**	**تماما**	، ل ما كانت علي ه في الايام الاولى |<s></s>| و عن الجدل حول مشاركة القناة هند صبري في موكب
18	arabstoday.net	المتفرقة التي حعلت من كادرات الفيلم **مصرية**	**تماما**	، رافضا اي تمويل اجنبي من اجل 2. واضحة نصمة ه

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CONCORDANCE

Arabic Web 2018 (arTenTen18)

Get more space

Simple مانك • 248
0.05 per million tokens • 0.0000046%

context [tag="adj" ""] (-1, 1, KWIC) • 104
0.02 per million tokens • 0.0000019%

filter [#933744631#1376234621#11594079014#826827805)#... • 19
less than 0.01 • 3.6e-7%

Details | Left context | KWIC | Right context

KWIC ▶

#	Details
1	humum.net
2	3trr.net
3	nawaat.net
4	nkforex.com
5	elamalivfcenter...
6	sudaress.com
7	ikhedmah.com
8	ikhedmah.com
9	ahl-alquran.com
10	mustafaris.com
11	qahtaan.com
12	copts.net
13	masrmotors.com
14	tabeaa.org
15	tebarabi.com
16	sptechs.com
17	algazalischool....
18	nmisr.com
19	quran-ayat.com

Appendix 7: Downtoners in CA (from arTenTen18 and Timestamped JSI Arabic Web Corpus 2021-04 Using Sketch Engine)

Arabic Web 2018 (arTenTen18)

simple أبداً • 442,464
82.83 per million tokens • 0.0085%

context [tag="adj.*"] (-1,1,-,KWIC) • 0.00071%
7.11 per million tokens • 37,968

filter [#3542721#1535515|#211356|#630956|#757180|#... • 21
less than 0.01 • 3.9e-7%

Details	Left context	KWIC	Right context
1. med1.com	<s> فيها 60% اتفاق بيتك وبيوتها	أبداً	صحيحاً </s> وك تصدقوا أبداً أن هناك زوجين متفاهمين في كل شيء، ليس
2. mi3mar.com	<s>< أن تكون الأسرة والأبوة متفائلين ماثة بالمائة، يعني إذا وجدت زوجة بيتك	أبداً	ضارة </s> كما أن لديها خبرة واسعة في رش و إبادة الحشرات
3. omarjeh.com	<s> على البيئة أو على صحة الإنسان كذلك تنظيف المنازل و الفيلات و	أبداً	غير الكبير </s> بعد ذلك يقد مباشر على أي شخص تجرأ وذكر اسم بلده
4. balrashed.net	<s>< وقد يأتي لتوضيح وجهة نظر بسيطة لم يقصد بها أي شيء آخر	أبداً	غريبة </s> سلوك بين الجميع وصلت إلينا من التاريخ الأوروبي، ومع ذلك فإن
5. halarajab.com	<s>< عن هذا التاريخ =|التاريخ الأكور >< كما نقول إن الحماس الديني كالعاطف	أبداً	غير منظم </s> و أكتفي بالنظر كأي معجب فقد رشده إلى الباقيات الطرقية
6. arabtx.com	<s>< أشبه بالفوضى وأحياناً بهذوه حركة الناس في الشوارع التي أمر بقربها	أبداً	مؤقتاً </s> بن وخصوم المدينة أثينكلو مديد في ركلك الترجيح ><
7. afflacoin.com	<s>< فقد أعلن الجانب الروسي مسبقاً موقفة المستمر والثابت من مكافحة الإرهاب من	أبداً	بعيدة </s> بن وخصوم المدينة أثينكلو مديد في ركلك الترجيح ><
8. ncro.sy	<s>< فقد أعلن الجانب الروسي مسبقاً موقفة المستمر والثابت من مكافحة الإرهاب من	أبداً	غير العكرة </s> وليدبو و هناك مابرر هذا اللغط والتجاوز إلا تفقد الإصطياد
9. al3asma.com	<s>< إنها (زيادة الأسعار) الحل الوحيد >< وكانت مجموعة من الإسلاميين	أبداً	ممكناً </s> ن قرارها زيادة أسعار الوقود، وقال في مقابلة هاتفية بشأن
10. albdel.com	<s>< إلا أنه يوجد بعض الطرق لحل تلك المعضلة وجعل حمامك يبدو	أبداً	مقبولة </s> أو طاولة القهوة لجعل المكان أكثر اتساقاً . بينما حمام لا
11. acrseg.org	<s> تول كبيرة رئيس الوزراء نوري المالكي وهو يصفونه متكأً على "مظلوميات" الشيعة. حتى أنفخ	أبداً	حكيمة </s> الادة قوية إن العراق اليمن، الذي ضربت الطاقية أطابوا فيه بلا
12. jadl.org	<s>< خلافا للنيابة الربحية في الإعلام النفطي العربي؛ إذ أن دراسة "شو أظهرت أن	أبداً	جذرية </s> والحسكة والرقة.< كما أن نطاق الوحل الزراعي في الجمهوريات العربية لم تكن
13. ncro.sy	<s>< لقد عرفنا على الأقل منذ عام 1893، عندما نشر فريدرك جاكسون تيرنر مقاله الرائع	أبداً	المنزلة </s> أخرى من عالم حيث لدينا مصالح مشتركة.< دبلوماسي، لم تكن الولايات المتحدة
14. iien.sa	<s> وجود أكثر من عشرة ملايين واقد يجدون أعمالاً في المملكة وفي نفس الوقت يوجد	أبداً	الطبيعي </s> تي تشكل نسبة كبيرة في برنامجي حافز وحدارة.< وأشار الأحمد إلى أنه من غير
15. sabq.org	<s> وما يقم أحد باكتشافها أو دراستها والقارة الجنوبية بقيادة كوفاد أنياتور التي نشرت الاعتقاد	أبداً	معروفة </s> ة السلفور وهذا الهدف لدينا لكن يكتشف هذه البروتينات المفرضية وغير
16. ncro.sy	<s> لدى الشعب الألماني يفعل سياسة الاتحاد المسيحي بقيادة كوفاد أنياتور التي نشرت الاعتقاد	أبداً	مقبولة </s> نامب كذلك فإن فكرة الحكومس مع الشيوعيين للتحدث عن المستقبل المشترك لم تكن
17. sabq.org	<s> وأنهاروا إلى أن المعلم قائد مهمة سيدة المهن وكيف أجعال تخدم الوطن وتابوا في ردة	أبداً	صحيح؟ </s> % من المعلمين والمعلمات خلال 20 عام لم صمح نصف المجتمع متطلبات أمثها
18. acrseg.org	<s> عن الجدال الساخن الدائر لآن حول ملكية جزيئن تيران وصنافير والموقف الإسرائيلي من هذا	أبداً	بعيداً </s> ة المطاف مادامت حدود إسرائيل ممتدة تحسمها متطلبات أمثها
19. tweet.so	<s>< خلود الحسن (@m_alrabei): لا أنصج بتحمل البرنامج >< محمد الربعي @	أبداً	غير مفيد </s> ب الثالث ؟< القلب الصامت >< (@mnt3003) : لا استخدمه وأرى أنه برنامج غير
20. iq24.net	<s> ولهذا وجد أن مفتا 2 الحل يكمن في طلب الجحال 2 وليس الكمال >< استحقيق استحقق يما	أبداً	مثالية </s> الكاع يضطرب عندما لا تسير الأمور بشكل مثالي ولكنه اكتشف أنها في الواقع لن تكون

CONCORDANCE

Arabic Web 2018 (arTenTen18)

simple بشكل خفيف • 2,219
0.42 per million tokens • 0.00042%

context [tag="adj.*"] (-1...1.,<KWIC>) • 404
0.08 per million tokens • 0.0000076%

filter [#13714651Ol#14210l1772l#19510000Ol#323784750l.... • 21
less than 0.01 • 3.9e-7%

Get more space

KWIC ▾

Details	Left context	KWIC	Right context
1	⊕ ksa-cute.com		بشكل خفيف	
2	⊕ almasdare.com		بشكل خفيف	
3	⊕ assabah.ma		بشكل خفيف	
4	⊕ assabah.ma		بشكل خفيف	
5	⊕ almrsal.com		بشكل خفيف	
6	⊕ legwareb.info		بشكل خفيف	
7	⊕ artravelers.com		بشكل خفيف	
8	⊕ albawabhnews.co...		بشكل خفيف	
9	⊕ alhaqeqah.com		بشكل خفيف	
10	⊕ syrianstory.com		بشكل خفيف	
11	⊕ le360.ma		بشكل خفيف	
12	⊕ hairarab.com		بشكل خفيف	
13	⊕ ma7room.com		بشكل خفيف	
14	⊕ scientificsaudi...		بشكل خفيف	
15	⊕ op-arab.com		بشكل خفيف	
16	⊕ nlpnote.com		بشكل خفيف	
17	⊕ foochia.com		بشكل خفيف	
18	⊕ elebda3.com		بشكل خفيف	
19	⊕ ayyamsyria.net		بشكل خفيف	
20	⊕ mawdoo3.com		بشكل خفيف	

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CONCORDANCE

Arabic Web 2018 (arTenTen18)

simple إلى حد ما • 57,703 • 0.0011%
10.8 per million tokens • 0.0011%

context [tag="adj.*"] (-1..1, KWIC) • 20,884
3.91 per million tokens • 0.00039%

filter [#490485|#713330|#1349945|#1317818|#2030081|#2... • 21
less than 0.01 • 3.9e-7%

KWIC ▾

Get more space ⊕

Details	Left context	KWIC	Right context
1 adplan.ae	للدول الأخرى والتي تتمتع بالتقدم السياحي أيضا.</s><s>	**مماثلة إلى حد ما**	ستحدث في هذا المقال عن قطا<s><s>:
2 daeux.com	الخطوط.</s><s>	**متوقعة إلى حد ما**	وتفصل دوكان السائل تريد المواد وتبريد<s><s>
3 ar-dar.com	ذات عيوب قليلة لأن تغطيه خفيفة<s><s>	**وبسيطة إلى حد ما**	ولكنه في كثير من الماركات المعروفة يكون مرور بالقياسات العلاجية ويكذ
4 najm49.com	غذر (خلط كتابي لهذه الدورة.</s><s>	**ممتعة إلى حد ما**	تلخص فكرته في إختار شخص موسوس بالنظافة إلى منزل شخص
5 ktateeb.org	على تقويم معلومات علاوات سنوية نسخة تتعهد<s><s>	**معقد إلى حد ما**	منها الإسهامات التي يقدمونها للمدرسة والمجتمع.</s><s>ويدخل المعلمين
6 onrjeem.com	هي زبدة الشيا زبدة الشيا هي مادة دهنية ذات قوام<s><s>	**غليظ إلى حد ما**	يتم إستخراجها من ثمار شجرة الشيا او الشجار الكارثي كما تدعى و تلك الأشجار توجد<s><s>
7 asell.net	هو ولد<s><s>Bruce Wayne:	**راقيا إلى حد ما**	عن المنتج، وعندما سمعت عن صناعتهم لفيلم animation تحسس لأنه - فو
8 fajr.sa	"تخفيضات ستشمل "تخفيضات<s><s>قرأتي القصة كتب	**كبيرة إلى حد ما**	في ميزانية الولايات المتحدة للمساعدات الخارجية في وقت لحق هذا الشهر.</s><s>وقال موظفين أن التخفيضات
9 fajr.sa	"تخفيضات المقترحة ستشمل "تخفيضات<s><s>	**كبيرة إلى حد ما**	في المساعدات الخارجية.</s><s>وقال موظفين أن التخفيضات في المساعدات
10 fajr.sa	يمكن استخدامها في يوم معين، ويبدو التطبيق<s><s>	**مشابها إلى حد ما**	لميزة Restricted Profiles التي كشفت عنها شركة جوجل مع الإصدار 4.3 من نظا
11 onea.dz	كلما زاد انتماء الفرد إليه - والعكس	**صحيح إلى حد ما**	• الانتماء يؤدي إلى نمو الذات وتحقيقها • وكذا تحقيق تميز الفرد وفرديته . وتماسك المجت
12 alwahhabi.com	يقدم محتوى ثري جدا بسعر الاشتراك شهري<s><s>	**معقول إلى حد ما**	يبدأ من 25$ شهريا.</s><s>بينما كتب أقرأ عن تاريخ هذه الشركة وكيف أنها بدأت من بيع ا
13 fajr.sa	الشاقة المستمرة فهذا النوع يكون<s><s>	**مفيدا إلى حد ما**	وهو رد فعل طبيعي لزيادة حاجة الجسم أضخ الدم بصورة أكثر أقوى . ما هي أسباب تضخّم ال
14 ahmedsamy.com	فدد معظام إننا هناك من البكسا أقام تعتبر<s><s>	**موثوقة إلى حد ما**	.</s><s><s>من البكسا بنقدر تعرف تعرف الترتيب العالمي والمحلي للموقع وسد
15 ncro.sy	مثل العراق.</s><s>ناقشت مارى كالدور الأمر بشكل	**مختلف إلى حد ما**	.</s><s>وذلك في كتابها "الحروب القديمة والجديدة" (New and Old Wars) 999 الذي صدر عام
16 onrjeem.com	تعتبر ظاهرة<s><s>زبدة الشيا هي مادة دهنية ذات قوام	**غليظ إلى حد ما**	يتم إستخراجها من ثمار شجرة الشيا او الشجار الكارثي كما تدعى و تلك الأشجار توجد في
17 albdel.com	فرشاة الاسنان لأول مرة في الأربعينيات . في نفس<s><s>	**حديثة إلى حد ما**	كما أنها لم تظهر صدفة . فقد ظهرت فرشاة الاسنان في هذه المدة القصيرة معروض بشدة للاتكاس
18 hope-center.om	على أمر محتمل<s><s>	**وطبيعي إلى حد ما**	ولكن من الممكن أن يكون المتعافي في الكثير من الأنظمة والأد
19 albdel.com	ليس هناك حل سريع . ويعلم خبراء وعلماء التغذية بأن الكثير من الأطعمة والأد<s><s>	**صعب إلى حد ما**	لأن بساقك<s><s>ن الزائد بسرعة وفشلت وفي الحقيقة أنت وحدك . لكن عملية فقدان الوزن أمر
20 ncro.sy	على الأقل سمحت والشتان إلى منع ظهور "مناق<s><s>	**مختلفة إلى حد ما**	.</s><s>ومنذ نهاية الحرب العالمية الثانية وجهة النظر الأمريكية

CONCORDANCE

Arabic Web 2018 (arTenTen18)

simple ‏ما نبا‏ • 54,209 • 0.001%
10.15 per million tokens

context [tag="adj", ""] (-1...1, +KWIC) • 25,909
4.85 per million tokens • 0.00049%

filter [#358290|#498716|#592123|#770588|#842855|#1011... • 20
less than 0.01 • 3.7e-7%

Get more space

KWIC ▸

	Details	Left context	KWIC	Right context

1	44700.com	... في تحطيم ...	`<s></s><s></s><s></s>` ما نوعاً ميكرا	في اعلى سقوط حر مسجل بالتاريخ. ولكنه فتح مطالبه في وقت مبكر في الساعة في اعلى سقوط حر مسجل بالتاريخ. لبي 729 ميلا في الساعة
2	mlt7d.com	بداية من عنوان الـ	`<s></s><s></s>` ما نوعاً ما غرفة تخص المرء وحده	الكتروني	فيرجينيا ووقف الكتروني. النافذة. تعامل مع هذه المدينة فاضلة. منطقية. ورائعة. لا وجود لمدينة فاضلة
3	abahe.org	و كتب أستطيع التعامل معها و لكن عندما تركت الحضانة و عملت بمدرسة ابتدائية	`<s></s>` ما نوعاً ما	و موافق تعاملت من خلالها مع الاطفال في عمر الرابعة و الخامسة و كانت مشكلاتهم محدودة نوعاً ما
4	maeen.org	بدأ في مسالة السرقة واخذ بعض المبالغ البسيطة والنقود في شراء الطويات والآ	`<s></s><s>`	بسب عدم انتقال العدو وانها لان شخصيت اخوه مختلفة تمام وعكس طبيعته. فكان خيار جيد نوعاً ما
5	ajwa.ae	خاصة تلك السهلية والمنخفضة وحتى الجليدية بحيث تبقى درجات الحرارة	`<s></s>` وتتنوع طقس فلسطين أن تكون الليالي القادمة صعبة نوعاً ما في مختلف المناطق
6	masr99.com	ستحافظ على آثار الشركل الكامل في جسم	`<s></s>` أن اختيار شركة نقل أثاث بالقاهرة فهمة ليست بالسهلة اليسيرة ولكفها قيمة نوعاً ما صعبة نظرا لأن الشركة التي تختارها هي التي ستحافظ على آثار منزلك بالشكل الكامل في جسم
7	nidhal.net	الى غاية إصمحلال الفوارق الجديدة و قصور الحضور المنضبي للنساء بالساحة السياد	لا – الجمعة – في تحديد القوائم الانتخابية من قبل بعض الفاعلين السياسيين. هي حركة أحدها نوعاً ما إجبارية
8	alkhat.org	في نفس الوقت ومع عدة أشخاص في هذه	`<s></s>` منطقة أورد منطقة جبلية نوعاً ما وهؤلاء من يرغبون بإيجاد عدة علاقات في نفس الوقت	ستا يختار علاقات جدية مع شخص واحد لمدى بعيد. وبعضنا يهتم بإيجاد علاقات قصيرة وعابرة نوعاً ما
9	chioca.com	هدايا وطنية ومعقولة ممتازة جداً ا	`<s></s>` بدالة نوعاً ما خضراء جدا تختار بوجود حقول الأرز على مد البصر	الشمس يتشوقون أجمل الالوان التي خلقها ربي سبحانه ...
10	alrumi.com	وفي هذه لا تكر	`<s></s>` القديمة نوعاً ما غير أنها من جهة أخرى. فيما يخص الدرس بعد ذاته. كانت متقلبة بشكل معاصر جداً.	لحكم على إجابتك تلك. فمن جهة كان بها شيء من صراحة تحمل2 المرء أرضا وشيء من بدائية نوعاً ما
11	satiha.com	فريده لا تكر	`<s></s>` جديدة نوعاً ما ومكان الصدمة في السيارة خفيف. واذا ان الحادث مجرد خدش بسيط ...	ام تقدير الورش بتقييم الضرر وتسهيم الكتلة. وهذه الحالة لا تنطق الا على السيارات القديمة نوعاً ما
12	tl-scs.org	رئيس مجلس	`<s></s><s></s>` صفوف عمل.	ن من طلابي عمل إلى أشخاص يتقدمون صفوف عمل. وشركات الحاضنة تهتم بمواضيع أخرى نوعاً ما
13	alaqsu.com	كامل بالشروط لاحكام الأ	`<s></s><s></s>` قليلة نوعاً ما ولا يكون المقد كبير لقطع الصيني. يقوم العمال بلف الصندوق كامل بالشروط لاحكام الأ	ق لقدر الاله الغزلوق او المقدار او سقط شيء ثقل عليه اثناء الاتقال تكون الخسارة قليلة نوعاً ما
14	albazy.com	عرض تصميم المواقع الاخبارية المر	`<s></s><s></s>` نافش نوعاً ما	المزيد في الفيديو	عرض تصميم المواقع الاخبارية المزيد بعض الاحيان في الماستر2 مثل عدد اضافة رغبرت اثناء الماسترنج ان كان المكس نافش نوعاً ما
15	mesh3l.net	للمستخدمين من خلال مفهوم وفكرة استقبال التحديثات بشكل مبكر دون الاتظ	`<s></s>` هذا نوعاً ما مشجعة نوعاً ما للمستخدمين من خلال مفهوم وفكرة استقبال التحديثات بشكل مبكر دون الاتظ	درام2 تحديث المطورين بعد إعلانهم عن حسابك في يرال الناس يشكون بانه قد تم حظرهم من جوجل. حيث كانت فكرة واحدة ومشجعة نوعاً ما
16	7asouby.com	قد تم حظاره فؤه	`<s></s><s></s>` منخفضة نوعاً ما	لا أدسنس ان يحظر حسابك لا يزال الناس يشكون بانه قد تم حظرهم من جوجل.
17	wassafaty.com	فتنح عليهم ان ت	`<s></s><s></s>` وبالنسبة لأولاد الذين يرغبون في تقديم الرعاية لمعهم بأنفسهم.	بوحدة من فوائد زيت القراص هو نوافره. ويمكن العثور عليه في أي صيدلية وكذلك الذين يرغبون في تقديم الرعاية لمعهم بأنفسهم. فتنح عليهم ان ت
18	stop1time.com	أنه يفضل اا	`<s></s>` وتتناقص اهتمامه فشيئا فشيئا بالعاب المرأة2.	نعكاسه الذي يقدم استعراضا على المرأة2 اخر. لعدم وجود الشخص اخر.
19	tech-fans.com	رفع الصورة كما هو مور	`<s></s>` بمجرد تثبيته وفتحه ستظهر لك واجه فارغة نوعاً ما	من متجر جوجل بلاي PhotoStamper,
20	1asir.com	من Gallery ليتم رفع الصورة الى عرض مهارات	`<s></s>` ثم انتقل مقدم الورثة إلى عرض مهارات	بر وتنوع أفشل من الطيور في المنطقة الواحدة ومراقبة وتصوير الطيور وهي تعتبر هواية مكلفة نوعاً ما وتحتاج إلى دقة الملاحظة والصبر والمثابرة

Get more space ⊕ ⇄ ⊙

Timestamped JSI web corpus 2021-04 Arabic 🔍 ⓘ

simple • نما • 534
5.81 per million tokens • 0.00058%

context [tag="(DT)?J?J..."] (-1..1;KWIC) • 260
2.83 per million tokens • 0.00028%

KWIC ▸

Left context   KWIC   Right context

Details

#	Source		
1	echoroukonline....		
2	addustour.com		
3	echoroukonline....		
4	ajel.sa		
5	alaraby.co.uk		
6	alraimedia.com		
7	emaratalyoum.co...		
8	akhbarelyom.com		
9	elwatannews.com		
10	syriasteps.com		
11	youm7.com		
12	albayan.ae		
13	elmaouid.dz		
14	khaberni.com		
15	shaamtimes.net		
16	aleqt.com		
17	elbashayer.com		
18	wattan.net		

CONCORDANCE

simple تقريبا • 6,534 • 71.15 per million tokens • 0.0071%

Timestamped JSI web corpus 2021-04 Arabic

context [tag="(DT)?..."] • 769 • 8.37 per million tokens • 0.00084%

filter (#1719653)#2694740)#2586312)#3114847)#3361665)... • 16 • 0.17 per million tokens • 0.000017%

Details	Left context	KWIC	Right context

CONCORDANCE

simple تقريبا • 526,450 • 0.0099%
98.55 per million tokens • 0.0099%

Arabic Web 2018 (arTenTen18)

context [tag="adj",""] (-1..1,-KWIC) • 64,322
12.04 per million tokens • 0.0012%

filter [#10661137|#5475821#153501|#31414011#395638|#198… • 17
less than 0.01 • 3.2e-7%

KWIC ▾

Details	Left context	KWIC	Right context

1. ibn3.com — ... دعونا نتأمل حتى قبل سنوات قليلة كان العلماء يعتقدون أن حركة الأرض حول الشمس **دائرية تقريبا** ... ولكن بعد اكتشاف حركة الأرض حول مركز المجرة وأنها تسير بسرعة هائلة تبين أن الأرض لا

2. alwad.net — ... من الدول العربية والإسلامية بحسب خبراء الفلك </s><s> </s><s> لكن تركيا ستكون الدولة **الوحيدة تقريبا** التي تصوم يوم الأربعاء 16 مايو بدون أن تعلن ذلك بحسب... </s><s> </s><s>

3. cojss.com — ... ربع إلى ست قضايا حقوقية ، وأربعا من قضايا الإعدادات العقارية **متنوعة تقريبا** = ... كان أبي فترة استجمام قبل صلاة الظهر بعشر دقائق أسعد فيها بزيارة </s><s> </s><s> القبلية |

4. rbsha.org — ... إلا الطعام للعبادين وحفض الموبايل لا يؤثر في محتواها في حليب الأم **ثابتة تقريبا** في حليب الأم على حساب استهلاك محزونها في جسمها . ولكن تنقص تناول المبتامينات الأخ

5. nidhal.net — ... سائلي عن وجهي و أخبرته أني ذاهبة الى العاصمة كازا ثم مراكش . و قال أن كل شيء **مماثل تقريبا** ... ستحبين المناخ ذاته . الطعام ذاته و طباع الناس ذاتها . المهم ، كل شيء مماثل </s><s>

6. hani.net — ... بي وقته غالبا على ظهور السفينة وفي المدن حينما يصل لها </s><s> </s><s> كل الغرف والحجرة **موزعة تقريبا** على الأدوار كلها ما عدا الدورين الأخيرة 15 و 16 فهي مخصصة فقط لأعضاء :ht Club

7. fajr.sa — ... با حساب أمام القتباء ". </s><s> وذكر المسئول العمبي أن "الاحتجاجات في غزة كانت **سلمية تقريبا** بشكل تام دون سلح2 . </s><s> وتابع : "خرج الآلاف في غزة من أجل الهتاف والمطالبة بالحق ف

8. arabtx.com — ... داعها عدم وجود منافذ كبيرة للدفع باستخدام خدمة Samsung Pay على عكس **المتوفرة تقريبا** في كل مكان . </s><s> استخدام نوفر إمكانية استخدام أكثر من حساب في تطبيقها لجهوزة أنه

9. arabtx.com — ... بلد من العملاقين AMD و NVIDIA كليهما يعرضنا بطاقات رسومية تبدأ بمبلغ **قليل تقريبا** بحدود 50 دولار وترتفع حتى تصل الى 800 دولار للفئة العليا، وبسعر 1000 الى 1500 دولار لل

10. appsarabic.com — ... لد سلمان بن عبدالعزيز آل سعود.</s><s> عند بدء تشغيل اللعبة سترى صورتين **متشابهتين تقريبا** .</s><s> واكن هذه الصور تحتوي على 5 إختلافات:</s><s> يجب عليك المثور والضغط عليها

11. ncro.sy — ... مستقبلهم من خلال إيجاد شيء أكبر ديناميكية </s><s> هذا الشيء سيوجد أول بشكل غير **مرئي تقريبا** داخل الأنظمة القديمة حتى يتمكن من اختراقها وإعادة تشكيل الاقتصاد حول قيم وسلوكيات

12. ncro.sy — ... نوية تقدر بكذة مليارات دولر.</s><s> داخل أروقة ورهات نظام السوق، وبشكل غير **ملحوظ تقريبا** ، بدأت مساحات كاملة من الحياة الاقتصادية تتبنى أنماطا مختلفا.</s><s> زادت مبادرات مثل

13. shada.sa — ... مركبة أن أكبر "مول" تجاري للتسوق في العالم عبارة عن "مدينة أشبا2" لا يطوفها أحد **متعادلة تقريبا** كل الأسواق الأمريكية دون نسيان إمكانية حدوث ثورة قادرة على أحداث رأت فعل في عدة

14. tadawoo.com — ... رعبيروها فلا تكون هناك أي انت2 الإنسمين بالحسب ..</s><s> أي تكون الحسم خالبا **فارغ تقريبا** من الأسمين .</s><s> لأنا تكون هذه الحكاية قمرت تماما أو حدث ابا عدمه فتوقفت عن

15. al3asma.com — ... المستحرك وعد الوحدات الحارةق الناتجة عنها أي أن الوكبات المتحدة تنتج كميات **فورتة تقريبا** من النفط والغاز، بسم تركز معظم انت2 السعودبة في مجال النفط، وهم تجاوز أسعار تلك الم

16. ncro.sy — ... شمالية وأوروبا خلال أسابع </s><s> ويمكن أيضا لأزمة مائية في إسبا أن تنتج تداعيات **فورة تقريبا** داخل الإقتليم القديمة حتى يتمكن من اختراقها وإعادة تشكيل الإقتصاد حول قيم وسلوكيات

17. ncro.sy — ... رأت التجارية، أو قتال أمام الكاميرا </s><s> وبينما كان الجزء الأول يعد في سورية بشكل **دائم تقريبا** ، كانت مشاهد التشويق والإدارة تتم في العراق في موقع غرف بأنها تقع ضمن محافظات تبنو

CONCORDANCE

Arabic Web 2018 (arTenTen18)

simple شبه • 464,728
87 per million tokens • 0.0087%

context [tag="adj","*"] (-1..1,:KWIC) • 169,629
31.75 per million tokens • 0.0032%

filter (#3105|#9368|#50751|#119499|#154543|#64333|#9… • 21
less than 0.01 • 3.9e-7%

Get more space

KWIC ►

Details

		Left context	KWIC	Right context

simple • شبه • 5,696
62.03 per million tokens • 0.0062%

context [tag="(DT)?,JJ.*"] {-1..1,-KWIC} • 2,294
24.98 per million tokens • 0.0025%

filter [#362851#496811#106712|#163852|#214651#284817… • 21
0.23 per million tokens • 0.000023%

	Details	Left context	KWIC	Right context
1	masrawy.com	. جدا ب الصحافة و الإعلام المصري التي تغطي الحدث على مدار اليومين السابقين ب طريقة	شبه مستمرة و هو امر بسعد ، أ ، عاجزين بريق في ظل الكورونا التي عامل ٥ حالة شباب في العالم
2	alaraby.co.uk	يستطيع ب ذراع ٥ عقل ٥ أن " يدبر حال ٥ " ان ما يعني ر الاسف ان ثمة تيارا	شبه كامل ل التكافؤ و العدل و الإنصاف ، في كل مكان و اي مكان ،
3	alarab.com	من طرف الاساتذة ل وضع الدروس و المحاضرات و التقييم عبر الارضية ال ان ا تسجل غياب	شبه العالمي على الحفاظ على اسرائيل. >	<<>> منذ تاسيس ها و اسرائيل تحظى ب دعم و رعاية
4	eldjoumhouria.d…	انتوني مارون: " مجرد اتهام ان هذا ال يمكن وصف ٥ ال ب السخيف ، و اضاف ". طبيعيا و	شبه كلي ل هؤلاء الطلبة غير الارضية و هو ما يتضح جليا خلال تفقدنا ل عدد الطلبة الواجبين ل ها
5	okaz.com.sa	غياهب الحب ، لا نعرف من ها ال اسم ها المعلق على جدران زجاجية هشة ، و في ها مكاتب	شبه مستحيل ان يحدث ذلك من اطفال ٥ ل يتجاوز 7 سنوات ، ل يدران ما يفعل ٥ ، على هم اثبات ال
6	arabi21.com	ما تعانيه الضفة الغربية المحتلة من تهيير عنصري ، و سياسات احتلالية تجعل من حياة الناس	شبه خاوية ينتظر من يخلس خلف ها رواتب هم الشهرية دون اي عمل وطني و ب ال البيانات >.
7	al-ayyam.ps	>. ال ارى ال السؤال المركزي في الرواية ما	شبه مستحيلة >	<<>> عدنية شلبي ، قالت ب دور ها : ل ارى ان
8	sotaliraq.com	بن القصر الجمهوري و بيت الوسط ، و اكدت ان فرصة التفهم على حكومة عون و الحريري	شبه حاسم ، >	<<>> من هذا كنت افضل دائما كتابة التاريخ ب ب شبه القصة الواحدة ، و هو ان
9	alankabout.com	شمر ان ت بدل في المسار التعطيل القابض على الحكومة منذ اشهر ، >	<<>> فجعل الوساطات	شبه معدومة ، و ان ليس في الافق الحكومي ما يؤشر ان ت بدل في المسار التعطيل القابض على
10	alankabout.com	هؤ ب ت نخفض كميات تمنية مادة البنزين ل السيارات العامة و الخاصة . >	<<>> فجعل الحياة باتت	شبه مطلاق ، و تكد الشوارع ل تخلو من السيارات عقب القرارات الاخيرة ، فيما تسب غياب وسائل
11	alaraby.co.uk	حضورون قداس الاحد >	<<>> و قال يسكي ان ضريبة الدخل على الثروات و تمويل المدارس	شبه الخاصة و معظم ها كاثوليكية تتم من المال العام ، تمجج الى المنظمات الكاثوليكية ملء اكثر .
12	inp.plus	>	<<>> اظهرت خولة ل " المدينة " في السوق المركزي ل الاعمال ب حدة (النقلة) من سيطرة	شبه تامة ل العمال الوافدة على كل من الاحزاb2 الرئيس و مافذ التبغ و فروغ الشركات العاملة في د
13	al-madina.com	على الحكي يقول : اذا ان مسبوق بحدث ٥ في في كل مرغ السوق٥ في ٥ من " النقلة " الغياب	شبه التام ال السعوديين سواء في الاحراز2 او ماغذ التبغ ، مشيرا الى ان السعوديين الموجودين في
14	al-madina.com	، 9.117 تريليون ريال ، >	<<>> و حادت مكاسب السوق٥ في شهر مارس ، او ذار في ظل ارتفاغ	شبه جماعي ل القطاعات ، ب قيادة " البنوك " الذي سجل ارتفاغا نسبة 2.43 % و بلغت المؤ
15	mubasher.info	لا شكليا و القضا ياتم ر ب امر ذوي السلطة و السلطان . >	<<>> الدعم الخارجي و التوافق	شبه صحراوية ، ايضا مخذخة ب الكامل ، و تشكل خطرا كبيرا على حياة السكان ، كون ها محيطة د
16	shafaq.com	العمران داخل المدازل . >|<<>> و اشار على الى ان ، منطقة محيط زاو ٥ ، التي تعد منطقة	شبه معدومة في اللعب و ل ات احتياجي ، >|<<>> في الدفاغ ان يعود ب التاكيد رامي بن سبعين…
17	echroukonline…	بيجة مع التخبر الى قلب القارة السمداء و لكن ٥ لم يلبب هناك ، و تبقى حطوظ عزالدين دوخة	شبه معدومة في اللعب و ل ات احتياجي ، >	<<>> في الدفاغ ان يعود ب التاكيد رامي بن سبعين…

Appendix 8: Emphasisers in CA (from arTenTen18 and Timestamped JSI Arabic Web Corpus 2021-04 Using Sketch Engine)

CONCORDANCE

simple بالتأكيد • 179,177
33.54 per million tokens • 0.0034%

Arabic Web 2018 (arTenTen18)

context [tag="adj.*"] (-1..1, KWIC) • 18,019
3.37 per million tokens • 0.00034%

filter [#2722198|#2782081|#3805703|#6599046|#1101003... • 13
less than 0.01 • 2.4e-7%

KWIC ▾

	Left context	KWIC	Right context

Details

1. aqarat.blog — اعرف انك سوف تحصل على المال من الحق بعيدا.</s><s> لا تنفق أموالك على العقارات دون البحث في البحوث أولاً.</s>

2. arrajol.com — ت على مر تاريخ شعب او ثقافة</s><s>اسم قد لا يبدو مألوفا للبعض في العالم العربي ولكنه **معروف بالتأكيد** على الصعيد العالمي وبالعرب الذين يحققون انجازات ك

3. nqaalite.com — قد تحدث نتيجة للمواصف الرملية نظراً للمناخ المتقلب بالرياض، لذلك نرى أن هذا امر **مقلق بالتأكيد**، ولكن مع تواجد السطحات الآن لم ..</s><s>شركة تخزين الاثاث بالرياض مستودعات

4. fajr.sa — ن الإنترنت: "زلكان هو زلكان".</s><s> هو يفوز عاما بعد عام</s><s>معداله التهديفي **مذهل بالتأكيد** وشغفه للعبة لا يصدق ومكن فقط مع شقفه وطموحه وسيرته الذاتية أن ينجد هذا القرار في

5. albdel.com — الأوغاد من شرب الكافيين، وعدم شرب الكثير من السوائل أثناء الليل ، هذه التصالح **مفيدة بالتأكيد**، لكن الإجماع في هذا الأمر كان على "إنذار السبير "، حيث ثبت أنه أفضل طريقة تساعد الطف

6. ncro.sy — ولكنه سيتفجر الآن في وجه غطرستها وتناقضاتها.</s><s>سوف يولد عالم **جديد بالتأكيد** من رحم الاتصار الوطني السوري على التحالف المدمر للوهابية السياسية والليبرالية الاقتص

7. europa-abc.com — ، صله عن أي منطقة</s><s>إذا كنت تفكر في شراء عقارات ، ثم هذه التصالح والحيل **مفيدة بالتأكيد** سيكون لها تأثير على قرارات الشراء الخاصة بك.</s><s>فقط باستخدام هذه الموارد القيمة ي

8. albdel.com — >،</s><s> فهو غني بالمعادن</s><s>إن إضافة القليل من الفلفل الأسود إلى أي طعام يعزز من نكهته ويمنحه طعما **رائقا بالتأكيد**، ولكن هل تعلم أن الفلفل الأسود له فوائد صحية لا حصر لها ؟!</s>

9. acrseg.org — ة للمشكلات الاجتماعية الخطيرة التي يعاني منها المجتمع المصري</s><s> هي حرب **صعبة بالتأكيد**، تسوجب تضافر كل الجهود لخوض معارك جانبية ضد الفساد والبيروقراطية وعجز الموارد ور

10. qawmi.com — في الثوراة يبدو عمون بذريوة مساعدنيا موآب في قتايا ضد "اسرائيل" (وهي نهمة **مشرفة بالتأكيد**، كما أن "نواش" ملك عمون جرد بعدها حملة على مدينة "جابس" (ربما وادي باب

11. acrseg.org — ، المجلس.</s><s>2</s><s>- الموافق حول الأجندة التشريعية للمجلس الجديد. وهي أجندة **مزدحمة بالتأكيد**، خاصة مع عبء قيام مجلس النواب الجديد بمراجعة كل القوانين والقرارات التي أصد

12. tmm24.org — ن السعودية</s><s>وفي دخولها مجال الصناعة. قالت المطيري إن "الخطوة كانت **مدروسة بالتأكيد**، فقرار ترك الوظيفة والاتجاه للعمل الحر قرار صعب جدًا. لاسيما إذا كانت الوظيفة توفر كبيرًا

13. acrseg.org — ؟ تثمير ظاهرة الإرهاب في منطقة الشرق الأوسط هو ظاهرة **معقدة بالتأكيد**، لا تنشأ أو تتطور بسبب عامل واحد حاكم دائما هناك العديد من العوامل التي لا بد من وضعه

Arabic Web 2018 (arTenTen18)

simple بثبا • 421,986 • 0.0079%
78.99 per million tokens • 0.0079%

context {tag="adj"} [-1..1,-KWIC] • 46,872
8.77 per million tokens • 0.00068%

filter [#145041 0|#145850 0|#1861826|#2064763|#21833982|... • 14
less than 0.01 • 2.6e-7%

Get more space

Details	Left context	KWIC	Right context

1. alrumi.com — | إني | أيضا كنت أمارس تأثيري عليها | طبأ | <s><s>كما أني أؤثر بالقوة الكاكوية<s><s> يتأثر، ومن تأثيرها هي العناد الموقيني، الشعور المرهف، الحساس بالعدالة النزق، وكل هذا

2. alrumi.com — الآخر | ... واعتقدت على العمر وإراني أتاسأ آخذ | طبأ | محمي من خلال الوعي بالقوة الكاكوية<s><s> كؤ2، ال وأحفيت حتى إزاء أولادك؟<s><s>سؤال صريح كهذا لم أطرحه على نفسي بشكل

3. manal-z.com — ... نفس اليوم، نفس الد | طبأ | ، اكتبي أذكرها هنا لذنا تشارك ذات اليوم، وأعتقد أن ولدتي وإراها في نفس اليوم، من أعياد الميلاد، إنها " أكبر فكرة كوميدية. فالحمدلله الذي جعلنا أكبر من كده "، سحر عبيطة

4. nabd-sy.net — المكا | ويكل الأحوال هم الآن وضعوا أنفسهم في هذا | طبأ | مذل | جدا لمقاتلي جبهة النصرة. اعش الأول، وهناك شروط مباغة الخليفة البغدادي وهذا

5. ency-bl.com — | الإجابة عن الأسئلة المطروحة | طبأ | <s><s>كما تبين الصورة أسفله | <s><s>3.إبدا بالإجابة عن الأسئلة مفيدة 5upvotes في حالة كانت أجابتك ٚالي قد تحصل على عدد كبير من التصويتات الجيدة

6. ncro.sy — | على وفق الأناشيد الصمود والتحدي حينا. وأغنيات تمجيد "القائد الملهم" و "القائد التاريخي" | طبأ | غير هاز | "لقد غطت منطقتنا العربية في سبات عميق على مدى عقود طويلة، وآمنت نوما – غير هاز

7. ncro.sy — | أن توضيح موقف الحركات الإسلامية في الوطن العربي بأسره من هذه المسائل<s><s>ولك | طبأ | مائة | لا السياسي وتعدى على الحقوق العربية ويحارب الأقليات الدينية<s><s>ثمة حاجة ماسة

8. allomran.com — ، فنموذج عمل المؤسسة هو موقف وكل موقف هو موضوع قبول ورفض من الطرفين<s><s> | طبأ | خاطئة | اتة؟<s><s>ومحاولة استيعاب كل احد (كزبون) او تجنب خسارة كل احد هي سياسة خاطئة

9. sana.sy — ولكن في الإعلام الذي نراه الآن لا يوجد شيء مستحيل وأنا أتحدث هنا على الساحة السورية<s><s> | طبأ | مستحيل | نحمد أن هذه السياسة خاطئة أو أنه ضد الإعمل 2 وهؤ الإرهاب .<s><s>هذا كلام مستحيل

10. tabeebi.net — من ما لا يعشق الإبسكريم وقاتي المطاط؟!؟<s><s> | طبأ | لذيذة | تي تفقدها في هذه الأنشطة السريعة لها تأثيرها أيضا.<s><s>لكن يوجد بدائل لذيذة وصحة. مثل الذ

11. iqtp.org — فوذا ليس سبا.<s><s>نقد كان لي نفس المحرر منذ عام 1967، دائما ما نقول لي أو بسا | طبأ | مقبولة | ب، وإن علين أن تختر ما كتب.<s><s>عندما أنتهي من قراءة خمسين صفحة – كتبة مقبولة

12. cam-academy.com — بعد الثقة في الله عز وجل<s><s>السلام عليكم و رحمة الله و بركاته الله لشرف متي أن أتعلم | طبأ | شديدة | رضى عمرو لما تقدمه لود الأمة من خير فوالله أنت من الناحية الطبية أثق فيك ثقة شديدة

13. iqtp.org — ولكن يجب أن لا نهمل الجزء الذهبي.<s><s>شجهم على ايجاد فعاليات تسمح لهم بإيجاد | طبأ | مفيدة | قدم او البيسبول، وكيهم يحتاجوا الى اعاب ذهنية ايضا.<s><s>الاعاب الحسمانية مفيدة

14. ebd3.net — الإجابة عن الأسئلة الصعبة حول اليمن وإيران.<s><s>وكان ولي العهد واصحا جدا. وقال إزه | طبأ | ضرورية | يكن مفاجئا أنه أراد التكلم بالعربية. "تقول أوبايل.<s><s>واضافت: "كانت الدقة ضرورية

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CONCORDANCE

Timestamped JSI web corpus 2021-04 Arabic

simple • 2,079
22.64 per million tokens • 0.0023%

context [tag="(DT)?ل.."] (-1..1,-KWIC) • 218
2.37 per million tokens • 0.00024%

filter [#5963508|#5081554|#1732457|#8458998|#2082770] • 5
0.05 per million tokens • 0.0000054%

Get more space ⊕ KWIC ▸

Details | Left context | KWIC | Right context

1	almodon.com	
2	islamonline.net	
3	alaraby.co.uk	
4	youm7.com	
5	elaph.com	

CONCORDANCE

Timestamped JSI web corpus 2021-04 Arabic

simple • 3,111
33.88 per million tokens • 0.00034%

context [tag="(DT)?ل.."] (-1..1,-KWIC) • 438
4.77 per million tokens • 0.00048%

filter [#421996|#6937703|#1210903|#1732242|#2162045] • 12
0.13 per million tokens • 0.000013%

Get more space ⊕ KWIC ▸

Details | Left context | KWIC | Right context

1	beirutobserver....	
2	arabstoday.net	
3	gulf365.com	
4	almodon.com	
5	rumonline.net	
6	aljazeera.net	
7	alsumaria.tv	
8	maghress.com	
9	alarab.co.uk	
10	al-akhbar.com	
11	alrakoba.net	
12	sana.sy	

CONCORDANCE

Arabic Web 2018 (arTenTen18)

simple نَدْ • 459,280
86.98 per million tokens • 0.0096%

context [tag="adj" ""] (-1...1,...KWIC) • 63,298
11.85 per million tokens • 0.0012%

filter [#157017|2|#178249|5|#1911678|#3096271#736233|#5... • 14
less than 0.01 • 2.6e-7%

Details | Left context | KWIC | Right context

#	Details			
1	aseii.net	فعلاً رائع	ولد يستحق بناء هذة السمعه من اكادمية كبار السن الحقى المنفصلين تماثلا عما يحدث		: تعني ان التفيد متقن.>/s><s><s>السبب الذي يدفعني للتحدث عن هذا الموضوع؛ هو ان القلم
2	hadyy.com	فعلاً غريبة	وفيها فائدة في نفس الوقت. وعادة ما ينصح المعلمون بهذه الطوعية من الكتب لتحبيب الناس		:الى المكتبة واشترى احد كتب التقمص العربية والعجيبة وتصمم الكتاب ووجد تخصصاً
3	saitat.com	فعلاً متميز	من نزات المبدا و كل ما هو قديم و نادر في كافة المجلات: اذاعة و تلفزيون و يقدم نوادر وقدر		ـن في المواقع المختلفة والصفحات التي تقدم معلومات عن الدراسة في تركيا، وهل انت جاد
4	karajeh.com	فعلاً واحدة	وتطلع للبدء في رحلتك الدراسية الاكادميية في تركيا اذا نشرك انك في المكان الصحيح الذي		ـ فكانت النتائج >/s><s><s>يقدم الموقع محتوى متميز جداً، مسجّل جرائد مجلات.>/s>
5	rakhawy.org	فعلاً واحدة	، ومتصلة بجذور فكرى ومعايشتى الاكلينيكية السابقة الذكر، وكذلك صممت اختبار للأطفال لا		كال العاصمة لقياس العملية التفكيرية على مستويات متصاعدة (ج،79) فكانت النتائج واحدة
6	aratho.com	فعلاً محفوظ	، اما في حال كنت من مواطني دول اخرى فانت ستحتاج الى استخراج فيزا شنقن لزيارة اي دو		تأشيرة للسفر الى دول منطقة شنقن . وفي حال كنت احد مواطني هذه الدول فانت محفوظ
7	aabouzaid.com	فعلاً رائع	وتحرية ممينة واعتقد انى هروج2 تانى قريب:)>/s><s><s>الخميس 13 نوفمبر2014>/s><s><s>مصر		<Tex-M>افضل المطاعم الكبه رائع >/s><s><s>من افضل المطاعم التي جربوا في القاهرة هو غالي شوية عن اغلب المطاعم
8	aabouzaid.com	فعلاً ملحوظة	صغيرة. ممكن تكون مجرد حديث عابر، ممكن تكون اي حاجة صغيرة لايها حد ده ممكن.>/s>		في حياته بسبب ملحوظة صغيرة قالوا الـ او خلال تاخد بالك منها.>/s><s>قد تكون ملحوظة
9	elnaggaar.com	فعلاً مؤهلة	لحفظ الاثاث من اي تكسير او تامية .. >/s><s><s>شركة تنظيف موكيت بالمدينة المنور		مركة تخزين العفش امر يتطلب الكبير من البحث لانة يجب التاكد من ان تلك الشركات مؤهلة
10	al-jazair.net	فعلاً متعطش	للشهرة والثروة . ولذلك شيئ في نشر اشعار بأسماء مستعارة في صحف ناطقة بالعربية مكتبه		ـا ليس كاف، فانور مالك لا يريد مالا فقط بل شهرة اعلامية ايضا. فانر قصر المعطش متعطش
11	acrseg.org	فعلاً معبرة	عن الشعب المصرى بكل طوائفه كيف ستمال الشخصية المصرية">/s><s><s>بدو و أهمية هذ		ـ "السبسي" رئيسا للجمهورية وبداية مرحلة جديدة لتاسيس ديمقراطية مصرية اصيلة معبرة
12	ncro.sy	فعلاً مذهل	هو رفض الحكومة الفرنسية الاعتراف بالحج2 العائق للخوين كواشي ما هو مذهل في الثقافة "اله		ـكاتب شارلى ايبدو واحمدى كولباى الذى هاجم المتجر الهودى.>/s><s><s>ـ كان ما هو مذهل
13	dirayabook.com	فعلاً متواترة	. او يناقض بعضها بعضا أو يناقض الحديث نفسه إلى غير ذلك من المتناقضات القطعيات		ـب . او تناقض السنن الكونية او القوانين الالهية او الطبيعة البشرية أو تناقض أحاديث متواترة
14	ncro.sy	فعلاً رائع	أن يرادت عاش هذه اللحظة لقد تحقق الامر الذي عملنا طويلا لاجله. وتعوضنا الكبير من الازء		ـتيا خلاقا لما توقعه الكبيرون.>/s><s><s>وعن تلك اللحظة يقول باز: "قلت في نفسي إنه امر رائع

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CONCORDANCE

Arabic Web 2018 (arTenTen18)

simple صِدق • 13,532
2.53 per million tokens • 0.00025%

context [tag="adj.*"] (-1..1,,KWIC) • 2,787
0.52 per million tokens • 0.000052%

filter [#1197447051#2803267681#294684750|#2946832141.... • 9
less than 0.01 • 1.7e-7%

KWIC ▸   Get more space ⊕

| Details | Left context | KWIC | Right context |

CONCORDANCE

Arabic Web 2018 (arTenTen18)

simple الأمانة • 25,134
4.7 per million tokens • 0.00047%

context [tag="adj.*"] (-1..1,,KWIC) • 12,475
2.34 per million tokens • 0.00023%

filter [#1095691311#6128114251 • 2
less than 0.01 • 3.7e-8%

KWIC ▸   Get more space ⊕

| Details | Left context | KWIC | Right context |

#	Details	Left context	KWIC	Right context
1	iphony.net	‹s/›.مختلفة على قمة جبل مقارنة الوادي‹s/›‹s›‹s/›جميع مراحل تحوي على مفاجآت مختلفة.	مختلفة في الحقيقة	على قمة جبل مقارنة القيادة إلى أعلى الجبل البنية هي مهارات إلى أو لصديقك!‹s/›‹s›‹s/›مراحل ديناميكية جديدة
2	elafaq.net	و عناصر معروفة بالجديدة و‹s/›‹s›‹s/›رغم أنهم كانوا دوما	مفرقة في الحقيقة	‹s/›‹s›‹s/›وراء القتيلين فجأة‹s/›. باتت كل وجوه الداعمين المنتفخة من خير البلد
3	nabd-sy.net	إذا العدو أن يتقدموا على العدو والعمل اتصدار من المقاتين أن يكمل	جديداً في الحقيقة	‹s/›‹s›‹s/›ما شاهدناه هذه الأيام هو اتصدار عن المسجد الأقصى عن هذا المكان المقدس وليفرضوا
4	fajr.sa	‹s/›‹s›‹s/›وفي رد على سؤال ء ."لقد حاولنا	محزن في الحقيقة	، ولكن هكذا هو الحال. الأمور لا تسير على ما يرام. لقد خسرت أربع مباريات نهائية. ثلاث منها على التوالي
5	ncro.sy	عن الرأي الثاني الذي يمثله البرقوي والنشمي وأخرين ويقول هذا الرأي بشريعة العمل	متفرع في الحقيقة	‹s/›‹s›‹s/›هناك رأي ثالث هو موضوع آخر ومختلف عما نحن في صدده‹s/›
6	ncro.sy	المدنية فكيد أنها لا تفضل هذا النوع من التنمية المدنية للتمدن لأنها	مضادة في الحقيقة	عن الصور التي تظهرها في المتجر‹s/›‹s›‹s/›وكذا أيضما الحكومة نفسها ليست
7	arabtx.com	فيما السيطرة لحرب واحد كان هو ذراع السلطة السياسي الذي انتهوت تحته كافة مناحي الح	مختلفة في الحقيقة	عن الصور التي تظهرها في المتجر‹s/›‹s›‹s/›هذه الوحدة الإعلادية ستسمح للمستخدم فتح الت
8	acrseg.org	الثمن ، وقد مكن ذلك الأثرياء من الاحتفاظ بخليهم الثمين في منازلهم ، كما طورت ‹s/›	زائفة في الحقيقة	‹s/›‹s›‹s/›وبما أن تكون التطبيقات وخاصة الألعاب تعكس تجديدة غير متقن ، تعكس
9	albdel.com	لأنه عند وضع القوانير والبرد وغيرها من الأمور الصغيرة على الكونتر داخل المطبخ	رخيصة في الحقيقة	‹s/›‹s›‹s/›من الجوانب حيث قامت بصنع محموعة من المحوهرات التي تحاكي المجوهرات الثمينة الكثيا
10	albdel.com	، منضدة المطبخ ‹s/›‹s›‹s/›هي الأوراق الخضراء‹s/›	مفيدة في الحقيقة	لأنه عند وضع القوانير والبرد وغيرها من الأمور الصغيرة على الكونتر أو المنضدة فإنها سوف
11	tabeebi.net	‹s/›‹s›‹s/›وكل أي حال فإنها هي السبائح أو الملوخية	مسطحة في الحقيقة	تمامًا بمفتها الرئيس في منطقة (بدر)| في جنوب شرق دمشق وبمركزها الحاسم با
12	shrc.org	حدد الرحمن عرفة ‹s/›‹s›‹s/›وهي وحدة فرعية تابعة لفرع فلسطين‹s/›‹s/› - الأوراق الخضراء‹s/›	خاضعين في الحقيقة	جدا مما فعله الإسرائيليون - ولكنهم لم يدعموا غزو غزة - لكنهم كانوا يدعمون "حماس" ولا يؤيدونها‹s/›
13	qawmi.com	الموضوع الملح هو أنه بالرغم من أن السكان في الضفة العربية لم يدعموا غزو غزة - لكنهم كانوا	محصورة في الحقيقة	في بعدها الديني المقدس وإنما تجاوزت ذلك. والتوازي معده أن البعد أو التوحيد لم تكن ‹s/›
14	acrseg.org	هذا إن أبعد مما تبدو عليه‹s/›‹s›‹s/›تتضح هذه الدرجة من أن فكرة التوحيد في الوهابية مع	واضح في الحقيقة	في اسم الحملة. فرد المقاطعة للحياء ورفض المشاركة في موازة التطبيع، يضعها في د
15	qawmi.com	‹s/› ترى المقاطعة على أنها فعل ظهير ومكمل للمقاومة المسلحة وليست بديلا عنها. وهذا ‹s/›		أستج

CONCORDANCE

Timestamped JSI web corpus 2021-04 Arabic

simple في الحقيقة • 1,357
14.78 per million tokens • 0.0015%

context [tag="(DT?JJ.*")] [-1,-1,-KWIC] • 103
1.12 per million tokens • 0.00011%

filter [#5424426]#349603U#44144U#38697812#2507615… • 10
0.11 per million tokens • 0.0000011%

Get more space

KWIC ▸

Details	Left context	KWIC	Right context

1 cedarnews.net ة مصالح الصين ب الاساس . >s/><s> و تبين لاحقا ان بعض الاتفاقات التي بدت جذابة هي **في الحقيقة محدثة** و قابية ب النسبة ال الدول الصغر و الاقل) من ها اقفر و اصغر من الصين

2 dostor.org كون قبل ثلاثة ايام من انتهاء المدة التشريعية ل هذا المجلس ، و هنا مخالفة دستورية **كبيرة في الحقيقة** كون ان الدستور العراقي حدد ب الضبط ان رئيس الجمهورية هو من من ينتهي عمل المجلس

3 aawsat.com ست " اسلحوفوبيا " ان ما يخلوون ، ف قد صار الدين عامل في الصراع الذي هو مائي و **قبلي في الحقيقة** و في دارفور ال ما في جبال النوبة و النيل الازرق ، ل ان نظام البشير استخدم الاسلام ب كتاب

4 sudanile.com ٥ هكسبي ب القول ان ٥ : موضوع بدور ال الوهلة الاولى شديد السياجة و الوضوح ٢ ، و لكن ٥ **في الحقيقة شديد** التعقيد . >s/><s> و هو علاقة العرب ب حركة التاريخ .... " و ل استخدام العموض عما يم

5 ahdath.info مسابقة " امير الشعراء ؟ " >s/><s> المشاركة كانت مميزة و قد استخدت من ها اشياء **كبيرة في الحقيقة** >s/><s> اقل ها هذا التواصل الجميل مع الجمهور الكبير داخل و خارج الوطن ، و المقارنة

6 al-sharq.com زار ب وقوع ها ؟ >s/><s> * ثابت مؤخرا بعض الروايات الصادرة حديثا و هي تجارب **جيدة في الحقيقة** و لكن ها ما زالت تلبس ثوب الحكي التقليدي و تتقمص ها بعض التقنيات السردية التي تحاك

7 vetogate.com ، شخص اخر ب الحياة و الكتب ، و ل ذلك في الحياة سيد ، و خاصة لو كان هذا الزوج2 **عامل في الحقيقة** و ثارة ال الصراع و ح يخاف من رب العالمين . >s/><s> المشهد بدا على ان الزوج2 قد تحقق

8 arageek.com الرسائل ، ال ان ٥ يحتقد المحادثة الحقيقة ال الاشخاص على الطرف الاخر ، ان تكون الزوج2 **موجودا في الحقيقة** ، و تلمس وجه الطرف الاخر . >s/><s> ليس و هم التواصل هو المعز الوحيد الذي نقع في ٥ ال

9 vetogate.com ٥ ما في المنام تجد رؤية ها دليل على كشف سر ها و هذا من نسب ال ٥ فضيحة **كبيرة في الحقيقة** . >s/><s> من يرى في المنام الاستعداد ل حضور فر2 ما موقب على استقبال ٥ ال العديد من

10 atrai.com هذه هي الطريقة التي يطور ب ها الجسم الاجسام المضادة ل الفيروس ، و هذا شيء **ايجابي في الحقيقة** و متوقع حدوث ٥ ." >s/><s> ب الاضافة ال الالم و الاحمرار و التقر2 في موقع الحقن ، قد ن

381

CONCORDANCE

Arabic Web 2018 (arTenTen8)

simple لكل أمانة • 1,127
0.21 per million tokens • 0.00021%

context [tag="adj.*"] [-1..1,,KWIC] • 123
0.02 per million tokens • 0.0000023%

filter [#74122149012#6217118271]#6739204551#734816914... • 8
less than 0.01 • 1.5e-7%

KWIC

Left context	KWIC	Right context

1. artravelers.com
2. artravelers.com
3. arabs.travel
4. kinanah.net
5. arabictrader.co...
6. gov.ye
7. evolvestar.com
8. almajalis.org

CONCORDANCE

Timestamped JSI web corpus 2021-04 Arabic

simple حرفيا • 254
2.77 per million tokens • 0.00028%

context [tag="(DT)*(.LU)*"] [-1..1,,KWIC] • 19
0.21 per million tokens • 0.000021%

filter [#79485671#777316441#80727255361 • 3
0.03 per million tokens • 0.0000033%

KWIC

Left context	KWIC	Right context

1. akhbar-alkhalee...
2. al-binaa.com
3. cedarnews.net

simple • بالسل • 398,486 • 0.0075%
74.6 per million tokens • 0.0075%

Arabic Web 2018 (arTenTen18)

context [tag="adj.*"] {-1,1,-KWIC} • 52,689
9.86 per million tokens • 0.00099%

filter [#116830|#185342|#2948741|#357694|#596086|#1192… • 11
less than 0.01 • 2.1e-7%

KWIC ▾

Left context | KWIC | Right context

Details

1	⊙ 6pc9.com	٥| وهم بمصحبتك الوالدين وهم ٥| اذا اذا كان بمصحبتك الوالدين وهم ٥| السفر الى كندا أن يكون قد بلغ من العمر ثمان عشر عاما وغير ذلك قد يمكن أن تقول أن الفرصة **ضعيفة بالفعل** للقاية . وقد لا يمكنك السفر والهجرة في هذه الحالة إلا اذا
2	⊙ noofl.sa	الما| انطلقت نوفل لتكون لبنة في سماء شبكة الإنترنت الما| <s><s>انطلقت نوفل لتكون لبنة في سماء شبكة الإنترنت الما| <هذه بداية السنة الثالثة لتعاملي مع هذه الشركة والشكرهم صراحة على تعاملهم الرائع **متميزين بالفعل** والدعم متواجد دائما الى الأمام>
3	⊙ ng4a.com	لا إ| حيث سنقوم لا إ| <s><s>حيث سنقوم لا إ| Square Enix في مونتريال بأن الجزء الجديد بيدو الأكثر سوداوية وظلمة وهذا ما يبدو **واضحًا بالفعل** عبر العرض العربي الرسمي وبعض صور اللعبة التي تم الكشف عنها.
4	⊙ 26sep.net	.بالمئة الى 80.39 دولار للبرميل.	<s><s>وصعدت عقود خام القياس العالمي مزج برنت الى 80.39 دولار للبرميل.	بة قد نهبط بسبب إعادة فرض عقوبات أمريكية وهو ما سيتقلص المعروض في سوق **شحيحة بالفعل** .<s><s>
5	⊙ abahe.org	الحصول على	والشهادة التي يتمنى أي شخص الحصول على	و بالفعل فهي الشهادة التي يتمنى أي شخص الحصول على	كاديمية العربية البريطانية للتعليم العالي لما كنت اعرفه من قبل عن قوة تلك الشهادة **المعتمدة بالفعل** و التي أسعدت كل من حصل عليها
6	⊙ abahe.info	البريطانية	العربية البريطانية	ف في محال حياته و عمله و ذلك من خلال التسجيل بها البرنامج مع الكاديمية العربية البريطانية	نير التخصصي في السلامة و الصحة المهنية من بريطانيا فقد حقق لنفسه إرادة كبيرة و **متميزة بالفعل** في محال حياته و عمله و ذلك من خلال التسجيل بها
7	⊙ abahe.info	و| قاو| <s><s>قاو| <s><s>قاو| معايير التي تلتزم بها منظومة التعليم البريطانية ككل و بحيث تكون تلك المقررات مفيدة و **ثرية بالفعل** للطالب و تساعده في تلبية متطلبات برنامجه الدراسي و تحقق>s|<s|
8	⊙ abahe.info	فنية	أو بإحدازه كما يكون لوحة فنية	<s>..<s><s>سبال ممتاز في الدما فنية	طظطا من بريطانيا التي تقدمها الأكاديمية العربية البريطانية للتعليم العالي من الشهادات **القوية بالفعل** سواء من حيث المحتوى العلمي أو من حيث الجهة المانحة للشهادة أو حتى من قوة المصدافات
9	⊙ damams.com	ممتاز في الدما| <s><s>سبال ممتاز في الدما| يأتي بأداء ممتاز في الدما| بل يرتب في التغير للأحدث وللأجدد، فعمنا سنرسل الى أفضل معلم دهان يتمتع بأداء **بارعة بالفعل** تحمل ما يقوم بإحدازه كما يكون لوحة فنية
10	⊙ aladiary.com	عبيد . فإنه سيصير	بأنه طفل عبيد . فإنه سيصير	<s><s> أن عبيد	انا اليومية ، مثال على ذلك، إذا تكرر على مسامع الطفل بأنه طفل عبيد . فإنه سيصير **عنيدا بالفعل** ، ولهذا السبب علينا دائماً أن نشيع المشاعر والصفات الإيجابية على مسامع الأطفال والكبار أن
11	⊙ ncro.sy	عنه	العنف بصورة أكبر،> تظاهرات و/أو أعمال عنه	<s>2<s> تظاهرات و/أو أعمال عنه	يدعمونهم – على منصب الرئاسة.<s><s>ومن شأن ذلك أن يزيد من إضعاف الدولة **المفككة بالفعل** ، الأمر الذي يثير احتمال تصاعد أعمال العنف بصورة أكبر،<s>2<s>

CONCORDANCE

Get more space ⊕

simple حرب • 26,229
4.91 per million tokens • 0.00049%

context [tag="adj."*] (-1...1,-KWIC) • 2,722
0.51 per million tokens • 0.000051%

filter [#448233397|#1462328571|#1693828101#2029836001#... • 14
less than 0.01 • 2.6e-7%

Details	Left context	KWIC	Right context

KWIC ▾

#	URL	Left context	KWIC	Right context
1	eldyar.net	شغل جديد محترم ومجهود كبير مبذر	**مؤكداً حرفياً**	على أن ما قد تم إنجازه في هذه الفترة الزمنية البسيطة (شفل جديد محترم ومجهود كبير مبذر
2	alawiyoun.net	"المسلمون العلويون"	**مقتبس حرفياً**	ولكن تتصرف من كلام الشيخ حسين المظلوم في كتابه ...
3	aman-dostor.org	</s><s>وأعادَ	**منقولة حرفياً**	من حجج الوقاف الأهلية والخيرية ووصف ما احتوته من شروط بأنها صحيحة ...
4	tahiamasr.com	خاصة فيما يخص رفع الحجز، وأهمها بند دعم الطاقة </s><s>وأكد الشنيطي أن الحكومة والبنك المركزي	**ملتزمان حرفياً**	بالاتفاق مع الصندوق، وأشمف ما يحدث في مصر ...
5	amicinfo.com	جودباً، المنقوشة على شاهدة قبره (على هذه الأرض ما يستحق الحياة) وهي عبارة	**مستنسخة حرفياً**	عن نيتشه القائل في أغنية للشرب (على هذه الأرض ما يستحق الحياة: يوم واحد قضيته مع ز...
6	rabtasunna.com	التحالف الدولي من استعادة مدينة الرقة من "تنظيم الدولة"، ولكن المدينة أصبحت	**مدمرة حرفياً**	بشكل شبه كامل، ففي شهر سبتمبر (أيلول) السابق أفادت تقديرات للأمم المتحدة بأن %80
7	saaddiary.com	تتمحتن بشكل غابة في المجال، وأشمرت الشاك، </s><s>هذه الوغود هي من أمناتي	**المادية حرفياً**	. </s><s>حينما انتهى الإجراء الذي أتى من أجله طلب مني أن أخبرُ لتأخذ صورة معاً </s>
8	juo17.com	بثر و "القبس بون" في بادرة فريدة تجسد مفهوم الأرشفة الإلكترونية والإعلام الرقمي	**الجديد حرفياً**	، وكشفت مدى أهمية و دور قنواته المتشكلة بهذه الشبكات الاجتماعية التي أصبحت تحكم الر...
9	4non.net	====== المعطلين </s><s></s><s> فقط هذا من حسن حظك لأنهم	**مقيدين حرفياً**	بالتعليمات فهم محجورون بعدم استعمال العنف ضدكم، فلوك هذه التعليمات التي تقيد تدخل...
10	sudaress.com	المسكن </s><s> وصح منذ بداية اللقاء ان تجربي التربي تنفذون تعليمات المدرب	**معاول حرفياً**	من خلال المستوى الخطابي الذي نفذه اللاعبون بانضباط وظهر جليا انها ان معاول درس دو...
11	adenghd.net	لا يقدم من تلقاء نفسه على "خطوات جديّة ". </s><s>إنما هو ممثل للمنظمة الدولية ومأتزم	**وملتزم حرفياً**	بسياستها </s><s>حتى وان تم التطرق للجنوب بالاسم فلن يكون كطرف ندي للسلطة الشرع...
12	elto7fageyya.co...	2: ممكن، والذي يفضله الذين يؤمنون أن القصة المعطاة في سفر التكوين هي قصة صحيحة	**صحيحة حرفياً**	على الرغم من أن العالم يحتوي على حفريات وأدلة أخرى تجعله بدو اقدم كثيراً (هل تم وضعه...
13	dawaalhaq.com	</s><s>يؤكد تحذير سلح 2 سنوَّى عام أو غاز ستخذ2 من ثبات وسهل التحذير	**ملتزم حرفياً**	ومن أشد الإسجه فتحَا وغرام واحد مده بَقتل 100 شخص بأكم لا العدّو على تدمير أنظمة ب...
14	futurosahara.ne...	ن السيَنارِيو بالمنطقة العازلة الكركرات . أوضح السيّد أمد حداد أن الطرف الصحراوي	**ملتزم حرفياً**	باتفاق وقف إطلاق النار والاتفاق العسكري رقم "1 ". </s><s>وأضاف ذات المتحدث "لقد فند ...

Appendix 9: *jiddan* and *marrah* in old CA (from KSUCCA Using Sketch Engine)

simple زادي • 16
0.27 per million tokens • 0.000027%

filter [#2229688|#18038348|#30599486] • 3
0.05 per million tokens • 0.000005%

KWIC ▸ + ①

Details

Left context | KWIC | Right context

① Religion • sham... / 2) زين عبد البر " و ، (173 رقم 41 - 40/ 9) " الجرح والتعديل " ... ا . م . من " الاستغناء لابن عبد البر)) ... ((مجمع على ثقته ، وكتابه متقن **بالمرة** وقال الذهبي :)) نابه ، وكان إذا حدث من حفظه ربما غلط .

① Religion • sham... وبكث فهمه :) فهمد على الله جل وعز فنظام وبساطلنا عن كتابه الذي أنزل إلينا مخاطبا لنا به وكيف **بالمرة** فقد نقدم على الله جل وعز فنظام وسياطلنا عن كتابه الذي أنزل إلينا مخاطبا لنا به وفقة عناية منا **بالمرة** فندا نقدم على ... قرأ كتابه أو أنا قرأناه ولم نفهم ما كتب به لقله <s><s>يرى أن ذلك تهاون منا به وقله عناية منا.

① Linguistics • s... فعل بابن دريد وغيره رأى أن يتحاشى أن يترجم للخليل حتى لا يتعوض لذكر العين تحت اسمه **بالمرة** [كذا] وعند ما نرى في مقدمته ذكر الخليل فإنما كان ذلك عرضا عند الكلام على اخرين كتابه.

RESULT DETAILS

simple جدا

Number of hits	**7,102**
Number of hits per million tokens	**118.98**
Percent of whole corpus	**0.01190%**
Corpus size (tokens)	**59,693,146**

Appendix 10: Mixed-Effects Logistic Regression Model for Amplifiers with All the Social and Linguistic Factors in RNDC

Total N			3416	
Deviance			1852.189	
Df			24	
Grand Proportion			0.0905	
R2 total			0.411	
Factors	**Logodds**	**N**	**Proportion of the application value**	**Factor Weight**
Adjective Function	**P-value**	1.48e-04		
Predicative	0.29	1919	0.1090	0.572
Attributive	-0.29	1497	0.0668	0.428
Age	**P-value**	3.67e-04		
Young	0.768	975	0.1390	0.683
Middle-aged	-0.315	1444	0.0824	0.422
Old	-0.453	997	0.0542	0.389
Semantic Category	**P-value**	1.83e-03		
Value	1.660	813	0.1190	0.84
Position	1.518	37	0.1080	0.82
Similarity	1.514	143	0.1820	0.82
Difficulty	1.414	188	0.1330	0.804
Dimension	1.360	193	0.1140	0.796
Physical property	1.216	208	0.0913	0.771
Human propensity	1.192	537	0.0875	0.767
Quantification	1.023	415	0.0795	0.736
Other	0.760	137	0.0657	0.681
Emotion	0.673	71	0.0563	0.662
Colour	0.466	21	0.0476	0.614
Qualification	0.334	375	0.0480	0.583
Age	-0.738	271	0.0148	0.323
Speed	-12.392	7	0.0000	<.001
Gender	**P-value**	2.48e-03		
Female	0.379	2018	0.1010	0.594
Male	-0.379	1398	0.0758	0.406
Education	**P-value**	4.75e-03		
High	0.425	2382	0.0907	0.605
Low	-0.425	1034	0.0899	0.395
Adjective Polarity	**P-value**	0.18		
Neutral	0.24629	1725	0.0846	0.561
Positive	0.00971	1108	0.0993	0.502
Negative	-0.25600	583	0.0909	0.436
Topic Seriousness	**P-value**	0.894		
Non-serious	0.00642	1221	0.0925	0.502
Serious	-0.00642	2195	0.0893	0.498
Adjective	Random	**Std.dev**	0.879	
Speaker	Random	**Std.dev**	0.603	

Appendix 11: Mixed-Effects Logistic Regression Model for Downtoners with All the

Social and Linguistic Factors (Except the Semantic Category) in RNDC

Factors	Logodds	N	Proportion of the application value	Factor Weight
Total N			3201	
Deviance			812.94	
Df			10	
Grand Proportion			0.0294	
R2 total			0.15	
Adjective Polarity	**P-value**	0.00173		
Negative	0.566	560	0.0536	0.638
Neutral	-0.104	1620	0.0259	0.474
Positive	-0.462	1021	0.0215	0.387
Adjective Function	**P-value**	0.00584		
Predicative	0.323	1777	0.0377	0.58
Attributive	-0.323	1424	0.019	0.42
Topic Seriousness	**P-value**	0.0275		
Non-serious	0.24	1151	0.0374	0.56
Serious	-0.24	2050	0.0249	0.44
Age	**P-value**	0.0954		
Young	0.4288	873	0.0389	0.606
Old	-0.0698	972	0.0298	0.483
Middle-aged	-0.359	1356	0.0229	0.411
Education	**P-value**	0.28		
High	0.176	2231	0.0291	0.544
Low	-0.176	970	0.0299	0.456
Gender	**P-value**	0.757		
Female	0.0429	1871	0.0299	0.511
Male	-0.0429	1330	0.0286	0.489
Speaker	Random	**Std.dev**	0.479	

Appendix 12: Mixed-Effects Logistic Regression Model for *marrah* with All the Linguistic Factors (Except the Semantic Category) and the Social Factors for Highly Educated Speakers in RNDC

Total N			2382	
Deviance			842.872	
Df			10	
Grand Proportion			0.0516	
R2 total			0.482	
Factors	**Logodds**	**N**	**Proportion of the application value**	**Factor Weight**
Gender	**P-value**	5.66e-07		
Female	1.08	1298	0.0709	0.746
Male	-1.08	1084	0.0286	0.254
Age	**P-value**	5.28e-06		
Young	1.64	415	0.108	0.838
Middle-aged	-0.622	1400	0.045	0.349
Old	-1.018	567	0.0265	0.265
Adjective Function	**P-value**	1.87e-04		
Predicative	0.446	1312	0.0686	0.61
Attributive	-0.446	1070	0.0308	0.39
Adjective polarity	**P-value**	0.61		
Neutral	0.148	1178	0.0484	0.537
Positive	0.059	798	0.0539	0.515
Negative	-0.207	406	0.0567	0.448
Seriousness of topics	**P-value**	0.91		
Serious	0.0126	1561	0.05	0.503
Non-serious	-0.0126	821	0.0548	0.497
Adjective	Random	**Std.dev**	1.113	
Speaker	Random	**Std.dev**	0.451	

Appendix 13: Mixed-Effects Logistic Regression Model for *marrah* with All the Linguistic Factors (Except the Semantic Category) and the Social Factors for Speakers with Low Education in RNDC

Total N			990	
Deviance			470.662	
Df			9	
Grand Proportion			0.0798	
R2 total			0.471	

Factors	Logodds	N	Proportion of the application value	Factor Weight
Gender	**P-value**	0.0000259		
Female	1.223	720	0.106	0.773
Male	-1.223	270	0.0111	0.227
Age	**P-value**	0.000222		
Young	0.865	560	0.121	0.704
Old	-0.865	430	0.0256	0.296
Seriousness of topics	**P-value**	0.052		
Serious				
Non-serious				
Adjective Function	**P-value**	0.403		
Predicative	0.126	584	0.0925	0.531
Attributive	-0.126	406	0.0616	0.469
Adjective polarity	**P-value**	0.86		
Negative	0.089	172	0.0814	0.522
Positive	0.029	300	0.09	0.507
Neutral	-0.118	518	0.0734	0.471
Seriousness of topics	**P-value**	0.91		
Non-Serious	0.271	389	0.0977	0.567
Serious	-0.271	601	0.0682	0.433
Adjective	Random	**Std.dev**	0.884	
Speaker	Random	**Std.dev**	0.302	

Appendix 14: Mixed-Effects Logistic Regression Model for *jiddan* with All the

Linguistic Factors (Except the Semantic Category) and the Social Factors in RNDC

Total N			3416	
Deviance			618.694	
Df			10	
Grand Proportion			0.0214	
R2 total			0.366	
Factors	**Logodds**	**N**	**Proportion of the application value**	**Factor Weight**
Gender	**P-value**	0.00657		
Male	0.664	1398	0.0393	0.66
Female	-0.664	2018	0.00892	0.34
Education	**P-value**	0.119		
High	0.462	2382	0.0277	0.613
Low	-0.462	1034	0.00677	0.387
Seriousness of topics	**P-value**	0.212		
Serious	0.167	2195	0.0232	0.542
Non-Serious	-0.167	1221	0.018	0.458
Adjective polarity	**P-value**	0.34		
Positive	0.1946	1109	0.028	0.548
Negative	0.0174	582	0.0206	0.504
Neutral	-0.212	1725	0.0174	0.447
Adjective Function		0.6		
Predicative	0.0669	1919	0.0208	0.517
Attributive	-0.0669	1497	0.022	0.483
Age	**P-value**	0.857		
Middle	0.159	1444	0.0298	0.54
Old	0.0289	997	0.0191	0.507
Young	-0.1879	975	0.0113	0.453
Speaker	Random	**Std.dev**	1.042	