TRANSLANGUAGING PRACTICES AND SOCIAL IDENTITY OF HERITAGE
LEARNERS IN AN ARABIC CLASSROOM

By

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ABSTRACT

Within the past few decades, notable contributions have been made in heritage language education research that continued to gain ground in language pedagogy and teaching practices (e.g., Dávila, 2017; Valdés, 2000; Fishman, 2001; Kelleher, 2010; Polinsky & Kagan 2007). This dissertation is guided by translanguaging and social identity, two theories that were previously investigated in connection with Heritage Language Learners (HLLs) in general, and Arabic HLLs in particular. This study investigates the effects of both translanguaging practices and social identity on the experience of Arabic HLLs in the classroom.

Following a mixed-method design, quantitative data are retrieved from two 9-point-Likert-scales questionnaires that target Arabic HLLs' perceptions of translanguaging and social identity in class. Qualitative data are triangulated from semi-structured interviews, classroom ethnographic observations, and class notes. Data from 72 Arabic HLLs who took the questionnaires and 17 learners who participated in the interviews are analyzed.

Quantitatively, results of a hierarchical cluster analysis categorize HLLs into three main clusters based on their questionnaire responses. Qualitatively, a thematic analysis method is adopted in analyzing the interviews, classroom observation, and class notes.

Results show general positive attitudes towards translanguaging practices in the classroom. Also, Arabic HLLs tend to align themselves with their heritage communities in terms of social identity. However, there appears to be mixed views on translanguaging practices in writing due to classroom effect and participants' personal language ideologies. Finally, results indicate that Arabic HLLs use translanguaging practices to

mobilize their social identity in class. Pedagogical implications and future directions are discussed.

How to become civilized
Abiding by all terms and conditions
Make all your words righteous
Take trees into your arms
Sugarcoat titles and names
While an army demolishes a nearby school
And when caught red-handed… with blood
Say everyone's a victim
But this's one issue, and that's another
Mostafa Ibrahim

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CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

Within the past few decades, several researchers have made notable contributions to the fields of heritage languages and heritage language education research (e.g., Fishman, 2001; Kelleher, 2010; Polinsky & Kagan, 2007; Valdés, 2000). Still, defining heritage language learners (HLLs) is a fuzzy task because many variables come into play depending on the purpose of the definition (e.g., sociopolitical status, identity, and policy), and the definition might vary depending on language background, proficiency, ethnicity, or ancestry (Hillman, 2019). For instance, Valdés (2000) defines HLLs as those who were raised in homes where a language other than English is spoken and who are to some degree bilingual in English and the heritage language. In this study, the term "HLLs" refers to those students who went to school in English and: (a) were raised in a home where Arabic was spoken, (b) have at least some proficiency in the heritage language (i.e., Arabic; Valdés, 2000), and (c) have cultural connections to one or more Arabic dialects (Kelleher, 2010; Polinsky & Kagan 2007).

With more than 3.7 million Americans with Arab roots (The Arab American Institute, 2021), Arabic is one of the quickly growing heritage languages in the U.S. (Van Deusen-Scholl, 2003). Additionally, Arabic was designated by the U.S. government as a critical language in 2006, and, since then, enrollment in L2 Arabic classes, for both heritage and non-heritage students, has increased in the U.S. over the past decade (Al Masaeed, 2020). Generally, still, there is a clear underrepresentation of Arabic compared to other languages like English, Spanish, or Chinese in the field of SLA. This lack of representation is even higher in the field of Heritage Language Education (HLE), where Arabic HLLs are examined less than other heritage language (HL) communities (Hillman, 2019). With little research conducted on Arabic HLLs, the pedagogical implications specific to Arabic are wanting, which leaves Arabic HL educators to

generalize implications from research conducted on other languages. While this might work in certain situations or contexts, Arabic HLLs stand out as a special population of students for their diglossic (i.e., where two languages or varieties are used by one community in different conditions) HL and the wide array of backgrounds they represent. Thus, Arabic HLLs require research that is designed specifically to understand their needs and provide implications applicable to their context.

With more students interested in learning Arabic in the U.S., a complex feature related to Arabic learning additionally surfaces; Arabic diglossia. Being a diglossic language means that there exists a higher and lower register of Arabic (Ferguson, 1959), each with its own use and purpose. Specifically, Arabic speakers read and write in one form but speak using another (Ryding, 2018; Mohammed, 2022). The higher register of Arabic, referred to as Modern Standard Arabic (MSA; Al-Batal, 2018) in the U.S., is mainly used for reading and writing and it is taught in formal education in Arab countries. It is primarily used in news outlets, political and religious speeches, religious sacred scripts like the holy Quran and the Bible, literary books, and formal speeches (Gomaa, 2022). The lower register is commonly used in everyday conversations and realized as spoken dialects, which differ from one country to another within the Arab world (Hillman, 2019; Bassiouny, 2020). With twenty-three countries where Arabic is the official language, scholars have different opinions about the number of Arabic dialects that exist. However, the most plausible categorization so far in the field of Arabic linguistics is that there are five main Arabic dialects: Egyptian, Levantine (in Syria, Jordan, Palestine, and Lebanon), Iraqi, and Maghreb dialects (in North-West Africa) (Bassiouney, 2020; Gomaa, 2022).

Since HLLs of Arabic vary in their ancestral lineage (i.e., their parents and extended families come from different Arab countries), it is common for multiple students in one Arabic

class to have been exposed to different Arabic dialects. Additionally, because HLLs in most cases do not receive formal education in their heritage language while growing up (Albirini, 2014a), they often experience less exposure to MSA, if any at all. Therefore, Arabic HLLs often enroll in Arabic language classes in university in order to learn MSA (Albirini, 2014b), an objective that has proven to pose significant challenges for educators of Arabic.

One of the first difficulties that Arabic programs in universities struggle with is the decision of whether to teach the standard written form (i.e., higher register, aka MSA) of the language or the dialectal form (i.e., lower register). For those who do decide to teach one or multiple dialects, they are then additionally faced with the decision of which to teach. Another challenge is that, while Arabic instructors in the USA have split views on integrating dialects with MSA in their teaching instruction and curricula (Al-Mohsen, 2016; Trentman, 2017; Younes, 2018), most Arabic textbooks are MSA-oriented, with minor focus on one or two dialects of Arabic (usually Egyptian and Levantine) (Al-Batal, 2018; Younes, 2018). As a result, most programs choose to primarily focus on MSA in classes (Shiri, 2007) because they either do not have enough supporting materials or they wish not to confuse students. However, due to their history of formal education in Arabic, HLLs generally come to class with almost no prior knowledge of MSA, and some proficiency (usually speaking and listening) in only one specific dialect of Arabic (Ibrahim & Allam, 2006). Furthermore, the decision against dialect integration in textbooks, curricula, and instructional practices ignores prior linguistic knowledge of Arabic HLLs (e.g., linguistic features such as pronunciation, intonation, and grammar use) that often closely resemble Arabic first language (L1) speakers (Schwartz, 2001).

Choosing to focus on MSA only in Arabic classrooms reflects an unrealistic image of everyday life in Arabic heritage communities, where translanguaging practices (using dialectal

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Arabic mixed with English) is the norm for communication. For example, in the Arabic diglossic case, HLLs might shift between dominant (English) and heritage (dialectal Arabic), and also within Arabic itself (MSA and one or more dialects). Communication in Arabic daily life is naturally filled with translanguaging practices. In an Arab country context, translanguaging happens within Arabic itself, as sometimes the lines between spoken dialects and MSA are blurred. When Arabic HLLs use dialectal Arabic, English, and MSA in the classroom, this allows them to, first, utilize their entire linguistic repertoire, and, second, represent their heritage communities.

In a sense, translanguaging also encourages HLLs to affirm their identities and boost their confidence. In an Arabic heritage community context (e.g., in the U.S.), translanguaging can appear in the shift between Arabic and English, and addition to the shift within Arabic itself. Arabic HLLs depend on translanguaging as a negotiation strategy when communicating with members of the heritage community. It permits them to navigate challenging situations where they are required, or expected, by other members of the community to communicate in Arabic. Using English in such a situation would mark the HLL as an outsider. Thus, using translanguaging practices presents HLLs with an opportunity to preserve their social identity as members in the heritage community (Wyman, 2012). Thus, translanguaging may not only help HLLs survive challenging interactions, but also help maintain their heritage language.

The decision to concentrate on MSA in Arabic language classrooms not only marginalizes Arabic HLLs' linguistic repertoires, but also their cultural and social ties to Arabic (Gomaa, 2022). Aside from a focus on the linguistic aspects of HLLs, previous studies on HLLs' identity have dedicated great attention to learners' individuality and unique identities in the classroom (Gee, 2000; McKay & Wong, 1996; Norton & Toohey, 2011). For instance, Dávila

(2017) found that HLLs use their heritage language to strengthen their ties with their multilingual communities. In addition, previous research confirms the importance of identity, among other factors like motivation and self, for HLLs (Kurata, 2015; Mori & Calder, 2015; Jee, 2017; Kim, 2017). HLLs might feel as representatives of not only the language they inherited from their parents, but also the culture of their heritage community. Moreover, HLLs might experience identity conflict, as they are often challenged with representing and maneuvering both their heritage culture and the dominant culture of the society they live in (Qin, 2006). Arabic HLLs use their heritage dialects to communicate with their families and communities. This communication constitutes a huge proportion of their social identity. Through translanguaging practices (using the entire linguistic repertoire), Arabic HLLs also use their full identity spectrum and become visible in the classroom (Gomaa, 2022).

Although many scholars in the field of applied linguistics and second language acquisition have contributed immensely to the field of heritage language education and they exert magnificent efforts to enrich the field with beneficial implications related to heritage language learners, Arabic HLLs remain significantly less studied than other HLLs (Hillman, 2019; Shoman, 2016). Thus, this dissertation focuses on Arabic HLLs in U.S. universities as the target population. In order to address variables relevant and important for Arabic HLL communities, the current study is guided by two theories: translanguaging (García, 2009; Canagarajah, 2011; Wei, 2018), and social identity theory (Tajfel, 1981; Norton, 2000). Due to Arabic's diglossic and heterogeneous nature, this study, first, explores Arabic HLLs' perceptions of using their full linguistic repertoire while studying MSA in college. Then, this study investigates how Arabic HLLs mobilize their social identity through linguistic practices that

utilize their rich linguistic repertoires (including dialectal Arabic and English), and how this mobilization affects their classroom experience.

In response to the needs in HLE and Arabic language education, this dissertation explores Arabic HLLs' translanguaging practices in the classroom and how their social identity informs such practices. This study is meant to, first, present the field of HLE with findings that apply to Arabic HLLs. Additionally, this study is a step towards increasing the current limited research about Arabic HLLs so that educators have a better understanding of their students' prior knowledge and identities. Further, this study aims to inspire Arabic educators to create a more inclusive classroom that allows HLLs to fearlessly utilize their prior linguistic knowledge to achieve their learning objectives and, at the same time, confirms their social identities as Arabic HLLs.

CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

In this chapter, I provide a brief overview of the two guiding theories of this dissertation, translanguaging and social identity, with an in-depth review of studies related to Arabic HLLs. First, I define the translanguaging theory in general. I then discuss the connection between translanguaging and meaning-making strategies in HLE, identity, and classroom practices. Finally, I introduce the social identity theory, review its connections to translanguaging practices, and finally outline the guiding research questions of this dissertation.

Definition of translanguaging

Translanguaging has been proposed as a transformative pedagogy that allows learners to utilize all their linguistic resources in bi/multilingual classroom settings (Creese & Blackledge, 2010; Wei, 2011). Originated in the Welsh context, the term translanguaging was coined by Cen Williams (1994), which was initially used to describe students' acts of alternation between languages they know for the purposes of receptive or productive use (Anwaruddin, 2018). Within the realm of contemporary multilingualism, translanguaging aligns with emerging trends in the field. To fully comprehend translanguaging, its linguistic and ideological aspects need to be considered. Linguistically, Garcia (2009) defines translanguaging as the implementation of more than one language in the language learning process. This definition encompasses spontaneous practices that can occur both within and beyond the classroom setting (Cenoz & Gorter, 2020). Canagarajah (2011) highlights that translanguaging as a communication tool allows multilingual speakers to fluidly switch between languages. In that sense, translanguaging is a strategy adapted by bi/multilingual speakers that capitalizes the interconnected system of their hybrid linguistic repertoire.

Translanguaging is not confined to educational settings, it can also occur naturally in the different social contexts of bi/multilingual speakers to help them align with the various social and communicative settings they encounter (Lewis, Jones & Baker, 2012) and acknowledges their ability to adapt to diverse sociolinguistic situations (Sembiante, 2016). Cenoz (2017) divides translanguaging into two main categories: *pedagogical* translanguaging and *spontaneous* translanguaging. Pedagogical translanguaging refers to the use of different languages and diverse linguistic repertoires of students in the classroom, and, essentially, it is mainly planned and facilitated by the teacher. Spontaneous translanguaging, on the other hand, refers to fluid discursive practices that can take place in- as well as outside the classroom. This suggests that translanguaging is a dynamic and fluid strategy of language learning that is centered around the concept of meaning-making. For example, when multilingual individuals depend on their linguistic repertoire, drawing upon elements from multiple languages, to convey a message or to simply have a conversation, the entire process is directed towards the goal of successful communication and meaning-making. Encouragingly, several scholars have begun to advocate for the deconstruction of conventional language boundaries where languages are distinct and separate from one another through support for translanguaging practices (Leung & Valdes, 2019; Otheguy et al., 2015). Between scholars' interest to foster communicative spaces that celebrate multilingual repertoires and the aim of translanguaging to blur the demarcations between languages, translanguaging has evolved as a theory that appeals greatly to language scholars.

Translanguaging practices often include a variety of discursive practices such as translation, code-switching, code-mixing, and code-meshing (Abourehab & Azaz, 2023). Such practices could occur in a spoken and/or written mode (Hornberger & Link, 2012). While code-switching is often conceptualized as intersentential, meaning one sentence in one language and

the following sentence in another language, code-mixing is often characterized as intrasentential, meaning mixing languages in the same sentence (Baker, 2011). Code-meshing appears to be the closest to translanguaging, as it refers to the integration of two languages in a single system (Canagarajah, 2011). The difference between code-meshing and translanguaging is that the latter exceeds the limited analysis of sentences and aims to understand the function of linguistic repertoires in language learning and instruction. Thus, translanguaging can be understood as an umbrella term that gathers all other constructs together to explain the language practices of bi/multilingual language learners.

Ideologically, translanguaging challenges the linguistic standards enforced by monolingual ideologies that disregard multilingual practices and overlook their significance (Garcia, 2011). Language ideology encompasses the practices, beliefs, and sentiments regarding languages in social contexts (Blackledge et al., 2008; Krotskrity, 2004). Translanguaging, as a language ideology, opposes the imposition of monolingual standards on bi/multilingual speakers, as it blurs the boundaries between languages, creating an integrated system rather than adhering to the distinct separation advocated by monolingual ideologies (Canagarajah, 2011; Garcia, 2011; Otheguy et al., 2015). Essentially, translanguaging provides bi/multilinguals with a broader range of choices compared to the limitations imposed on monolingual speakers.

Beyond the expanded linguistic choices facilitated by translanguaging, bi/multilingual speakers experience a sense of agency absent in monolingual ideologies. When these speakers opt to utilize their diverse linguistic repertoires, they challenge the social and political divisions between languages (Otheguy et al., 2015) and amplify the voices of social, cultural, and political power positions typically marginalized by monolingual ideologies (Blackledge & Creese, 2014; Street, 1984). Additionally, translanguaging empowers multilingual speakers by recognizing and

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validating their linguistic repertoires, contrasting with the shaming tendencies of monolingual ideologies (Jonsson, 2005). This empowerment contributes to advancing social justice by dismantling the hierarchical distinctions between languages promoted by monolingual ideologies that designate one language as more valuable than others (Jonsson, 2017; Wei, 2023).

Translanguaging and meaning-making in language learning

According to Garcia et al. (2017), translanguaging in education means using the learner's full linguistic repertoire, which makes it an inclusive process of drawing on all language practices brought to class by students from different language backgrounds. Through translanguaging, learners are able to develop new language practices while maintaining the old ones (Garcia & Kano, 2014). For example, in the context of the current study, Arabic HLLs might use their first language (e.g., English), and their dialectal Arabic knowledge (e.g., Egyptian Arabic) to develop the new language they wish to learn (e.g., MSA).

Many researchers have examined how translanguaging practices help learners to achieve their learning goals (e.g., Daniel et al., 2019; Velasco & García, 2014; Sun & Zhang, 2022). For instance, in a case study on transnational students, Wang (2019) examined the dynamic inter-connection of literacy practices of an international college student from China. Although her study focused on literacy mobility across formal and informal digital spaces, it touched on the translanguaging practices of the focal participant during reading the class material. Through examining data from semi-structured interviews, field notes and audio recordings, WeChat (a Chinese social media app) posts, and writing artifacts of reading and writing assignments, Wang found that these translanguaging practices were manifested in the form of multilingual annotations in the writing assignments, and translations from English to Chinese in the assignments' drafts, which helped the student comprehend her class material. In addition, the

participant used translanguaging practices (i.e., writing in English and Chinese) when she used social media to post about her academic experience. According to the participant, this strategy helped her understand the course material better. This study demonstrates the potential positive value students might find when they implement translanguaging practices in their language learning.

Of the very few studies that examined translanguaging practices *within* the Arabic language, Al Masaeed (2020) included dialectal Arabic knowledge alongside MSA and English in his analysis of translanguaging in an Arabic study abroad program in Morocco for American university students. To explore how Arabic learners used multidialectal practices in their interactions with L1 speakers of Arabic during their program, Al Masaeed collected dyadic conversation data (in MSA) from a total of 10 students, with Arabic proficiency levels ranging from novice to advanced, and eight L1 speaking partners, who were L2 English-speaking (under)graduate students in Morocco. The analysis of the recorded conversations showed how participants preferred translanguaging practices (i.e., through using multiple dialects of Arabic) to using only MSA to create opportunities for learning and signal their multiple identities. Interestingly, Al Masaeed's study explored translanguaging practices within the Arabic language, moving from one dialect to the other, as opposed to other studies that examined translanguaging practices between different languages. While Al Masaeed's study acts to highlight the importance of translanguaging practices in Arabic conversations to achieve communicative goals and represent multiple identities, importantly, it was conducted in a study abroad setting that may limit the implications for domestic Arabic classrooms. Additionally, his data were not reflective of the typical classroom setting. Instead, data were recorded conversation sessions between Arabic L2 learners and language partners. Finally, his study did

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not target Arabic HLLs. Therefore, the current study focuses on the Arabic classroom experience and the translanguaging practices of Arabic HLLs including how they use dialectal knowledge, English, and MSA.

Translanguaging and meaning-making in HLE

Scholars have used translanguaging as a theoretical framework now for decades to further understand the impact of language learners' linguistic repertoire on their language learning experience and communicative practices (i.e., Blommaert, 2010; Cenoz, 2017; Creese & Blackledge, 2010, 2015; Hornberger & Link, 2012; Mary & Young, 2017). For instance, in their study focusing on Gujarati and Chinese storytelling in two community language schools of Gujarati and Chinese, respectively, in the U.K., Creese and Blackledge (2010) conducted case studies where they observed and recorded language classrooms (ages 5 – 16), and interviewed their four participants and their teachers after four weeks of observation. Examining classroom interactions, pair and group discussions, and classroom tasks, researchers concluded that participants used a mixture of English and family languages (Gujarati or Chinese) to communicate with their teachers and classmates. Another important finding of this study is that participants appeared to need to use all the languages they knew in order to convey and negotiate meaning in class. This study demonstrates translanguaging as a meaning-making process (Vaish & Subhan, 2015), during which one language reinforces the other resulting in more understanding in both languages (Lewis et al., 2012).

In terms of translanguaging and heritage languages, empirical research has investigated translanguaging and how it has been used for meaning-making, knowledge acquisition in class, negotiating power, protecting minority languages (e.g., heritage languages), boosting motivation, and learning literacy skills (Cenoz, 2017; Creese & Blackledge, 2010; Duarte, 2018; Fang &

Huang, 2023; Hornberger & Link, 2012). Encouragement and support for translanguaging practices is essential for maintaining heritage languages, because these practices are usually excluded in the monolingual ideologies that can guide both sociolinguistic interactions and the language learning classroom, where the focus is given to only the dominant language of the society or the target language, respectively. This focus on monolingual ideologies leads to a clash between monolingual and translanguaging pedagogies in heritage language education. While monolingual pedagogies see students' additional languages as invalid resources of knowledge, translanguaging pedagogies value and promote the integration of those languages because they can result in more learning (Kamwangamalu, 2010). In fact, translanguaging ensures that students bring their entire linguistic repertoires to classroom interactions (Rivera & Mazak, 2017) because their heritage languages have been marginalized and silenced by monolingual ideologies.

Within the realm of HLE, translanguaging reflects HLLs' realities as multilingual speakers by incorporating their heritage and the dominant societal languages in the learning process of the heritage language. HLLs' dynamic and fluid use of the languages they know supports their meaning making process in terms of their rich linguistic repertoires (Garcia et al., 2017). Specifically within the context of a diglossic language, Arabic HLLs can utilize translanguaging practices to switch between their dialectal knowledge, MSA, and English to construct meaning and maintain successful communication with their peers (Gomaa, 2022). However, studies targeting Arabic HLLs' translanguaging practices mainly focus on analyzing the linguistic practices of HLLs learners, be it during pre-designed prompts (e.g., Narrative Analysis in Albirini & Chakrani, 2017) or during class time (e.g., Conversation Analysis in Abourehab & Azaz, 2023), without a deeper exploration and reflection of Arabic HLLs' voice

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related to how they perceive translanguaging and how this might affect their MSA learning experience. Therefore, this dissertation aims to fill this gap by investigating Arabic HLLs' perceptions towards translanguaging practices in class.

The few studies that have focused on translanguaging practices in Arabic HL suggest that translanguaging was a contributing factor to Arabic learners' experience. For example, Said and Zhu (2017) focused on Arabic heritage children (ages 6-9) in family interactions and how they mobilized their multiple and developing linguistic repertoires from one language to the other, in addition to how this helped with maintaining their heritage language. Analyses of the language practices of the children's families during mealtime multiparty interactional data over eight months showed that families valued both Arabic and English in their interactions. Said and Zhu concluded that as a result of the family's adoption of flexible bilingual (Arabic and English) practices with their children, the children, being aware of the value of Arabic and English in family interactions, used this knowledge to assert their agency to achieve interactional goals in Arabic. While this study does not focus on the classroom setting, it yields important insights for the importance of translanguaging practices in fostering family connections and promoting heritage language maintenance.

Another example of a study that focused on the interplay of dialectal Arabic, MSA, and English within the Arabic heritage context is Albirini and Chakrani (2017), as they examined Arabic heritage speakers' ability to use the societal majority language (English), their dialectal knowledge of Arabic, and their MSA knowledge in the construction of narratives of personal experience. The authors collected and analyzed 30 narratives by five heritage speakers of Arabic who were university students (mean age = 23 years) and self-reported high proficiency in Arabic. Participants produced two versions of each narrative (one in Arabic and one in English), and

those narratives were analyzed based on word count and incidents of dialectal Arabic, MSA, and English. Albirini and Chakrani found that Arabic heritage speakers used a mixture of MSA, dialect, and English in their Arabic narratives, with varying degrees based on the cultural context of the narrative and the students' level of proficiency. While Albirini and Chakrani shed light on the linguistic practices of Arabic heritage speakers as they depended on their rich linguistic repertoire to achieve communicative goals, their study focused on code-switching (the narrow view of shifting between linguistic codes) between MSA, dialectal Arabic, and English. The analysis was limited to revealing the registers and linguistic contexts where code-switching happened. Additionally, participants were not Arabic heritage language *learners*, meaning they were not taking Arabic classes, which limits the findings of the study to beyond the classroom setting. Finally, Albirini and Chakrani did not investigate the relationship between their participants' identity as heritage speakers and their linguistic practices. Therefore, this dissertation aims to continue shedding light on the interplay between MSA, dialectal Arabic, and English, however, through the more-inclusive lens of translanguaging as a theory that examines linguistic practices in relation to one's social and educational contexts. Moreover, the present study focuses on Arabic heritage speakers enrolled in Arabic classes (i.e., HLLs) to reveal the relationship between their translanguaging practices and their social identity as members in the heritage community who have consciously made a decision to study Arabic in a formal setting.

Taken together, previous studies that explored translanguaging pedagogical practices and learners' translanguaging practices provide evidence that applying translanguaging practices can have a positive effect on the language learning experience. However, most studies have focused on translanguaging practices in the context of two or more languages, as opposed to instances of translanguaging between multiple dialects of one language. Furthermore, previous research on

translanguaging practices in Arabic does not specifically focus on Arabic HLLs as the target

population. Therefore, in the current study I expand the research on translanguaging by exploring

the practice not only in terms of different languages (Arabic and English), but also within the

Arabic language itself. Specifically, I investigate how Arabic HLLs profit from relying on their

dialectal knowledge when learning MSA to translanguage between dialectal Arabic, English, and

MSA, in addition to the effect of their social identity as heritage learners on their learning

experience.

Translanguaging and identity

According to García and Wei (2014), translanguaging extends beyond linguistic practices

to the continuous process of discovering an identity and finding a sense of belonging in the

world. As translanguaging serves as a strategy to promote diverse language practices, it also

encompasses the reconstruction and manifestation of identities and social affiliations (e.g., Gee,

2005; Her, 2005; Solmaz, 2018). When multilingual learners employ translanguaging practices

to achieve communicative goals, they also project identities that resonate with their true selves

(Cinaglia et al., Forthcoming; Choi, 2019; Ng & Lee, 2019; Solmaz, 2018; Walker, 2017). By

going beyond the linguistic norms of the dominant language (e.g., English), multilingual learners

can use their meaning-making resources to project identities that better-align with their true

selves as multilingual, multicultural learners with diverse linguistic and cultural backgrounds

(García & Wei, 2014; Shi, 2023). According to Choi (2020), translanguaging aids multilingual

learners in reshaping their identities to create new ones that hold personal significance to them.

Through translanguaging, they construct new identities that better represent their evolving selves

as multilingual and multicultural individuals (e.g., Choi & Liu, 2021; Dong, 2021; Phillips &

Genao, 2023; Ra, 2021; Walker, 2017; Wei & Zhu, 2013).

In terms of heritage language learners, students do not only bring their linguistic repertoires to class, but they also bring their rich identities. According to Leeman, Rabins, and Román-Mendoza (2011), heritage language education has always been connected with the identities of the students. Therefore, Arabic HLLs, with their rich transglossic linguistic repertoire and social identities, seem to be an ideal population of students to implement translanguaging practices in their learning journey of Arabic. Therefore, this dissertation aims to investigate the connection between translanguaging practices and HLLs' identities.

Since HLLs are often tied to their heritage languages through familial, cultural, and societal values, sometimes HLLs consider those values while learning their heritage language. Worthy and Rodríguez-Galindo (2006) indicated that HLLs are expected by their families to value and nurture the literacy skills of their heritage language alongside the local language (e.g., English). From the family's perspective, maintaining the heritage language can enhance their children's connection to the family and support their ethnic identity (Cho, 2000). Similarly, Abourehab and Azaz (2023) indicated that Arab families see MSA as the marker of Arabic and/or Islamic identity. Therefore, they encourage their children to learn MSA, as these immigrant families wish to pass their community/heritage languages to their children. Lee (2002) concluded from interviews with Korean-American university students that heritage language proficiency was directly connected to cultural values and ethnic identity (Rivera & Mazak, 2017). Since literacy practices are situated in social practices and connected with how individuals use language (Street, 1984), translanguaging can help utilize multiple literacy practices rooted in the different languages that learners depend on in classroom interactions (Song, 2015). In the case of heritage learners, the hybrid cultural background they often have may lead to different literacy practices that result in creating new forms of knowledge (Kearny,

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1995; Marsh, 2005). Wei (2014) recommended translanguaging practices as a suitable approach to teaching in the heritage learners' context. Gregory and Williams (2000) conducted a study examining the literacy practices of multilingual immigrant families in London, and they concluded that heritage learners learned to speak the dialect of their heritage language, the standard form, and the local language (English). However, it is important to note here that the focus of translanguaging is not speakers' language itself, but speakers' use of that language. This means that literacy practices of heritage learners are a reflection of their social reality (Reznicek-Parrado, 2023). After analyzing a corpus of 10 contact hours of instruction focusing on translanguaging practices in teacher-learner interactions in a community/heritage Arabic school, Abourehab and Azaz (2023) demonstrated that Arabic HLLs use their home dialects in class as part of their trans/multidialectal competence, and those dialects facilitate learning MSA.

Since research has indicated that translanguaging practices help HLLs to advance in their learning (e.g., Said & Zhu, 2017; Albirini & Chakrani, 2017; Al Masaeed, 2020, Abourehab & Azaz, 2023), this study examines those practices by Arabic HLLs in the classroom and extends the examination to how translanguaging can help those learners bring their social identity to the classroom.

Definition of social identity theory

In the past decades, identity as a main aspect in HLLs' development has gained increasing attention (e.g., Leeman, 2015; Tseng, 2020; Zhou & Liu, 2023). In perhaps the most canonical definitions of the term, Norton (2000) refers to identity as a person's understanding of his/her "relationship to the world, how this relationship is constructed in time and space, and how the person understands possibilities for the future" (p.5). Similarly, Joseph (2006) defines identity as a category to which a person belongs. He points out that one can belong to several

social categories according to their gender, ethnicity, nationality, cultural heritage, age, occupation, and social status. In other words, identity is not fixed. Instead, it is fluid and might change overtime (Norton, 2000), which has also been noted within the HLL context (Gyogi, 2020; Park, 2021; Zhou & Liu, 2023). From under the umbrella of identity spurred the social identity theory which was first developed by Henri Tajfel in the late seventies of the last century. According to Tajfel (1981) and Tajfel and Turner (1979), social identity theory is a major social psychological theory of intergroup relations and group processes that explains the individual's self-concept and how others treat him/her. In other words, one claims a social identity by, first, self-categorization as a member of a social group, then by adhering to the social groups' norms and expectations. Tajfel combined his earlier work on categorization and social perception with his interest in understanding intergroup conflicts in society to arrive at a theory for social identity (Hogg, 2016). According to Abrams and Hogg (2004), Tajfel believed that intergroup conflict was group phenomena driven by human motivation and people's beliefs about themselves, society, social context, and group situations. This leads to intergroup comparison, in an attempt to prove that in-group characteristics or actions are more positively perceived than out-group ones (Brewer & Campbell, 1976).

A social identity is the feeling of belonging to a social group, which is in turn defined by the sets of attitudes, behaviors, and beliefs of a group of people. The similarities within a group define their social identity and how they are different from other groups. A member in a social group is called an in-group member, while an outsider is called an out-group member. In-group members feel a sense of belonging to their groups and, most of the time, their thinking is shaped by the group (Hogg, 2012). As Hall (1996) argues, identity is defined by how individuals differentiate between themselves and other identified groups. Thus, their relationship to others is

what defines their Self. Hall also stresses that identity has the capacity to selectively include and exclude particular groups. Identity is, therefore, tied to a sense of belonging, a feeling that one is an "insider"—or that one is not. That said, Arabic HLLs' sense of belonging to their heritage communities, how they feel about their relationship to their heritage culture, and how they are perceived by their Arabic heritage community all constitute their social identity as Arabic HLLs.

Social identity and heritage language learners

Because the social identity of a person includes more than just one's social status, Turner et al. (1987) added emotional, evaluative and other psychological correlates of in-group classification to the social identity of a person. Applying social identity theory to HLLs, two important processes appear to be involved in the formation of HLLs' social identity: self-categorization and social comparison. The former means that the self is related to a specific social category, which is the heritage community. This leads to, eventually, developing some facts about the heritage community (e.g., physical presentation, language ideologies), which can be used to define the group norms. The perception of such norms or facts can result in social comparison with other social groups. However, since identity is fluid and can be multiple, HLLs can belong to more than one social group, which makes social identity an essential variable for exploration and consideration for HLL communities. Furthermore, social comparison means to label HLLs as in-group or out-group members in relation to social categories. The process of self-categorization leads to producing a new version of the person, which is seen through the eyes of the heritage community. A person tries to adhere to the group norms and attributes, including language ideologies and expectations (Loewen, 2004), so they can be considered an in-group member. Thus, HLLs can consider themselves in- or out-group members of heritage language and culture groups based on their connection to the heritage language and culture

(Oakes, 2001). HLLs might experience a feeling of marginalization from their heritage communities if they fail to conform to the heritage community norms (Tsai et al., 2021).

While a heritage language is not necessarily a gatekeeper to membership in heritage communities, it is considered one of the traits of heritage communities, especially for Arabic HL. Many scholars highlighted the importance of heritage languages in the formation of HLLs' social identity (e.g., Harris & Lee, 2021; Kim, 2020). In addition, Cameron (2001) posits that the social affiliations individuals make affects the languages they develop. Since social identity entails self-categorization, group membership, and, in turn, a sense of conformity to group norms and obligations, individuals' social identities are constructed and manifested through the roles, rights, and obligations they adhere themselves to (Rex & Schiller, 2009; Korobov & Bamberg, 2004). For Arabic HLLs, one of the main traits of Arabic heritage communities is some level of familiarity with an Arabic dialect and MSA for two reasons. First, Arabic is closely tied to religion (Islam and Christianity). Many scholars have confirmed that religion plays a central role in shaping individuals' linguistics practices (e.g., Fishman, 2006; Souza, 2016; Spolsky, 2006). In the context of Arabic, Bahhari (2023) investigated the role of religion in Arabic language maintenance by collecting questionnaire and interview data from ten Saudi families with school-aged children living in Australia. His results confirmed that religion was reflected by the studied families as one of the main reasons to maintain Arabic. In addition, in her sociocultural linguistic study, Engman (2015) examined the role of religious identity for second-grade Arabic language learners at a K-12 Islamic school. This study highlighted the ways in which learners' religious identities intersect, support, and overlap with their social and academic identities in a language course exclusively for Muslim HLLs. Findings showed how young Muslim learners drew on their religious identities in the Arabic class to support and strengthen their academic

and social identities. A strong manifestation of religious identity in the Arab heritage community (and the Arab world in its collective sense) is the ability to recite the holy books (i.e., The Holy Quan, The Bible), and the ability to read and interpret Hadith (Prophet Muhammad's sayings). Those texts are written in MSA. Therefore, Arabic HLLs are sometimes pressured by their families to enroll in MSA classes to be able to maintain their religious identities (Abourehab & Azzaz, 2023). In other words, language (in this case MSA) represents an access card to gaining a social identity as a member in the heritage community. In summary, this heavy Arabic presence in religious contexts plays a considerable role in Arabic HLLs' language ideologies so they feel they need to learn Arabic to be included in the religious communities. In other words, Arabic HLLs need Arabic to be able to claim an in-group membership in their heritage community social group.

A second reason for Arabic heritage language to be considered a main trait of Arabic heritage communities is the relationship between language proficiency and ethnic identity, which is shared among heritage communities of all languages. In the context of Korean heritage language maintenance, for example, research has indicated a positive correlation between heritage language proficiency and HLLs ethnic identity (e.g., Choi 2015; Kang & Kim 2012). Additionally, research has indicated that failure to develop heritage language proficiency might result in negative feelings for HLLs such as regret and embarrassment (Nakamura, 2020). In spite of its core relatedness to HLLs' social identity construction, existing research on HLLs sometimes overlooks the role of language in HLLs' identity construction and focuses on other issues like cultural, ethnic, and identity struggles (Shin, 2010). To that end, Park and Chung (2023) explored the identity construction of two Korean heritage university students in relation to Korean language and culture. They concluded that both participants realized the importance of

maintaining and developing their heritage language for constructing their desired identities as it allowed them a sense of belonging in their heritage communities. In the context of Arabic HLLs in the United States, cultivating cultural and social connections with Arabic heritage communities contributes immensely to the maintenance of Arabic as a heritage language in the U.S. (Sehlaoui, 2008).

Aside from the linguistic aspects of HLLs, previous studies on HLLs' identity have dedicated considerable attention to HLLs' individuality and unique identities in the classroom (see He, 2004; Hornberger & Wang, 2008; Lee, 2005, 2010; Makoni, 2018; Maloney & De Costa, 2017; Ortega, 2002; Pavlenko & Blackledge, 2004; Valdés, 2005; Wei, 2011; Yilmaz, 2018). External factors (e.g., immediate or extended families, heritage community elders, teachers, classmates) play a major role in the construction of HLLs' social identity. When HLLs claim membership in their heritage community, they are expected to uphold the group's values, and be representatives of their heritage communities. This representation entails dealing with expectations of members of the heritage community (Park et al., 2021; Tseng, 2020), and also the outsiders to whom a correct and accurate image of the heritage community should be represented, such as classmates and teachers (Kitchen, 2014; Lee, 2013). Al Rifae (2017) examined the close and dynamic relationship between language, culture, and social identity by collecting observation and interview data from 31 college students learning Arabic, 11 of whom were Arabic HLLs. Interview results showed that some HLLs felt an increased responsibility to represent their culture in the most accurate and positive way. HLLs considered the classroom an opportunity to present a correct image of their culture, unlike the negative one projected by Western media. Results also showed that non-heritage students considered their HLLs classmates as native speakers of Arabic and as the legitimate representatives of Arabic culture and language.

From the point of view of non-heritage learners, HLLs brought an authentic aspect of language and culture to the classroom and helped put language into context. Also, many non-heritage learners affirmed that they sought out HLLs' help for questions related to the heritage culture. Whether HLLs face expectations by teachers (e.g. Block & Moncada-Comas, 2022; Maddamsetti, 2020; Sato et al., 2019; Yoon, 2008) or non-heritage students (e.g. Brisson, 2018; Linares, 2021; Pu & Evans, 2019), such expectations shape HLLs' behaviors and performances in the classroom (Shi, 2023), additionally contributing to their sense of social identity.

Social identity and translanguaging practices

Translanguaging practices are tightly connected to the social identity aspects of HLLs. The decision of what and when to use translanguaging practices depends on HLLs' evaluation of their connection to others. If HLLs are communicating with members of their heritage community who speak their heritage language, HLLs are likely to use heritage language and implement translanguaging practices to varying degrees, depending on their level of proficiency and the person with whom they are communicating (Jiang, 2021). On the contrary, when HLLs communicate with non-HLL individuals they are likely to use the majority or dominant language (i.e., English) to avoid any feelings of discomfort that might be felt by the non-heritage individuals (Shi, 2023). It is important to note that HLLs might sometimes view translanguaging as inappropriate or unprofessional in certain situations or when communicating with certain people (Shi, 2023). For example, in the case of Arabic, when a heritage language learner uses translanguaging practices (in spoken or written mode) in a religious or official context, it might be rendered as a sign of weakness in Arabic, which in turn jeopardizes the in-group membership a heritage language learner aspires to maintain or gain. Similarly, when Arabic HLLs use translanguaging practices (even shifting between MSA and dialect) in an Arab country, the same

discomforts of linguistic doubts may be triggered either for themselves or for community members, and an opportunity arises for locals (i.e., L1 Arabic speakers) to categorize these HLLs as outsiders, thus affecting their social identity.

Present study

A careful review of the literature reveals that previous studies investigating Arabic HLLs have depended solely on qualitative design to collect and analyze data around language, identity, and related factors (e.g., Abourehab & Azaz, 2023; Albirini, 2014; Albirini & Chakrani, 2017; Al Masaeed, 2020; Al Rifae, 2017; Bahari, 2023; Said & Zu, 2017). While qualitative designs are essential for providing rigorous and insightful results and implications pertaining to Arabic HLLs, the field requires a variety of research methods to address the different aspects of Arabic HLE. In addition, translanguaging and identity as theoretical frameworks have also commonly been investigated in the field of heritage language education, and SLA in general, using mainly qualitative methods and have largely overlooked the value of quantitative and mixed methodologies (Özkaynak, 2023). This dissertation, thus, set forth to make use of a wider toolkit of methods in order to explore the themes at hand.

In addition to a need for mixed methodologies, the scarcity of studies that examine the social identity of Arabic HLLs is apparent in the field. Though some studies use social identity theory as a guiding framework in their studies, they do not explicitly examine the element of in-group vs. out-group memberships of Arabic HLLs, along with external factors (e.g., effect of family and classroom expectations) to present a more complete view of Arabic HLLs' social identity. Therefore, this study intends to address Arabic HLLs' social identity (including the aspect of self-categorization, group expectations, and the classroom effect) in relation to HL learning and use. In summary, from the review of the previous literature, it is apparent that

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previous research on HLLs in general, and on Arabic HLLs specifically, is lacking in three main points: 1) translanguaging practices using majority language (i.e., English), dialectal knowledge, and MSA; 2) the social identity concepts of self-categorization and community expectations; and 3) the relationship between translanguaging and social identity in the MSA classroom. Thus, the present study investigates these three areas and is guided by the following research questions:

RQ1: What are Arabic HLLs' attitudes and perceptions towards translanguaging practices in the MSA classroom?

RQ2: How do HLLs adopt translanguaging to mobilize their social identities meaningfully in the MSA classroom?

RQ3: a. How do HLLs perceive various stakeholder expectations (i.e., from family, community, teachers, [non-]heritage students)?

b. How do those perceptions affect HLLs' social identity?

CHAPTER 3: METHODOLOGY

In this chapter, I provide detailed information about the methods of this dissertation, including participants' profiles, participants' classroom setting, the structure and focus of contributing Arabic programs, and researcher positionality. Further, I explain the research design and rationale, data sources, and data analysis.

Context

Positionality

I was born and raised in Fayoum, Egypt and identify as a L1 speaker of Egyptian Arabic. I came to the U.S. as an international graduate student in 2017 to study Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages (TESOL) and then Second Language Studies (SLS) at a public Midwestern university. Prior and during my graduate studies, I have worked as a university-level Arabic instructor and have 5 years of experience teaching novice, intermediate, and advanced levels. Together, my experiences and background give me insight into the target population for this dissertation, as well as the classroom context and pedagogical methodologies.

Contributing Arabic programs

The Arabic language programs where recruitment for this study was carried out all followed a general structure established by the American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages (ACTFL), which divides proficiency bands into three main categories: *Novice, Intermediate*, and *Advanced*. Within each main category, there are three sub-categories: *Low, Mid*, and *High*. Each of the Midwestern U.S. universities contributing to this study provide Arabic programs which consist of four years of courses. Like most language programs, they all start with the basics in 101 and 102 targeting novice level proficiency goals. Participants in these two Novice classes ($N = 63$) made up the majority of participants in this study (87.5%) and all

worked with one of two common Arabic language textbooks: *Alif Baa* (Brustad, et al., 2010) or

Ahlan Wa Sahlan (Alosh & Clark, 2021). These two textbooks focus mainly on the alphabet and

basic simple sentence structure practices. Participants in the two Intermediate classes ($N = 7$) in

the second year all used *Al-Kitaab fii Ta'allum al-'Arabiyya* (Al-Batal et al., 2011), which has

multiple volumes and parts and is widely used in Arabic programs across U.S. universities.

Participants in fourth year Advanced courses ($N = 2$), for which no set textbook exists, worked

with authentic material that served their course objectives to study advanced sociolinguistic

concepts and engage with language from specific advanced genres (e.g., literature, politics, etc.).

Regardless of level, all participating Arabic programs in this study mainly focused on teaching

MSA, with little focus on dialects (e.g., Egyptian, Levantine)

The focus on MSA is very important for the context of this dissertation because Arabic is

a diglossic language with a high and low form. The diglossic nature of Arabic is a very important

aspect that draws Arabic HLLs to study Arabic in a formal classroom in order to learn MSA, the

high form of the language that is not acquired at home. Apart from developing mostly only

listening and speaking competencies in their homes or heritage communities, those competencies

are related to specific dialects and vary in their similarities to and/or differences from MSA. In

addition to developing speaking and listening skills in MSA, formal Arabic classes support

Arabic HLLs to develop their reading and writing competencies. Arabic HLLs usually have very

limited reading and writing competencies in Arabic, whether it is dialectal or formal (Albirin,

2014b). As such, Arabic classes may appeal to Arabic HLLs to aid in reading and writing

abilities. In Arabic 101, heritage language learners start with little to no prior knowledge of MSA

and some oral proficiency in an Arabic dialect (the one they picked up at home), usually limited

to household surroundings (Albirini & Benmamoun, 2015). In Arabic 102, students build on the

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knowledge of MSA they developed in Arabic 101 and start to develop their writing skills at the sentence level. Moving to second year (Arabic 201), HLLs begin to study more complicated grammatical structures and more vocabulary. When they reach Arabic 400, they are expected to be proficient enough in Arabic to discuss advanced topics like literature, politics, and history, among other more complex and critical themes.

Participants

Participants recruited for this study were part of typical four-year Arabic programs at three large U.S. Midwestern universities. The total number of participants is 72 ($N = 72$): 53 participants in Arabic 101, 10 participants in Arabic 102, seven participants in Arabic 201, and two participants in Arabic 401. Participants were between 18-22 years old ($M = 18.97$; $SD = 0.86$) at the time of data collection. 71 participants were born in the U.S., and only one participant moved to the U.S. when he was one year old. All participants were raised in the U.S. and attended American schools in English. One participant (401 level) spent one summer in Jordan as a study abroad program. All participants self-reported that their first language was English and responded to quantitative questionnaires. In the following section, I present a brief description of the seventeen participants who further contributed qualitative data through interviews and classroom note-taking.

Participant profiles for qualitative data

To anonymize participants' identities, all names used in this study are pseudonyms picked by the participants themselves. In order to gain insight into participants' senses of HL identity, they were also asked to explain the reasoning behind their choice of pseudonym. Table 1 below summarizes the reasons why participants chose those pseudonyms.

Table 1. Participants' pseudonyms and reasoning

No.	Pseudonym	Reason
1	Saheb	Let's go with the name "Saheb". The reason why I chose this name is because it translates to "friend" in Arabic (so I have been told).
2	Grace	The name Grace works as a pseudonym for me, it's my middle name.
3	Stacy	There is no real reason I picked the name Stacy except for that it is a common American name.
4	Maryam	How about Maryam? I just think it's a pretty name:)
5	Jasmine	She is a Disney princess from Aladdin.
6	Qaf	In terms of an alias or nickname, just "ق" is fine. There is significance behind that letter because most people who could not properly pronounce my name have resorted to calling me "Q" since it is the first letter of my name in english (sic). Since this research pertains to Arabic, I feel like the letter "ق" is a perfect alias.
7	Salah Tuqan	I'd like my pseudonym for the study to be Salah Tuqan because that's the street I lived on in Amman this summer.
8	Khadija	Khadijah is what I am (sic) going to be originally named, after my grandmother!
9	Tamwuz	For my pseudonym name, I decided to go with تموز (Tamwuz). As you know it means July in Arabic, and it is the month my brother and I were born. It is also what my parents almost named him!
10	Alshams	You can use the nickname Alshams which means sun in Arabic. I chose this name because it was one of the first words I learned in Arabic.
11	Chrollo	This name is special because my best friend calls me it and says I look like him as well, you pronounce it, "crow" (as in the bird) and "low" (as the opposite of high).
12	Widad	This is my grandmother's name.
13	Horrya	As for my name I want to go by حرية to represent that one-day Palestine will be free.
14	Hanan	It is the name of one of my aunts.
15	Abud	As for the pseudonym, I would like to use the name Abud (Abdulmajeed). Abud is a mentor of mine 10 years older than me. He's

Table 1 (cont'd)

		really religious, caring, smart, and strong, mashallah. He's always looking out for others and putting them in his best interests so they can succeed. I really admire him as an individual and hope to come close to the man he is one day Inshallah. Abud has always been there when I needed him, and wants the best for me, especially in Arabic.
16	Haroon	*Chosen by researcher.*
17	Kareem	My parents wanted to name me Kareem.

Table 2 summarizes the 17 participants' profiles from qualitative interviews and note-taking. All participants started their Arabic classes with varying degrees of proficiency in their families' Arabic dialects (listening and speaking) and limited proficiency in MSA. Sixteen out of the 17 participants were born and raised in the U.S. The only exception was Kareem, who was born in Egypt; he and his family moved to the U.S. when he was one year old. All participants had parents (either one or both) that came from an Arabic-speaking background (either immigrating from an Arab country or born in the U.S. to an Arab family).

In terms of exposure to Arabic while growing up, Saheb, Grace, Jasmine, Maryam, Kareem, Khadija, Alshams, Widad, and Horrya were tied to Arabic through both their parents. They were surrounded with Arabic in their households and their Arabic heritage communities. Due to their high exposure to Arabic in their families, they could understand their home dialects very well and to some extent speak them too, and some could speak the home dialect very fluently (Maryam, Widad, Kareem). However, they shared that their knowledge of MSA was very limited due to lack of exposure.

Stacy, Qaf, and Hanan had only one parent coming from an Arabic background, and they expressed less exposure to Arabic than other participants while growing up. Salah also had one parent that came from an Arabic background. However, his family compensated for the limited

household exposure to Arabic by hiring a private tutor to teach him and his brother MSA at a young age. Salah reported that he learnt reading and writing in MSA when he was 10 years old but always struggled with the speaking aspect of Arabic.

Abud's and Haroon's family settings set them apart from the other HLL participants. On the one hand, Abud had two immigrant parents whose L1 was Arabic. However, they used Arabic as a means of communication in the household on a very limited basis. As a result, Abud did not use Arabic very frequently with his family and only learnt Arabic through attending an English-Arabic Islamic bilingual school until third grade. On the other hand, Haroon's parents were born and raised in the U.S., and they spoke English at home most of the time. Haroon's connection to Arabic was ignited by his grandparents, who encouraged him to speak the language with them. Both Abud and Haroon reported that they used Arabic to communicate with their Muslim heritage community at the mosque more than with their immediate family.

The last two participants were Tamwuz and Chrollo. Both grew up in a family from a Chaldean-Iraqi background. Tamwuz and Chrollo were brought up in a Chaldean/Arabic-speaking household where their families communicated mostly in Chaldean first, then Arabic as the secondary home language. Chaldean is an Indigenous, semitic language spoken in Northern Iraq regions. Residents of that region speak both Chaldean and Arabic. Both being Semitic languages, there are many similarities between Arabic and Chaldean. Before starting the Arabic program, Tamwuz could communicate in Chaldean and Iraqi Arabic but had very little knowledge of MSA. Chrollo reported that his family did not teach him Arabic when he was young. Instead, they primarily focused on Chaldean in their communication.

Table 2. Participants' profiles

No.	Participant	Class level	Gender	Family background	Arabic family dialect(s)
1	Saheb	101	Male	Lebanon/Iraq	Shami/Iraqi
2	Grace	101	Female	Lebanon/Iraq	Shami/Iraqi/Chaldean
3	Stacy	101	Female	Lebanon/USA	Shami
4	Mariyam	101	Female	Egypt	Egyptian
5	Jasmine	101	Female	Iraq	Iraqi
6	Qaf	101	Male	Jordan/ Lebanon/ Mexico	Shami
7	Salah Tuqan	401	Male	Palestine/USA	Shami
8	Khadija	101	Female	Iraq	Iraqi
9	Tamwuz	201	Female	Iraq	Iraqi/Chaldean
10	Alshams	101	Female	Palestine	Shami
11	Chrollo	101	Male	Iraq	Iraqi/Chaldean
12	Widad	101	Female	Syria	Shami
13	Horrya	201	Female	Palestine	Shami
14	Hanan	101	Female	Yemen/Spain	Yemeni
15	Abud	101	Male	Egypt	Egyptian
16	Haroon	101	Male	Syria/Palestine	Shami
17	Kareem	201	Male	Sudan	Sudanese

Study design

This study follows a sequential mixed-method design (Ivankova et al., 2006; Tashakkori & Teddlie, 2003; Creswell, 2005) to complement qualitative research that has been done previously on Arabic as a heritage language. Quantitative and qualitative methods are presented below, followed by methods for data analysis. Together, mixed methods aim to foster more robust and generalizable results, as well as a wider picture of HLLs' perspectives and experiences. Quantitative instruments and qualitative protocols were used to respond to all three research questions. Table 3 summarizes the data sources used to respond to each of the study's research questions.

Table 3. Data sources according to research question

No.	Question	Analysis
RQ1	What are Arabic HLLs' attitudes and perceptions towards translanguaging practices in the MSA classroom?	Qualitative: Interview data, class notes, and field notes from classroom observations
RQ2	How do HLLs adopt translanguaging to mobilize their social identities meaningfully in the MSA classroom?	Quantitative: number of translanguaging practices used in class notes. Qualitative: Interview data and field notes from classroom observations
RQ3	a. How do HLLs perceive various stakeholder expectations (i.e., from family, community, teachers, [non-]heritage students)? b. How do those perceptions affect HLLs' social identity?	Quantitative: descriptive statistics of questionnaire responses. Qualitative: Interview data and classroom observations.

Quantitative instruments

Quantitative data for this dissertation consist of results from two 9-point Likert scale questionnaires (Appendix A). The scale of the questionnaires was as follows: *1 = Strongly disagree, 2 = Disagree, 3 = Moderately disagree, 4 = Mildly disagree, 5 = Neutral, 6 = Mildly*

agree, 7 = Moderately agree, 8 = Agree, 9 = Strongly agree. A scale of 9 points was chosen for this dissertation because it provides participants with more response options than traditional 5-point scales. This would allow for more distinctions in participants' opinions and greater variability in the responses, which leads to more precise data that provide a better understanding of participants' perceptions of the two target constructs. These instruments were devised to investigate participants' perceptions of translanguaging practices and social identity in the Arabic classroom. All 72 participants responded to these two Likert-scale questionnaires.

Perceptions & attitudes towards translanguaging questionnaire

The first questionnaire targeted Arabic HLLs' perceptions and attitudes towards translanguaging practices in their MSA classroom. The questionnaire consisted of 12 items, developed specifically for this study based on central tenets and findings in translanguaging for HLLs from previous research (e.g., Cenoz, 2017; Creese & Blackledge, 2010; Garcia et al., 2017; Hornberger & Link, 2012). All items were piloted with 10 Arabic HLLs prior to this study, and five items were revised for clarity. To check the reliability of this questionnaire, Cronbach's alpha (α) was calculated to assess the internal consistency of the translanguaging questionnaire. The obtained Cronbach's alpha was α = 0.84, indicating high internal consistency for the 9-point Likert Scale used in the questionnaire (Plonsky & Derrick, 2016).

HLL social identity questionnaire

A second questionnaire inquired into participants' social identity in terms of three sub-components: (1) their self-categorizations as HLLs, (2) their awareness of surrounding expectations in the classroom, and (3) their perceptions of the weight of such expectations (i.e., the feeling of embarrassment). The questionnaire consisted of 33 items and was piloted with 10 participants prior to this study. To check the reliability of this questionnaire, Cronbach's alpha

(α) was calculated to assess the internal consistency of the social identity questionnaire. The obtained Cronbach's alpha was α = 0.87, indicating high internal consistency for the 9-point Likert Scale used in the questionnaire (Plonsky & Derrick, 2016).

Qualitative methods

Qualitative data comprise results from (1) semi-structured interviews (Appendix B) with seventeen participants, (2) participants' class notes, and (3) fieldnotes from ethnographic classroom observations. Of the 72 total participants, 17 individuals agreed to participate further in the study by providing class notes and agreeing to be interviewed and observed in class. Table 4 summarizes the data sources. Individual qualitative methods are described below.

Table 4. Summary of study instruments and methods

Method	Data
Questionnaire	Two questionnaires on Qualtrics.
Classroom observation	Field notes and classroom observations for four weeks.
Survey (Appendix C)	Background information such as personal information, education background, language learning background, travel experiences, reasons for learning Arabic, etc.
Class notes	Notes taken by students during classes.
Interviews	Two 30-minute video-recorded interviews with each participant (total 34 interviews for all participants).

Interviews

Individual interview procedures prompted participants to elaborate on some of their questionnaire responses so that more insightful information could be gained about their experiences as Arabic HLLs. The interview questions were devised to address Arabic HLLs' perceptions and attitudes towards translanguaging and social identity, and interview questions were piloted with three Arabic HLLs prior to this dissertation. Being semi-structured, some questions were pre-prepared based on insights from previous research addressing

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translanguaging and social identity (e.g., Garcia & Wei, 2014; Solmaz, 2018; Walker, 2017), and some questions were devised during the interviews spurring from the discussion. All questions in the interviews were uniquely devised specifically for this study and provided in Appendix B.

Class notes

Another qualitative data source was class notes taken by the participants. Those notes were examined for translanguaging practices implemented by the participants during their Arabic language class periods. Participants were notified in the recruitment process that they would have to submit notes they took during class time or from when they were studying Arabic at home. It was made clear to them that assignments and quizzes would not qualify as class notes. Participants submitted through email the notes they took in class for four weeks at the close of each week. On average, each participant submitted eight pages of class notes, resulting in 136 pages total of class notes for analysis.

Ethnographic observations

Finally, ethnographic observations were conducted over a four-week period at each of the three participant sites to collect information about their classroom interactions and the language learning atmosphere in general. Field notes were taken regarding teacher-student and student-student interactions regarding the use of translanguaging practices and social identity demonstrations in class. This information allowed for qualitative data triangulation, resulting in more robust findings. Together, these observations amounted to 76 hours of ethnographic observation for analysis.

Procedure

First, I reached out to Arabic instructors and program directors in the universities to ask them to distribute the recruitment invitation on Arabic HLLs in their classes. Next, interested

students were recruited and participation details and study tasks were explained to them (e.g., interviews, class notes, classroom observations). For successful completion of all study tasks, participants were paid $75 in cash, except for one participant who refused to get paid because she was really appreciative of the opportunity to share her heritage background and bring awareness to Arabic HLLs in the research realm. Table 5 summarizes the data collection procedure.

Table 5. Data collection procedure

Step 1	Recruitment invitation was sent at the beginning of the Fall semester.
Step 2	Participants were recruited.
Step 3	Questionnaire responses were collected after a month of attending classes.
Step 4	The first thirty-minute interview was conducted.
Step 5	Classroom observations and Class notes collection (four weeks).
Step 6	The second thirty-minute interview was conducted four weeks after the first interview.

Data analysis

Quantitative data analysis

Both quantitative and qualitative analyses were conducted in this mixed methods study. Quantitatively, descriptive statistics of questionnaire responses were generated using RStudio (R Core Team, 2023) and JASP (JASP Team, 2022), two software applications commonly used in quantitative data analysis to conduct statistical analyses. After tabulating and visually presenting descriptive statistics (mean, standard deviation, and 95% confidence interval), an interpretation of general trends in the data was possible. Then, the number of translanguaging practices and

their types were quantified (e.g., translation, transliteration, dialect) in the collected class notes. *Translations* were all instances where participants translated MSA vocabulary to English equivalents. *Transliterations* were all instances where participants used the English alphabet to write MSA words, and all instances where a participant used their heritage language dialect were coded as *dialect*. The following step was to conduct a cluster analysis, using RStudio to group the participants in meaningful clusters based on their social identity characteristics and the relationship between translanguaging practices and social identity of the participants.

Cluster analysis

According to Loewen and Plonsky (2017), cluster analysis identifies "groups or clusters of cases based on a set of measured variables" (p.24). In other words, participants grouped within one cluster share similar characteristics. As cluster analysis is used in L2 research for data exploration and data reduction (Crowther et al., 2021), it was used for this analysis to group participants who share similar characteristics in terms of their social identity and translanguaging practices in order to explain the connection between translanguaging and social identity for Arabic HLLs learning MSA.

There are two main types of cluster analysis: K-means and Hierarchical Cluster Analysis (HCA). This study implemented the latter (i.e., HCA) for two reasons. First, HCA requires a smaller sample size than K-means cluster analysis (Crowther et al., 2021). While there is no generally accepted minimum sample size for cluster analysis, several researchers suggest that K-means is more appropriate for larger sample sizes and HCA works better for smaller sample sizes (e.g., Crowther et al., 2021). Second, K-means requires a predetermination of clusters by the researcher before running the analysis, which was not useful in the current study. Since the purpose for using cluster analysis in this study was to explore the data and categorize the

participants based on the similarities they had in their questionnaire responses, HCA provided

clusters without the need to predetermine the number of clusters prior to running the test. In

HCA, determining the appropriate number of clusters happens after the analysis is conducted.

Therefore, HCA allowed for exploration and interpretation of the clusters first, followed by a

determination of the number of clusters that best explains the similarities amongst participants

and that responds better to the theoretical framework of this study.

Conducting hierarchical cluster analysis

To conduct HCA and visually present the results, RStudio was used. Before running the

analysis, it was necessary to choose a distance measure between clusters. To produce compact

and even-sized clusters, *Ward's method* was employed, which is paired with *squared Euclidean*

distance measure (for more details see Staples & Biber, 2015; Crowther et al., 2021). Then, the

analysis was conducted and a dendrogram with three clusters was produced. Finally, the

dendrogram was refined by highlighting the three clusters and preparing it for visual

representation. Figure 1 summarizes the steps of conducting HCA.

Figure 1.

Steps for conducting HCA
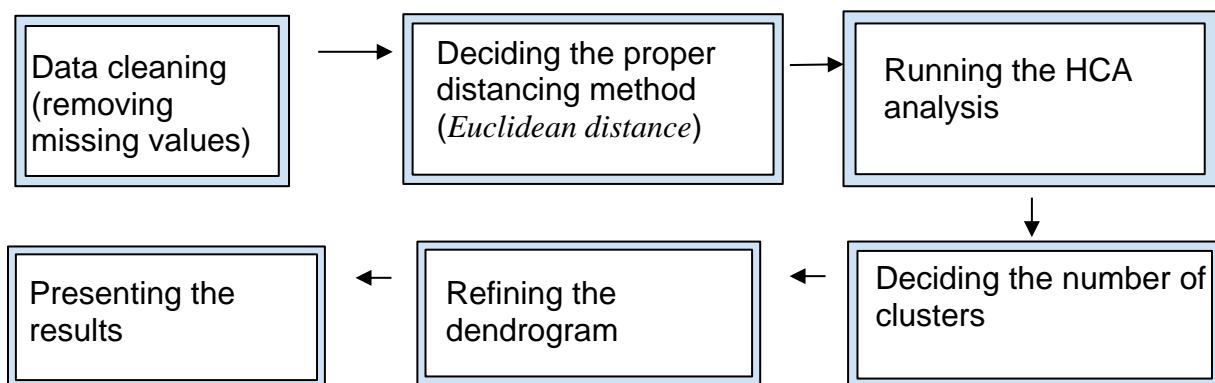
Next, a mixed-design analysis of variance (ANOVA) was conducted to examine if there

was a significant difference between clusters. Before running the ANOVA analysis, the

homogeneity of statistical assumption was checked by conducting a Levene's test and results

confirmed that clusters were roughly equally varied, $F(2,69) = 0.10$, $p = 0.91$. Finally, post hoc

pairwise t-tests were conducted, and results were adjusted using the Bonferroni correction to

compare the differences between participants' responses in each cluster.

Qualitative data analysis: Thematic analysis

Qualitatively, a thematic analysis method (Block, 2015) was adopted in analyzing the

data. Thematic analysis is a qualitative analysis method that opts for identifying emerging

themes within a data set (Braun & Clarke, 2006), while examining the perspectives of different

research participants, highlighting similarities and differences, and generating unanticipated

insights (Nowell et al., 2017). In addition, thematic analysis fits the scope of this study in

allowing for data triangulation. Since qualitative data in this study come from more than one

source, thematic analysis allowed for examining those sources concurrently and finding common

and recurrent themes that best represent participants' views and answer research questions.

To produce a robust thematic analysis, the six-phased method (Table 6) recommended by

Nowell et al. (2017) was followed. Although this method seems linear, it was an iterative process

that involved moving back and forth between phases. Phase 1 includes data familiarization.

Thus, all interview audio files were transcribed using *Otter ai* transcription software. After

generating transcriptions, the generated texts were reviewed by comparing them to the audios

and making the necessary modifications. Since all participants were Arabic HLLs, interviews

contained numerous incidents of translanguaging practices that Otter ai could not transcribe

properly. Therefore, extra attention was required to the transcriptions before including them in

the analysis. In Phase 2, MAXQDA (VERBI Software, 2023), a qualitative data analysis

software, was used to inspect, document, and store the analysis. In the following four phases, all

qualitative data sources were examined concurrently for emerging themes related to the participants' translanguaging practices and social identity. There was more than one cycle of data analysis. The first cycle of the analysis aimed to obtain an overall understanding of how the participants identified themselves in- and outside of class in relation to their heritage language communities and how connected and well-received they thought they were by their peers, teacher, and community members. At the end of the first cycle, codes were generated that best describe the data. During the second cycle, multiple excerpts (from interviews, class notes, and field notes of classroom observations) of the data were highlighted and labeled into two general categories: translanguaging practices and social identity. During the third cycle of the analysis and data triangulation, more detailed themes were generated including: translanguaging as the norm in HLLs' homes, gaining access to the heritage community, and translanguaging as a way to nurture social identities in the Arabic classroom. The last phase of the thematic analysis was to provide a results report (see Chapter 4).

Table 6. Phases of thematic analysis

Phases of Thematic Analysis	Action Taken
Phase 1: Data familiarization	- Prolong engagement with data. - Document thoughts about potential codes/themes - Store raw data in well-organized archives - Keep records of all data field notes, transcripts, and reflexive journals
Phase 2: Generating initial codes	- Code generation
Phase 3: Searching for themes	- Keep detailed notes about development and hierarchies of concepts and themes
Phase 4: Reviewing themes	- Themes and subthemes checked - Test for referential adequacy by returning to raw data
Phase 5: Defining and naming themes	- Documentation of theme naming

Table 6 (cont'd)

Phase 6: Producing the report	- Describing process of coding and analysis in sufficient details - Report on reasons for theoretical, methodological, and analytical choices throughout the entire study

Adopted from Nowell et al. (2017).

Summary of the analysis procedure

To answer the first research question, descriptive statistics of the translanguaging questionnaire were generated in tables and graphs and inspected for participants' perceptions of translanguaging practices in class and in learning MSA in general. Additionally, interview excerpts, fieldnotes from classroom observations, participants' class notes that relate to the participants' perceptions of translanguaging in the classroom were analyzed using a thematic analysis. Importantly, because inferential statistics overlook small nuances and comparative relationships between items, a triangulation of descriptive statistics and qualitative findings was deemed most meaningful in revealing HLLs' attitudes and perceptions towards translanguaging practices.

To answer the second and third research questions, a hierarchical cluster analysis was conducted, and descriptive statistics were generated in tables and graphs and inspected for the connection between translanguaging and social identity. Next, a mixed-design analysis of variance (ANOVA) was conducted to examine if there was a significant difference between clusters. Finally, post hoc pairwise *t*-tests were conducted, and results were adjusted using the Bonferroni correction to compare the differences between participants' responses in each cluster.

CHAPTER 4: RESULTS

This chapter outlines the statistical and qualitative findings for all research questions. First, mixed methods results are presented for research question 1, including quantitative findings and key qualitative insights with respect to this research question. Next, the findings for research questions 2 and 3 are presented together, given that both focus on the connection and relationship between translanguaging practices and social identity of Arabic HLLs.
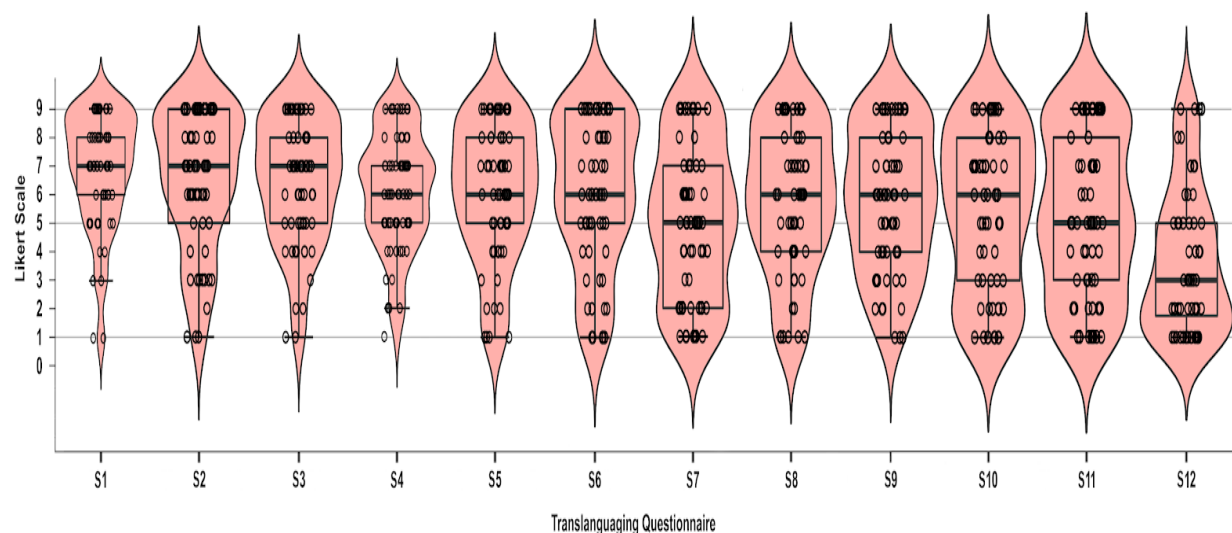
Research question 1: quantitative findings

To answer the first research question, data from the translanguaging questionnaire, participants' class notes, interviews, and classroom observations were analyzed using both qualitative and quantitative methods. Table 7 summarizes mean scores, standard deviations and 95% confidence intervals of participants responses to the translanguaging questionnaire, which targeted participants' perceptions of translanguaging practices during their study of MSA. Figure 2 visually represents participants' mean scores in the form of a violin graph, which displays the distribution of participants' responses to the questionnaire statements on a 9-point Likert scale. Findings from statements regarding translation of MSA words to English, referral to home dialect or English when a word is unknown in MSA, the usefulness of the home dialect in studying MSA, and mixing between MSA and the home dialect, all revealed that participants somewhat agreed with these practices. Findings from the statements regarding learners' use of translanguaging between MSA, dialect, and English revealed that participants were relatively neutral with respect to their use of all three languages within one context. Findings from the statement regarding learners' use of translanguaging practices in writing revealed that participants mildly disagreed with mixing MSA, home dialect, and English in their writing practices, compared to a general agreement with translanguaging while speaking.

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Table 7. Descriptive statistics for the translanguaging questionnaire

No.	Statement	Mean	SD	95% CIs
1.	While studying, I sometimes translate MSA words to English.	6.84	2.02	[6.33, 7.35]
2.	When I do not know a word in MSA, I refer to my home dialect.	6.50	2.43	[5.89, 7.11]
3.	When I do not know a word in MSA, I refer to English.	6.44	2.19	[5.88, 7.01]
4.	My home dialect helps me in studying MSA.	6.11	2.10	[5.57, 6.65]
5.	While studying, I sometimes translate MSA words to my home dialect.	6.03	2.39	[5.42, 6.65]
6.	While speaking, I mix between MSA and my home dialect.	6.02	2.62	[5.36, 6.67]
7.	While speaking, I mix between MSA and English.	5.90	2.71	[5.20, 6.60]
8.	I often alternate between my home dialect and MSA in class.	5.75	2.55	[5.10, 6.39]
9.	I find it OK in the classroom to mix MSA with my home dialect and English to get my message across.	5.74	2.48	[5.11, 6.37]
10.	While speaking, I mix between all three: MSA, my home dialect, and English.	5.33	2.77	[4.63, 6.04]
11.	While writing, I sometimes mix between MSA and my home dialect.	5.23	2.82	[4.53, 5.95]
12.	While writing, I sometimes mix between all three: MSA, my home dialect, and English.	3.73	2.55	[3.08, 4.39]

Figure 2.

Beeswarm violin graph of the translanguaging questionnaire

Research question 1: qualitative insights

After conducting a thematic analysis (Block, 2015) of the qualitative data, two themes emerged regarding participants' perceptions of translanguaging practices: *The importance of Arabic dialectal backgrounds*, and *Reliance of translanguaging practices*. During classroom observations, multiple incidents of translanguaging occurred in all classes observed. Fieldnotes taken during these classroom observations confirmed that HLLs used their home dialects in class discussions and speaking activities on multiple occasions. One situation where HLLs tended to use their home dialect in class was with new vocabulary. The following excerpts of fieldnotes and classroom interactions between the teacher and the participants indicate how home dialects were used in class, and how teachers reacted to that usage. In Fieldnotes 1 and 2, Hanan, Maryam, and Widad relied on their home dialects in class discussions and group work, in particular to help with vocabulary. Afterwards, the teacher corrected them with the MSA forms of the words. These two fieldnotes represent how the participants used translanguaging practices in classroom interactions with the teacher, revealing the positive attitude participants had towards using their home dialect in speaking interactions in class.

Table 8. Fieldnote 1: Mixing dialect with MSA in class

Date	Class level	Observation
10/18/2022	Arabic 101	Lesson objective was practicing body parts and clothes vocabulary. Teacher went around class and asked students random questions about their clothes and/or their body parts. Teacher directed his question towards Hanan by pointing at his nose and mouth and asked her to say what they mean in Arabic as follows: Teacher: Ma Hatha wa Hatha? *What is this and this?* Hanan: Hatha Nokh, Hatha Khashm. *This is nose, this is mouth (Yemeni dialect)* Teacher: Not Nokh, Hatha Anf, Hatha fam. *Not Nokh, this is nose, this is mouth. (MSA)*

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Table 8 (cont'd)

Teacher: Ma Hathihi?
What is this (feminine)
Maryam: Hathihi Shanta
This is a backpack (Egyptian dialect)
Teacher: Hathihi Haqiba.
This is a backpack (MSA)

Table 9. Fieldnote 2: Filling vocabulary gaps with dialect

Date	Class level	Observation
10/26/2022	Arabic 101	In this class, the objective was to learn how to express likes and dislikes using vocabulary learnt in class. Teacher first allowed students to discuss their likes and dislikes in terms of food in pairs. Then she called on a number of students to share their answers in full MSA sentences. Widad was paired with another HLL, and while observing their interaction I noticed that both of them are speaking in their home dialects the entire time. When the teacher called on Widad to speak the following interaction happened:

Widad: انا لا أحب القهوة بس أشرب الشاي
Widad: Ana la Oheb AlKahwa bas Asharab Ashai.
I don't like the coffee but (Shami) I drink the tea.
Teacher: (smiles) Walaken?
But? (MSA)
Widad: (smiles) Walaken.
But (MSA)

During the interviews, participants were asked whether they found value in using their home dialects in the MSA class, and in what ways they have used them. Excerpts 1 – 3 display the perceived value of home dialects in studying MSA from three participants' who were in Arabic 101 and came from Syrian, Iraqi, and Egyptian heritage backgrounds, respectively.

Excerpt 1: Home dialect is the backbone

Amr   How often do you use your home dialect while studying Arabic?

Widad   I use it pretty much all the time. It's almost like my, the backbone of all

the stuff I'm learning. So if I'm studying FusHa, for example, often I'll

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look at the Shammi version. I'll pronounce it this way. If I'm trying to

remember, FusHa, then I'll try and be like, Okay, what does this sound

like in shammi. And how's it changed into FusHa. So anytime, really, I'm

studying Arabic, Shami is always like the backbone to remembering

anything.

Amr   How useful do you find your home dialect in class?

Widad   Again, it's also very useful. It honestly also, the usefulness depends on

the week. So sometimes all week, we'll be focused on FusHa. And

sometimes in one week, we'll be focused on Shami to make sure that

we're learning both the spoken, spoken version of Arabic and the written

and read version of Arabic. So on the weeks that we do FusHa it is a

little less useful, but it's still useful. Like how I when I study, it's still

useful in terms of what I need to form or structure sentences, for

example, because in the dialect there are maybe a few differences, but

generally, the structure and spoken and written are pretty much the same.

So it is still very useful. But then when we have the weeks when we

focus on Shami, it's very useful because I can kind of just let go and

speak the way I'm used to.

Excerpt 1 demonstrates Widad's belief that her Shami dialect was useful to her whether

in studying MSA at home, or during the MSA classroom. Her reflection shows that she has

constantly depended on her home dialect for pronunciation checks and sentence structure.

Similarly, Jasmine's comments (Excerpt 2) also reflect on her attitude towards her home dialect

in class. In fact, both Jasmine and Maryam (Excerpt 3) described their home dialects as

beneficial while learning MSA. Jasmine even went so far as to reveal her thinking that it would have been much more difficult for her to learn MSA without at least some previous knowledge of an Arabic dialect.

Excerpt 2: Having a background helps

Amr   How useful do you find your dialect in class?

Jasmine   I actually find it very useful, even though it's not the exact same. If I didn't have any background at all, I feel like it would be like 10 million times harder to pick up on the language, because it is a new foreign language, a different alphabet, different everything basically. So, I find it (her home dialect) very helpful to where there's stuff that I have background on.

Excerpt 3: A home dialect is a plus

Amr   So as a heritage learner of Arabic, What is the value of your home dialect in class?

Maryam   It is definitely a plus. Especially in this class. I think it's a very fast paced class and I think it would be a really, really difficult struggle for me if I didn't have any previous knowledge because it's very fast paced. And even with my previous knowledge, I'm still struggling a little bit.

Similar to Widad and Jasmine, Maryam also framed her home dialect as an advantage in class because it enabled her to keep up with the "fast pace". All three of these participants generally found great value in their home dialects in class, whether to help the class pace or MSA comprehension. Together, these excerpts demonstrate the importance of Arabic dialect background for the participants while learning MSA in class.

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Participants also explained how exactly they used their home dialects in class (Excerpts 4-6). For example, Kareem shared that, since the focus of his class was solely MSA, he found little value for his home dialect in class. However, a follow-up question prompted Kareem to reflect on when his home dialect of Sudanese Arabic did come in useful during MSA study.

Excerpt 4: Dialect is useful in group work

Amr   So is there any room to use your dialect in class at all?

Kareem   When we're having conversations, sometimes the teacher wants us to talk with each other and with him about prompts and topics that we've reviewed in class. So if there's a word that I don't know, and I just use my dialect.

Although there appeared to be very little room for Kareem to utilize his dialect knowledge in class, he still claimed that he was able to find opportunities to use his home dialect to help him in group work conversations. In fact, this sentiment was shared by other participants as well, such as Stacy, who expressed a similar thought (Excerpt 5).

Excerpt 5: Using dialect to communicate with other HLLs

Amr   How do you use your home dialect in class?

Stacy   My professor is a little bit strict about using the dialect that he teaches us (MSA). But I do have a kid in my class who does speak Lebanese dialect as well. And so sometimes I get confused about some things, and he explains it to me better in Lebanese, and then I get it more.

Like Kareem, Stacy's class was not very dialect-friendly. However, she still found value in her dialect as it allowed her to communicate with another HLL from a Lebanese background

like her and achieve a better understanding of MSA through his explanation in the Lebanese dialect.

Continuing to reflect on the usefulness of home dialects in the MSA class, Horrya compared the value of her Palestinian dialect in speaking versus writing (Excerpt 6).

Excerpt 6: Dialect is useful in speaking, not writing

Amr   So in what ways do you usually use your dialect?

Horrya   I probably use it more than I should because a lot of the time when I'm using my dialect, my teacher will be like "try to use FusHa (MSA)". So I use my dialect a lot, but I try not to. I usually just use it for vocabulary. That's mainly it, especially in speaking and conversation. coz writing, like I'll be able to like think about it, but speaking is just like, whatever comes to my head first.

Horrya mentioned that she tried to refrain from using her home dialect in class because whenever she used her dialect, her teacher encouraged her to use MSA instead. However, she used her home dialect mainly to find vocabulary to help her in speaking and conversation activities. Horrya believed that her Palestinian dialect was more useful in speaking than writing because it happened naturally in speaking, compared to writing where she had more time to "think about" the language she was using. Together, these excerpts revealed that despite class policies that promote the use of MSA over home dialects, participants still found room to use their home dialects in class, especially during group work and peer discussion, and in speaking (more than writing) activities.

To provide a complete image of the participants' perceptions of translanguaging practices, participants' class notes were examined to figure out the frequency of translanguaging

practices in their notes. Table 10 and Figure 3 summarize the translanguaging practices

participants used in their class notes. After inspecting all class notes, results show that

participants used transliteration, MSA, dialect, and English. To calculate the percentage of each

of those translanguaging practices in class notes, each participant's note page was inspected and

each translanguaging practice was assigned a percentage based on its frequency in the page.

After analyzing each page separately, an average percentage of each translanguaging practice

was calculated. Finally, average score and standard deviation for each translanguaging practice

was calculated. Results in Table 10 show that the most used language in a majority of the

participants' notes was MSA ($M = 47\%$, $SD = 21.35$), followed by English for grammar

explanation ($M = 20.33\%$, $SD = 10.60$), then translation to English ($M = 17.66\%$, $SD = 10.32$),

and transliteration ($M = 14\%$, $SD = 18.34$), and finally dialect ($M = 1\%$, $SD = 2.80$). The use of

English in class notes was more frequent than transliteration and dialect use. Some participants,

mostly in Arabic 101, used transliteration in their notes in the beginning weeks of classes then

started relying on MSA once they learned the Arabic alphabet and the writing system. Home

dialects were rarely used in the participants' class notes. Figures 4, 5, and 6 below are examples

of participants' class notes, demonstrating how participants integrated translanguaging practices

in their written class notes.

Figure 3.

Translanguaging practice in class notes
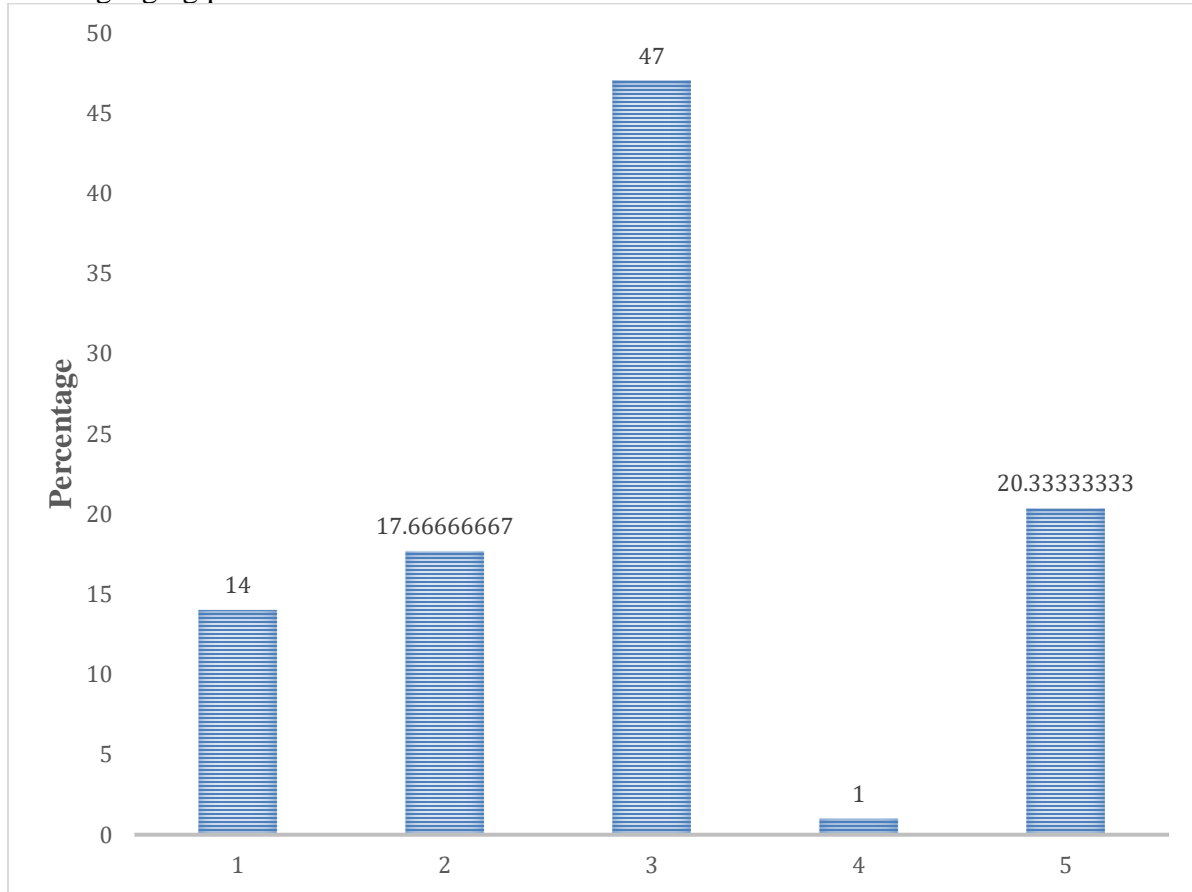
Note: 1 = Transliteration; 2 = Translation to English; 3 = MSA; 4 = Dialect; 5 = English (grammar explanation)

Table 10. Translanguaging practices in class notes

	Transliteration %	Translation to English %	MSA %	Dialect %	English (grammar explanation) %
Mean	14%	17.66%	47%	1%	20.33%
SD	18.34	10.32	21.53	2.80	10.60

Figure 4.

Example from Khadija's class notes

Figure 5.

Example from Stacy's class notes

Figure 6.

Example from Horrya's class notes
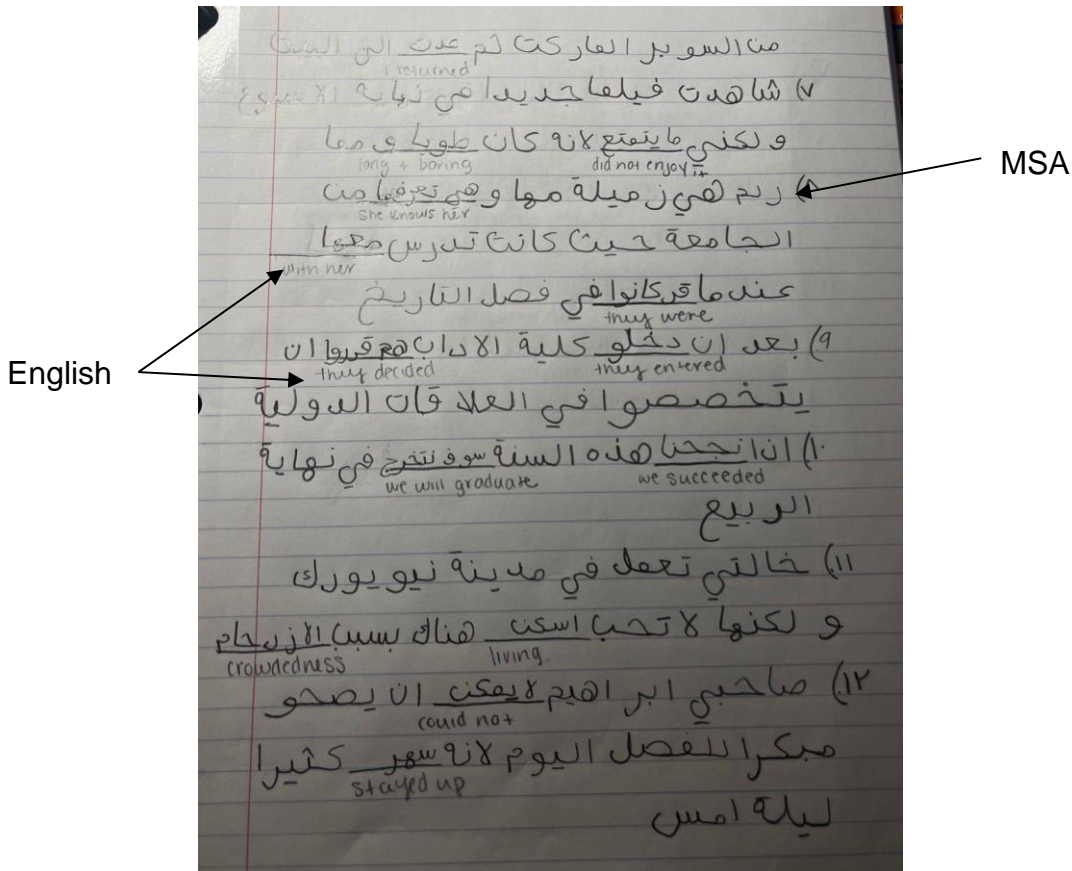
Together, these quantitative and qualitative findings reveal that participants counted on a variety of translanguaging practices in the MSA classroom. HLLs generally found their home dialects beneficial in class conversations and interactions, either with the teacher or classmates. Additionally, participants' class notes showed usage of English to translate new vocabulary and explain grammatical concepts, along with the use of transliteration and MSA, and very limited use of dialects. In sum, findings reveal a positive stance towards translanguaging practices in the Arabic classroom.

In summary, triangulating evidence from questionnaire responses, classroom observations, interviews, and class notes shows that participants generally had positive perceptions of translanguaging practices in the MSA classroom. Quantitative analyses demonstrated that participants thought positively of their linguistic repertoire and found value in their home dialects while studying MSA. However, participants expressed a somewhat negative perception of translanguaging in writing. While qualitative insights outlined that participants used translanguaging practices to achieve communicative goals in class and to improve their MSA comprehension, they also demonstrated the presence of translanguaging practices (e.g., dialect, English, transliteration) in the participants' writing practices. Together, these findings show how Arabic HLLs implemented, to an extent, translanguaging practices in their MSA classroom experience.

Research questions 2 and 3: quantitative findings

To answer the second and third research questions, first, descriptive statistics of the social identity questionnaire were generated and inspected. Then, a hierarchical cluster analysis was conducted, followed by a mixed-design ANOVA and post hoc pairwise *t*-tests comparing the generated clusters.

The social identity questionnaire targeted three variables related to HLLs' social identity: (1) Self-categorization, (2) Embarrassment and pressure, and (3) Classroom expectations. While participants responded to just one collective questionnaire and questionnaire findings showed how participants perceived their social identity in class, results are presented here for each of the three variables separately. Table 11 and Figure 7, which show the distribution of questionnaire responses on a 9-point scale, summarize   findings for Self-categorization, which is characterized by statements that target how Arabic HLLs categorize themselves as in-group or

out-group members of their HL communities. Findings of statements related to participants'

pride of their heritage culture, their self-identification as Arab or Arab-American, their endeavors

to share their heritage culture, and sense of representation of their heritage societies revealed that

participants agreed with these statements, suggesting that they think highly of their Arabic

background. Findings of the statement "*I am proud of my heritage culture*" had the highest mean

($M = 8.67$, $SD = 0.79$), indicating the high sense of pride participants had of their Arabic heritage

culture. In addition, Findings of statements "*I identify as Arab*" ($M = 7.19$; $SD = 2.45$), and "*I

identify as Arab-American*" ($M = 7.17$; $SD = 2.67$), showed that participants self-categorized

themselves as Arab and Arab-American. Moreover, Findings of statements "*I seek opportunities

to share my heritage culture with people*" ($M = 6.84$; $SD = 1.77$), and "*I consider myself a

representative of my heritage society*" ($M = 6.52$; $SD = 2.10$) demonstrated the participants' mild

agreement with these statements. In terms of neutral positions, findings of statements that relate

to acting in a manner opposed to heritage culture values, identifying as American, and

considering oneself an expert of heritage culture all revealed that participants were relatively

neutral with respect to these statements. However, it is worth noting an average bordering on

agreement for the statement " *I always think of my heritage community before I do something

opposed to the values they cherish*" ($M = 5.97$, $SD = 2.25$), suggesting a consideration of heritage

language community values.

Table 11. Self-categorization

No.	Question	Mean	SD	95% CIs
1.	I am proud of my heritage culture.	8.67	0.79	[8.47, 8.87]
2.	I identify as Arab.	7.19	2.45	[6.57, 7.81]
3.	I identify as Arab-American.	7.17	2.67	[6.48, 7.86]
4.	I seek opportunities to share my heritage culture with people.	6.84	1.77	[6.39, 7.29]

Table 11 (cont'd)

5.	I consider myself a representative of my heritage society.	6.52	2.10	[6.00, 7.04]
6.	I always think of my heritage community before I do something opposed to the values they cherish.	5.97	2.25	[5.40, 6.54]
7.	I identify as American.	5.95	2.84	[5.22, 6.68]
8.	I consider myself an expert of the Arabic culture.	5.18	2.07	[4.66, 5.70]

Figure 7.

Beeswarm violin graph of the Self-categorization questionnaire
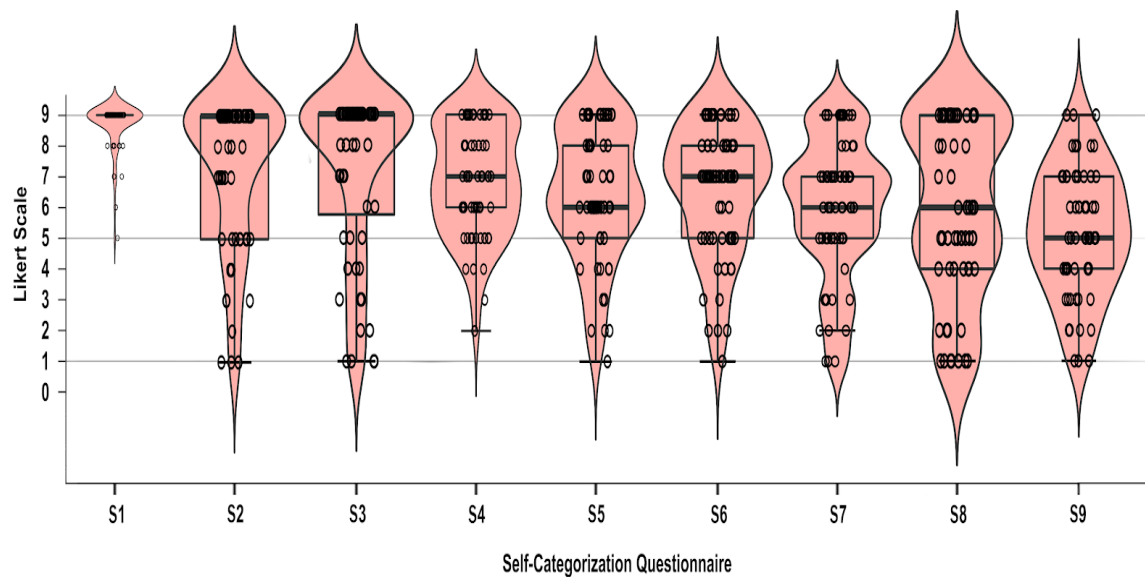
The second variable of HLLs' social identity was feelings of embarrassment and pressure in class. Table 12 and Figure 8, which visualizes the distribution of questionnaire responses across statements, summarized participants' responses to five statements that targeted classroom embarrassment and pressure resulting from HLLs' social identity awareness.

Table 12. Classroom Embarrassment and Pressure

No.	Question	Mean	SD	95% CIs
1.	I feel embarrassed when I don't know the answer to questions related to my heritage culture.	6.44	2.12	[5.90, 6.98]
2.	I feel embarrassed when I do something that offends my Arab culture.	5.95	2.23	[5.38, 6.52]
3.	I feel more pressure than other classmates because I am a heritage learner.	5.13	2.61	[4.47, 6.52]
4.	I feel embarrassed when my teacher asks me questions about my heritage culture.	1.85	1.40	[1.50, 2.20]
5.	I feel embarrassed when my classmates ask me questions about my heritage culture.	1.75	1.21	[1.44, 2.06]

Figure 8.

Beeswarm violin graph of Classroom embarrassment and pressure
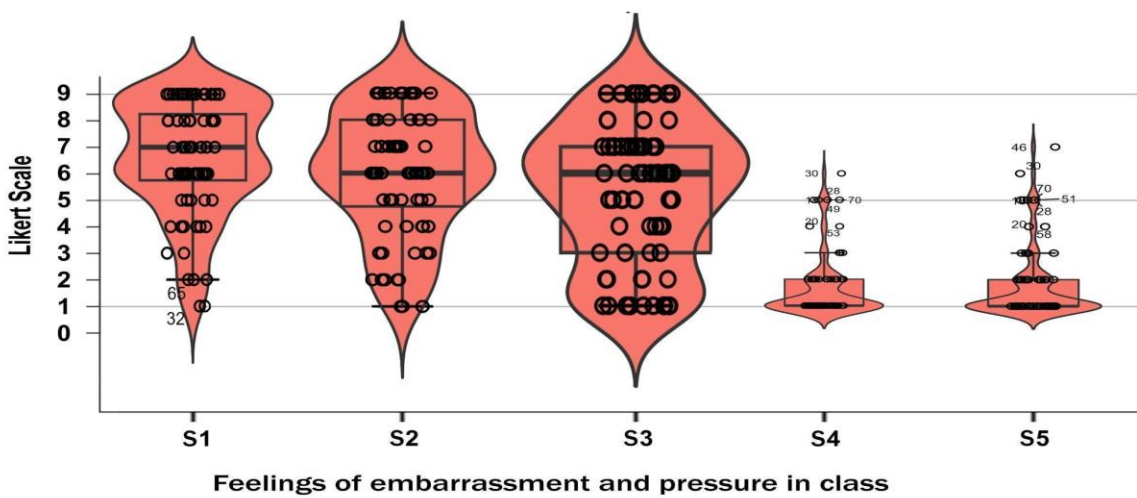
On average, participants agreed with the first statement, "*I feel embarrassed when I don't know the answer to questions related to my heritage culture*" ($M = 6.44$, $SD = 2.12$). Findings of statements about feeling embarrassed when doing something that offends heritage culture ($M = 5.95$, $SD = 2.61$), and feeling more pressure because they are Arabic HLLs ($M = 5.13$, $SD = 2.61$), respectively, garnered neutral sentiments. The distribution of responses in Figure 7 for these statements showed that some participants still agreed with both statements, demonstrated by the 95% confidence intervals that showed that 95% of responses were between *Neutral* and *Mildly Agree* in statement *"I feel embarrassed when I do something that offends my Arab culture"* [5.38, 6.52], and between *Mildly disagree* and *Mildly Agree* for statement *"I feel more pressure than other classmates because I am a heritage learner"* [4.47, 6.52]. Overall, participants did not seem to feel extremely embarrassed or pressured because of their heritage social identity. However, the statement "*I feel embarrassed when I don't know the answer to questions related to my heritage culture*" showed the highest mean ($M = 6.44$, $SD = 2.12$), suggesting that participants felt embarrassed when they did not know the answer to questions related to their heritage language culture.

The third variable of HLLs' social identity was classroom expectations. Table 13 and Figure 9, which visualized the distribution of questionnaire responses, summarize participants' perceptions of their non-heritage classmates' expectations of them.

Table 13. Non-heritage Classmates expectations

No.	Question	Mean	SD	95% CIs
1.	My classmates consider me a native speaker of Arabic.	5.38	2.78	[4.67, 6.09]
2.	My classmates always ask me cultural questions because I am an Arabic heritage learner.	5.03	2.60	[4.37, 5.69]
3.	My classmates always count on me to lead group discussions in Arabic class.	3.96	2.27	[3.38, 4.54]

Figure 9.

Beeswarm violin graph of no-HLLs expectations
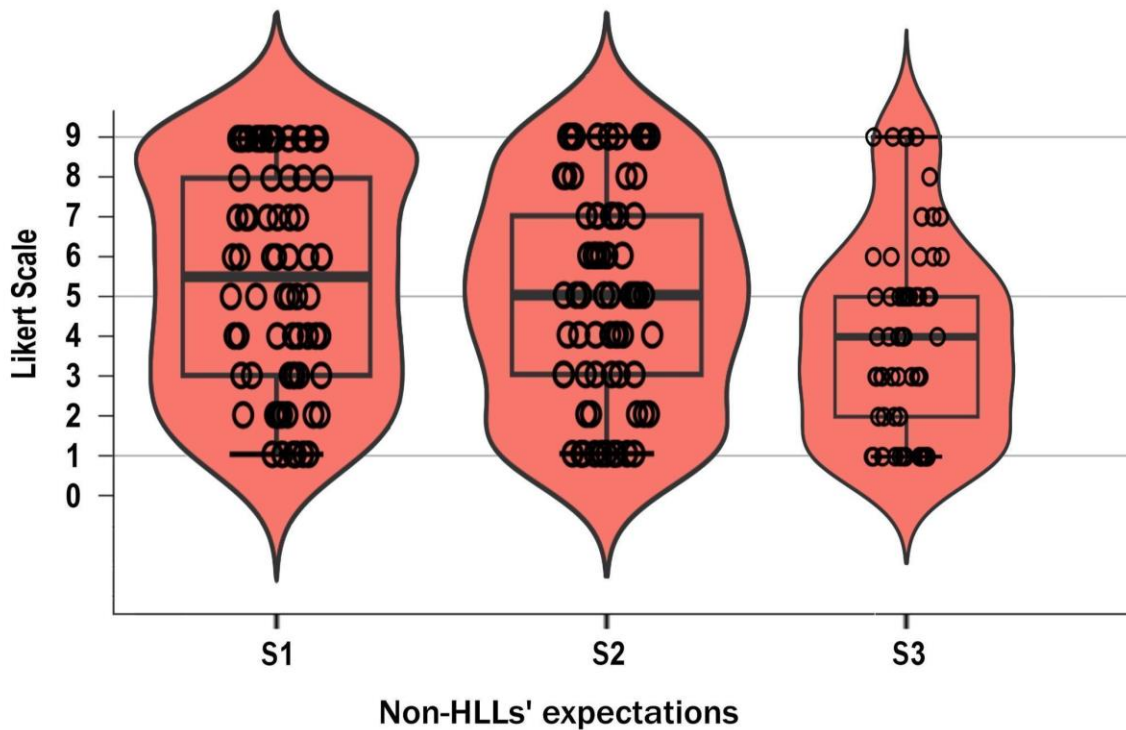
Findings of statements related to participants' perceptions of being classified as native speakers of Arabic by their non-heritage classmates, and being asked cultural questions by their classmates because they were Arabic HLLs revealed that participants adopted a neutral sentiment, suggesting that non-heritage classmates did not have high expectations of the participants because of their HL background. Moreover, participants expressed disagreement to the statement "*My classmates always count on me to lead group discussions in Arabic class*" ($M = 3.96$; $SD = 4.54$), showing that participants did not think their classmates depended entirely on them to lead group discussions in class. Together, findings suggested that participants did not think their non-heritage classmates had high expectations of them. Table 14 and Figure 10 summarize teachers' expectations and visualize the distribution of responses.

Table 14. Teacher expectations

No.	Question	Mean	SD	95% CIs
1.	In my Arabic Language class, my teacher has high expectations of me.	7.21	1.60	[6.80, 7.62]
2.	My teacher sees me as a native speaker of Arabic.	5.47	2.35	[4.86, 6.08]
3.	My teacher always counts on me to help my peers during group discussions.	5.31	2.69	[4.63, 5.99]
4.	My teacher turns to me to check if a specific pronunciation is correct in my home dialect of Arabic.	4.67	2.63	[3.99, 5.35]
5.	My teacher always turns to me to initiate group discussions.	4.53	2.11	[4.00, 5.06]

Figure 10.

Beeswarm violin graph of Teachers' expectations

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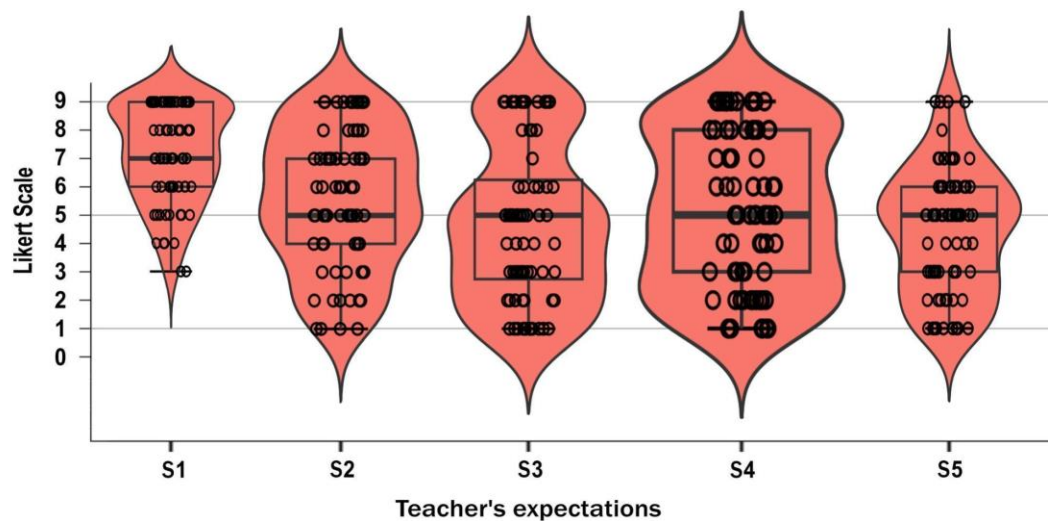
Findings of the statement related to teachers' high expectations of the participants in class revealed that participants showed a moderate agreement sentiment ($M = 7.21$; $SD = 1.60$), suggesting that they were aware of teachers' high expectations of them in class. In terms of statements related to teachers' classification of the participants as native speakers of Arabic, and teachers dependance on the participants to help with group discussions, findings suggested that participants were neutral in their responses. Finally, findings revealed that participants disagreed that teachers depended on them to check correct pronunciations in their home dialects, and that teachers always call on them to start group discussions. Together, findings suggest that, overall, participants agreed that their teachers had high expectations of them. However, participants did not necessarily believe they were being classified as native speakers of Arabic by their teachers, or that their teachers counted on them as references for Arabic dialect pronunciation checks or to always initiate group discussions. While descriptive statistics give an overall picture of HLLs' perceptions of their social identity in class, a hierarchical cluster analysis was conducted to further explore the connection between social identity and translanguaging. Participants' responses to all questionnaires were combined in one datasheet under four main variables: Translanguaging, Self-categorization, Classroom Expectations, and Classroom Embarrassment and Pressure. A cluster dendrogram (Figure 11) revealed three main clusters characterizing participants. With a total number of 72 participants ($N = 72$), cluster 1 (orange) contains twenty-six participants ($N = 26$), cluster 2 (green) contains twenty participants ($N = 20$), and cluster 3 (blue) contains twenty-six participants ($N = 26$). To further understand each cluster's characteristics, descriptive statistics of the three clusters were generated (see Table 15). Moreover, the line graph of mean scores of the four variables across three clusters (Figure 12)

provides a visual representation that compares the three clusters based on the four variables mentioned above.

Figure 11.

Hierarchical cluster analysis dendrogram of translanguaging and social identity questionnaires
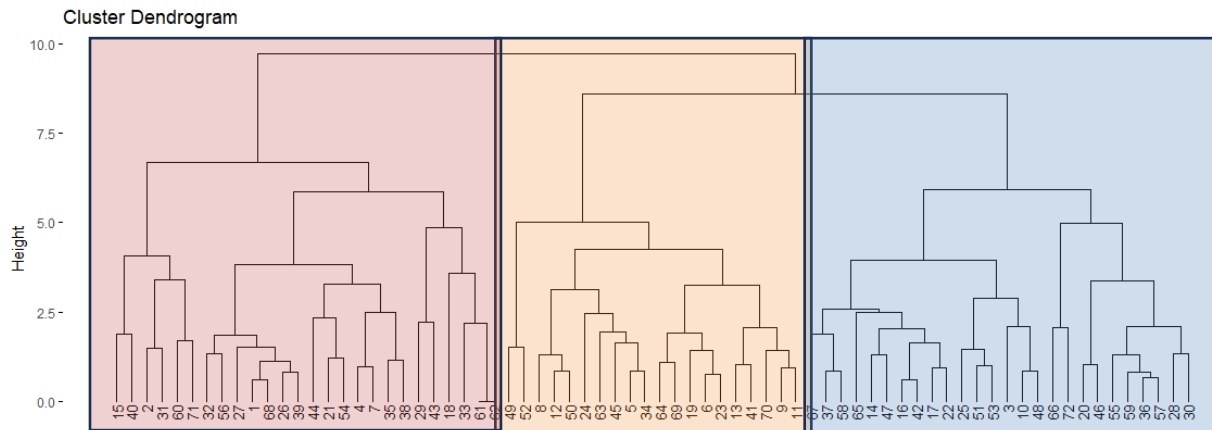
Table 15. Descriptive statistics of the three clusters

	Variables											
	Translanguaging			**Self-categorization**			**Classroom expectations**			**Class Embarrassment & Pressure**		
	Mean	95% CIs	SD	Mean	95% CIs	SD	Mean	95% CIs	SD	Mean	95% CIs	SD
C1 (N= 26)	52.73	[46.00, 59.50]	17.50	47.92	[44.15, 51.71]	9.82	34.81	[29.94, 39.60]	12.61	16.31	[14.35, 18.30]	5.11
C2 (N= 20)	72.90	[67,99, 77.81]	11.20	56.40	[53.21, 59.60]	7.31	56.50	[52.65, 60.35]	8.88	23.30	[21.31, 25.30]	4.67
C3 (N= 26)	82.73	[77.61, 87.85]	13.32	56.31	[53.97, 58.65]	6.11	33.77	[29.81, 37.81]	10.41	23.77	[22.02, 25.51]	4.54

Inspecting the descriptive statistics of the three clusters, participants in cluster 1 had the lowest perceptions of translanguaging and self-categorization, moderate awareness of classroom expectations, and the lowest sense of awareness of classroom embarrassment and pressure. Participants in cluster 2 had higher perceptions of translanguaging, high perceptions of self-categorization, the highest sense of awareness of classroom expectations, and relatively higher awareness of classroom embarrassment and pressure. Participants in cluster 3 had the highest

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perceptions of translanguaging, high perceptions of self-categorization, moderate awareness of classroom expectations, and relatively higher awareness of classroom embarrassment and pressure.

Table 15 and Figure 12 show that the mean scores of Translanguaging, Self-categorization, and Classroom Embarrassment and pressure for clusters 2 and 3 were higher than cluster 1. Additionally, the lower bands of the 95% confidence intervals for those three variables in clusters 2 and 3 did not overlap with higher bands in cluster 1. In other words, there might be a significant difference in attitudes towards translanguaging, tendency of self-identity and self-categorization, feelings of embarrassment and feeling pressured in HL learning between clusters 2 and 3 on one side and cluster 1 on the other side. For classroom expectations, cluster 2 demonstrated a higher mean score than clusters 1 and 3. The line graph in Figure 12 additionally suggested that participants in clusters 2 and 3 were more similar in their perceptions and attitudes for the four variables than individuals described by cluster 1 characteristics. Specifically, those in clusters 2 and 3 had similar perceptions of translanguaging practices and social identity. In short, cluster 1 was characterized by negative perceptions of translanguaging and low social identity awareness, cluster 2 by positive perceptions of translanguaging and high social identity awareness with low awareness of classroom expectations, and cluster 3 by positive perceptions of translanguaging and high social identity awareness including classroom expectations.

A mixed-design ANOVA (see Tables 16 – 19) revealed statistically significant differences between the three clusters across all four variables (Translanguaging, Self-categorization, Classroom expectations, and Classroom embarrassment and pressure). To examine where exactly the significance differences lied, a post hoc pairwise *t*-test was conducted (Table 20). Results indicated that cluster 1 and cluster 2 were significantly different from each

other ($p < .001$), demonstrating significant differences in the characteristics of participants within these two clusters. Likewise, a significant difference ($p < .001$) was also demonstrated between clusters 1 and 3, but no significant difference was revealed between clusters 2 and 3 ($p = 0.065$). In other words, results revealed a significant difference between cluster 1 on the one hand, and clusters 2 and 3 on the other hand. In terms of effect size, the highest effect size of difference was between clusters 1 and 3, meaning that this difference was the strongest amongst the three clusters and that participants in these two clusters demonstrated the largest differences in characterizations.

To summarize the results of the cluster analysis, a mixed-design ANOVA and post hoc pairwise *t*-tests revealed that participants in clusters 2 and 3 had similar perceptions of translanguaging and social identity, and that these two clusters differed significantly from participants in cluster 1. Clusters 2 and 3 scored higher on the questionnaires in terms of how they valued their heritage social identity and how useful translanguaging practices were to them. Cluster 1 scored lower on all aspects of translanguaging and social identity, meaning that this group had negative perceptions of translanguaging practices and low awareness of their heritage social identity. Given the positive relationship between translanguaging and variables of social identity within clusters, these results may suggest a potential connection between social identity and translanguaging practices in class. With respect to RQ2, these findings revealed that translanguaging is connected to the mobilization of participants' social identity in the MSA classroom. In terms of RQ3, because the participants categorized themselves as in-group members of the Arabic heritage community and to some extent representatives of it, results suggested that participants' awareness of their social identity was related to how they perceived

classroom expectations and the feelings of embarrassment and pressure that encompass such

expectations.

Figure 12.

Line graph of three clusters

Table 16. ANOVA - Translanguaging

Cases	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	p
Cluster membership	12085.969	2	6042.985	28.800	< .001
Residuals	14478.031	69	209.827		

Note. Type III Sum of Squares

Table 17. ANOVA – Self-categorization

Cases	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	p
Cluster membership	1179.093	2	589.547	9.351	< .001
Residuals	4350.185	69	63.046		

Note. Type III Sum of Squares

Table 18. ANOVA – Classroom Expectations

Cases	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	p
Cluster membership	7151.547	2	3575.774	30.392	< .001
Residuals	8118.231	69	117.656		

Note. Type III Sum of Squares

Table 19. ANOVA – Classroom Embarrassment and Pressure

Cases	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	p
Cluster membership	877.424	2	438.712	19.375	< .001
Residuals	1562.354	69	22.643		

Note. Type III Sum of Squares

Table 20. Results of post hoc pair-wise t-test, and effect sizes

		Cohen's *d*	*P*
Cluster 1	Cluster 2	-4.681	< .001
	Cluster 3	-7.467	< .001
Cluster 2	Cluster 3	-2.282	0.065

Note. *p*-value adjusted for comparing a family of 3

Research questions 2 and 3: qualitative insights

Qualitatively, interviews and classroom observations were analyzed in an iterative way (Nowell et al., 2017) for emerging themes. Qualitative results addressing research questions 2 and 3 were based on data from interviews and classroom observations, and offered insight into social identity awareness, and the effect of such awareness on the classroom experience of the participants, which were not evident through quantitative finds alone. Interview data and field notes from classroom observations were analyzed to explore the connection between translanguaging practices and HLLs' social identity mobilization in class. The major themes that emerged from the data were (1) *Self-categorization as Arab or Arab-American*, (2) *The importance of learning Arabic for HLLs*, (3) *The effect of family and heritage community on HLLs*, and (4) *Being a HLL in class*.

The first theme emerged from the analysis was Self-categorization as Arab or Arab-American. It is worth noting before delving into interview findings that most of the pseudonyms that participants picked to represent their identity in this dissertation were reflective of the participants' social identities as Arabs. Thirteen participants chose Arabic Muslim names that held some resemblance to them (e.g., Abud, Khadija, Horrya, Widad). Three participants chose western Christian names (Grace, Stacy, Chrollo). Only one participant did not pick his own pseudonym (Haroon) and left the pseudonym to be chosen by the researcher.

In the social identity questionnaire, participants responded to statements about their identity as Arab, Arab-American, or American. Excerpts 7 and 8 demonstrated participants' inner thoughts and reflections regarding their self-identity with respect to these labels. In Excerpt 7, Saheb explained why he identified as Arab and Arab-American, but not only American.

Excerpt 7: Connection to Arab roots

Amr	On the questionnaire, you actually responded strongly agree with Arab, an Arab American but strongly disagree with American? why?
Saheb	Well, first and foremost, I came from an Arab household. And I think it's important to stay true to your roots regardless of where you are in the world. Yes, I am currently living in the most, or the highest Arab population, city with the highest Arab population, but let's say for example, I moved to Chicago or California where the people next to me don't look the same and don't necessarily speak the same language that is spoken at home. I think it's important to just keep that faith with you, regardless of where you are on the map. And that's why identify as an Arab American, there's no doubt about that, in comparison to somebody who's, let's say, grew up in an Arabic household, but then did not necessarily practice Arabic or didn't necessarily have religion within the household. such a person may possibly identify as strictly American. And I think that has a lot to do with how you were raised and where you grew up around.

Here, Saheb clearly stated that identifying as Arab and Arab-American, as opposed to only American, was extremely important to him because this part of his identity was going to stay with him regardless of where he lived. Maryam (Excerpt 8) also explained the reasoning behind identifying as Arab-American.

Excerpt 8: (not)Belonging to both worlds

Amr On the questionnaire, there were three statements about how you identify as an Arab, as an Arab American or as American. Can you tell me more about your choice? And why?

Maryam Sure, um, I identify as an Arab American, because as much as I am Arab and I feel very connected to my Arab culture, I still feel like a big part of me is American. I've grown up here. And I've always just been a part of the culture here. And I've always had friends who were American, and I find myself connecting to both cultures oftentimes. And there's a struggle. For example, for me I go to Egypt and I'm never going to be Egyptian there, I'm always the American one. And here in America, I'm never the American, I'm always going to be Egyptian. So the difference in you is always going to stand out so I identify with both cultures. No matter how hard I tried to be Egyptian, when I go to Egypt I'm introduced as American. It's a significant thing about me that I'm American, or when I'm here in America, it's a very significant thing about me that I'm Egyptian or that I'm Muslim. I feel like the part of you that's a minority is always going to stick out no matter where you

are. No matter how much you fit in. English is my first language and I think I speak English well, but no matter how well I speak English, it's always going to be clear that like my parents are from Egypt, which isn't a bad thing, but it stands out.

Amr   But I noticed that your Egyptian Arabic is great. So when you go back to Egypt, do you get singled out still?

Maryam   Yeah. And that's actually something that I kind of struggled with, because when I was little, my Egyptian Arabic wasn't good. So what drove me to want it to be good, and I like practice and I made an effort because I was always made fun of for it. So then once I started feeling like, I've gotten better and I you know, I'm doing good. It still bothers me when people act like I have a thick accent, when I am going out with my cousins and my aunt will say, oh, just don't speak because they're gonna make the prices higher for you. But I feel like that's the part of me that people will always see. Imagine saying you have bad English, I feel like it would be a mean thing to say in Egypt. I think they think it's a compliment. And it's something I don't take as a compliment. It's something I really work on. it's not a good thing for me to always be looked at as different. But here in America, I don't mind it because diversity is more embraced here. And being American isn't something I'm chasing. It's just something I know I'm part American and part Egyptian.

Maryam thoroughly expressed how she felt about being an Arab-American. For her, a paradox existed where she struggled to fully fit in in both worlds in which she belonged. Being singled out in Egypt because of Arabic proficiency was something that bothered her because it prevented her from a full sense of integration in Egyptian society in Egypt. In terms of identifying as American only, Maryam explained being American was a part of her identity that she was not chasing, unlike her Egyptian side.

Another theme reflected in the qualitative data was participants' point of view about the importance of learning their heritage language. In Excerpt 9, Qaf demonstrated that speaking with his family in Arabic is the main reason he started studying MSA.

Excerpt 9: Stories from the past

Amr   Why is it important for you to speak to your family in Arabic?

Qaf   I think it's important because it shows that I'm trying to understand
             my culture, understand part of who I am, because that's one of my
             big things is knowing where I come from through the stories of
             my parents and my elders. And I know that sounds like maybe a
             little bit cliche, but I like hearing the stories from my mom or my
             dad about growing up. And I want to be able to hear the stories of
             my grandparents and my aunts and uncles, and I want to be able to
             understand what they're saying, because that means more to me.
             And I know it means more to them. So, I think that's why I want to
             understand the language and I want to speak it.

In Expert 9, Qaf indicated that the main reason he decided to take Arabic classes was to improve his family communications in Arabic. He wished to create a deeper communication with

his family through learning their life stories. Arabic for Qaf was the medium that would help him stay true to his roots and link him to who he was and where he came from. In contrast, Saheb had a different reason for considering learning Arabic as important to him (Excerpt 10).

Excerpt 10: Arabic is integral to the culture

Amr   And why is learning Arabic important to you?

Saheb   Too important to me, because well, as an Arab, I think that one way to distinguish yourself is not only how you represent yourself physically, but also how you communicate, then that's a huge aspect to things. And I believe that being able to better understand my language will allow me to be closer to my culture. I wish I kind of prioritized learning Arabic at a younger age. I kind of wish that I entertained learning Arabic much more when I was younger. I have siblings, older, much older than me who are fluent in Arabic and the reason for that is because they chose to actually learn Arabic and sit down with our parents and say, Hey, teach me Arabic. Me, on the other hand, I wasn't too focused on learning and I probably didn't appreciate it or realize the importance of learning my language at a younger age. But I'm here now and really looking forward to seeing where the end of the semester takes me and hopefully, at the end of the course, because I do have three more semesters after this so InshAllah *(If God wills it)* in the future, we can circle back then and hopefully we'll have this conversation strictly in Arabic.

Amr	What would have changed if you learned Arabic at a young age?
Saheb	I think I would have possibly been more involved with the Arab culture, I possibly could have been doing things that were only for students who spoke strictly Arabic, I wasn't able to go out there and be in those environments only because of the circumstances that I'm experiencing such as not knowing Arabic as efficiently as my peers but I think that's something that would have been extremely different. I missed many opportunities because of me not fully understanding or being able to communicate Arabic.

In addition to his belief that Arabic was an integral part of his identity and representation in the heritage community, Saheb regretted not learning Arabic at a younger age like his siblings. He believed this would have opened doors for him in terms of integration in the Arab community. In addition, Saheb envisioned himself having conversations with L1 Arabic speakers, like me, "strictly in Arabic".

Another theme that emerged from the data was how learning Arabic brings HLLs closer to their families and heritage communities. In Excerpt 11, Saheb explained the reasons he decided to study Arabic.

Excerpt 11: Family communication

Amr	Why did you decide to study Arabic now?
Saheb	So my mother doesn't always keep yelling at me for not actually understanding Arabic. But aside from that, I thought it'd be a good idea to just kind of stay true to my roots and get a better understanding as to what my language is, how it originated from,

and being able to just communicate with those that have similar

perspectives as I do within their culture. In terms of long term,

possibly just being able to communicate Arabic efficiently. I want

to impress my family, and especially knowing how quickly I was

able to just get to where I'm at right now. They're looking forward

to seeing what the future semesters hold and see if I can be

proficient.

One of the important reasons that drove Saheb to learn Arabic and be proficient was to impress his family. Yet, this motivation to impress his family added more pressure on Saheb. At the end of the excerpt, he highlighted the expectations of his family, and that he aspired to meet those expectations. This gave him three semesters to work on his Arabic proficiency and make his family proud. In Excerpt 12, Grace explains her motivation to study Arabic, which went beyond the desire for family connection expressed by Saheb.

Excerpt 12: Arabic for the sake of family and culture

Amr	So you mentioned that you're very motivated and passionate about studying Arabic. So can I ask why?
Grace	Yeah, so my dad is an Iraqi immigrant and my mom is from Lebanon. And so they both speak Arabic fluently, my dad reads and writes, my grandma as well. I've never really been able to have a full conversation with my grandma, because I can only understand, but I could never speak, read or write. So that's family wise, culturally wise I'm on a pre-law track and I want to be able to help Middle Easterners Arabs in some way, maybe through

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immigration, something like that. And I think being able to read, write and speak Arabic is a very unique trait that would really kind of help set me apart in that space. So I want to use it for my future career as well.

In addition to helping her have full conversations with her family in Arabic, Grace expressed her desire to use her Arabic knowledge to help her heritage language community when she becomes a lawyer. She shared her belief that Arabic would allow her to provide service to her community and boost her career. Similar to Saheb and Grace's connections relating to meeting family and community expectations, Maryam also spoke about how Arabic brings her closer to her family (Excerpt 13).

Excerpt 13: Arabic is more than a language class

Amr   How is your Arabic study experience going so far?

Maryam   I think it's gotten pretty good for me. I've noticed even when I text

my family in Egypt, you probably know this, a lot of people in

Egypt use the Franco thing. So for me, that's what I would always

resort to, or I would use the voice thing. So now when I'm texting

my grandpa or when I'm texting anyone in Egypt I'm able to

actually type it out. So I think it's been a very positive experience

and I'm very glad I took the class because it has helped.

Amr   And what kind of reactions do you get from your family when you

text them in Arabic?

Maryam   Oh, um, I think most people in Egypt are surprised because they've

always assumed I don't know Arabic even when I go and I speak

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audibly. They're like oh wow you can speak out, even though I see

them every year (*smiles*). But I think definitely for people that are

really close to me like my grandpa, for example, he gets very

excited when I'm able to speak or when I'm able to say things in

formal Arabic.

Amr   And how does that reaction make you feel?

Maryam It's definitely encouraging. It makes me want to try harder in the

class because I start seeing that it's not just a grade and this has a

big effect on me. Especially, you know, as Muslims, there's the

Quran and there's understanding certain formal words, it's very

different than just speaking Egyptian audibly. So that also has an

effect not just like studying for a grade.

In this excerpt, Maryam demonstrated the effect on her family of her being able to read and write in Arabic. She shared that her family acknowledged her newly acquired proficiency in Arabic and her appreciation of their recognition. These family sentiments appeared to have incentivized her to keep studying and improving, as she mentioned in the end. In short, Arabic was more than a grade for her. Arabic was connected to her family, culture, and religion. Continuing to reflect on the role of family as a major motivation behind studying Arabic, other participants discussed connections to family and community through interactions and attitudes displayed in their homes. For example, in Excerpt 14, Kareem spoke about the role his family and heritage community played in his decision to take Arabic classes.

Excerpt 14: Arabic at home is not enough

Amr   Why did you decide to take Arabic classes?

Kareem	Because I noticed that whenever I speak Arabic at home, I would say that my vocab is limited, since we mainly talk about the same stuff, or the same type of things every day. And by studying Arabic in university, you get to learn much more vocab and grammar, which you rarely use at home.
Amr	Why is it important for you to improve your Arabic?
Kareem	Well, it's important for me to improve my Arabic because I would like to become much more proficient in Arabic, so that I could communicate with my friends and family back in Sudan who learn and know much more Arabic than me, as well as to be able to hopefully use Arabic in the future when I become a doctor.

Kareem stated that the Arabic he picked up growing up at home was not sufficient for him due to the limited vocabulary exposure. He decided to formally study Arabic for two main reasons. First, he wished to be at the same proficiency level as his family members in Sudan. Second, he aspired to use Arabic for his future career as a doctor. Similarly, Excerpt 15 showed Abud's approach with his family regarding exposure to Arabic. Abud's family did not use Arabic at home very often. However, Abud started to initiate Arabic conversations with them, which revealed his passion to learn Arabic and create the exposure needed so he could improve his proficiency.

Excerpt 15: Creating the exposure

Amr	Why do you initiate Arabic discussions with your parents?
Abud	I initiate a discussion just so I can really build on the language dialogue. It's very beautiful. And I just want to pass it down to my

children. I don't want to forget anything, I just want to be actively

exposed to it as much as possible.

Amr	Why is it important for you to maintain your Arabic language?
Abud	You know, it's important for me just because of the deen (*religion*), you know, I really want to make sure I have a connection to the Quran and the texts that I'm reading belaarabi (*in Arabic*) and making sure I understand. And then not only that, I want to be able to pass it down to my children. And so they have the capability and resources to continue with it. And I don't falter along the way, you know, which is I know what I'm saying. I know I'm teaching them inshAllah (*If God wills it*).

Abud was very determined to maintain his Arabic proficiency and pass it down to his children in the future. He suffered from lack of exposure to Arabic at home because his family mainly communicated in English. Therefore, he insisted on initiating Arabic discussions with them so that he could create exposure opportunities for himself to be able to practice and improve his Arabic. Additionally, Abud believed in the importance of Arabic because it connected him to his religion. Being able to read and understand the Quran was of great importance to him and he hoped to pass this knowledge on to his children as well. Together, these insights suggest that the participants' main motivations to study MSA in class were to improve their family communications, to be fully integrated in their heritage communities and their cultures, and to fill the gaps in their Arabic proficiency because Arabic spoken at home was not fulfilling either their professional objectives (e.g., career plans) or their personal aspirations (e.g., cultural integration, religious connections).

The last theme from interview findings connected to participants' classroom expectations and feelings as HLLs. During the interviews, participants were asked about how their classmates perceived them and how they felt about that. Saheb (Excerpt 16) described his experience with his non-HLL classmates through an interesting analogy.

Excerpt 16: Arabic background gives a head start

Amr   In class, does it occur to you that you're more experienced than other than your classmates sometimes?

Saheb   Yes and no. So the classroom is fairly diverse. I want to say it's possibly like 70% white, 20% Arab, and then possibly like five or 10% Black. With that being said, those who didn't necessarily come from an Arabic household, this is completely brand new to them. Whereas, and for me, it's new, but not completely new, I had a somewhat understanding of the alphabet and [MSA] as a whole. And I think you can look at it through the perspective or the lens of someone who's looking to walk, right as someone who's gone through the crawling phase and then began to walk is going to be much more efficient than somebody who didn't crawl from before and just went straight to walking. I somewhat had that background and experiences in my past life that allowed me to kind of be decent in the Arabic language. But yeah, I don't think I'm necessarily more competent than my peers.

Saheb expressed that his Arabic background helped him in the MSA class. Compared to his classmates with no Arabic background, he had an advantage. However, he also believed that

his background, while helpful as a first push, did not mean he was more competent than his classmates. Similarly, Maryam (Excerpt 17) gave her opinion about her classmates' dependency on her.

Excerpt 17: Classmates expectations

Amr   Do your classmates ask you for help?

Maryam   Yeah. Definitely. I think even if it's just homework questions and stuff, a lot of them have gotten my number, and they'll just text me. Or they'll send me a picture of the homework and be like, does this look right? So just things like that. I mean, I don't mind it. But I do notice that a lot of people kind of depend on me sometimes in that class.

Amr   Why do you think they depend on you specifically?

Maryam   I think it's because they can tell that I have background knowledge in Arabic. So for the people that have no background knowledge I seem very advanced to them, but I'm not as advanced as they think.

In Maryam's case, her classmates did not only seek her help in class, but also outside of class by calling her and/or sending her their homework to check. Maryam stated that she was not as advanced as her classmates thought. Similar to Saheb and Maryam, Abud's classmates sought his help with Arabic, as he explained in Excerpt 18.

Excerpt 18: Helping with the linguistic aspects

Amr   Does it occur to you sometimes that you're more experienced than your classmates?

Abud	Yeah, I think so. Alright. Just because of the previous exposure that I've had to Arabic at home, my parents speak Arabic. So like, if I really need to, I can ask my mom for help, like with a grammar rule or something, if I really don't understand certain words, since this is Arabic level one, a lot of the words that we're learning I've heard multiple times in my life, I have an idea of how it should be pronounced. So students who asked me like, I don't know what a word is off the top of my head. Like, let's say for example, *Surah* (picture), like, they may say, like, soooraa (*wrong pronunciation of Surah*), they don't pronounce it right. So I'll help correct them by telling them how it should be pronounced and they appreciate it, and I love to help them.
Amr	So do you get approached a lot by your classmates to help?
Abud	Yeah, now, maybe not so much outside of class, but in class, if we're working on a drill, they'll ask me, oh is this how you do this? This is how you do that. Is this how it should be said? is this how it should be done? and I'll explain to them what it is, and how.

Abud stated that his Arabic background allowed him to help his classmates in terms of vocabulary, grammar, and pronunciation. He expressed that he loved helping his classmates.

Connected to classroom expectations and feelings, the following excerpts address HLLs' perceptions of and reactions to classroom questions and teachers' expectations of them. For example, Haroon summarized his experience with classroom interactions (Excerpt 19).

Excerpt 19: Avoiding classroom participation

Amr   How often does your teacher call on you to answer questions in

class?

Haroon   Like, a little more than others. So I actually don't try to involve

myself in the class, when it's something that I think I know, to

give the opportunity for others who should practice, you know? If

I just raise my hand every time, then the question will go by very

quickly. Some people need a minute to think about it, and they

should practice answering. So I try to restrict myself from always

putting my hand up. But it is the case that a lot of times the people

answering are people who have experience with Arabic. And I

think the teacher, you know, calls on them like most times, even

though the teacher tries to call on people that haven't participated,

because the teacher gets everyone to participate. But it seems to

me that the teacher's opinion is calling on people who can

pronounce the words correctly, and everything is good for

everyone. Because as the people who pronounce words correctly,

say it out correctly, the people who wouldn't hear it and maybe

will understand how to pronounce it correctly. For me, I feel that

there's too much of that, a little bit too much of that. And there

should be more of people who have trouble pronouncing things

correctly, you know, being called on over others. But for me, I

don't get called on too much because I involve myself

conservatively.

In Haroon's opinion, he appeared to notice that HLLs tried to dominate class practice time, and the teacher allowed it with good intentions to provide more authentic pronunciation to students. Haroon expressed his opinion stating that this method was unfair to non-HLLs as they needed their share of class time to practice. This realization made Haroon consciously restrict his class participation to allow his classmates more time to practice, time that he believed was not as essential for him because of his background as a HLL.

Participants were also asked about their teachers' expectations of them and how they affected their classroom experience. The following two excerpts summarized Abud and Kareem's opinions and gave insight to the high teacher expectations revealed by quantitative survey findings.

Excerpt 20: High expectations of teachers

Amr	What are the expectations of the teacher from you?
Kareem	The teacher, I feel that he wants me to participate in every single thing and to be the student that answers and helps drive the class forward and progress. Sometimes, the other students in class might be shy or hesitant to answer one of his questions, since they don't know or they're scared of responding. So I'm expected to be the student who participates more in class.
Amr	How does that make you feel?
Kareem	I'd say it makes me feel some kind of good, and also kind of sad at the same time. Because I know that teachers, they think that they

think positively of me, and they think that I have potential, but I also view it as a bad thing, because they might place more expectations on me than they do on the other students in my class.

Amr   And how do you feel when you do not know the answer to your teacher's question?

Kareem   I feel a little bit embarrassed since I have a background and I kind of expect myself to know these things. But despite that, I still like that I don't really know some stuff since it always gives me more opportunity to learn.

Excerpt 21: Self-resentment

Amr   How do you feel if you are asked a question and you do not know the answer?

Abud   If I don't know the answer, I'd be a little upset with myself, because I probably should know the answer. But at the end of the day, like I'm in the class to learn. It's a good opportunity for me to actually take the time to really learn the concept that I'm learning.

Amr   Why do you feel like you should have known the answer? Why do you feel upset with yourself?

Kareem   Just because I feel like, and I don't want to sound arrogant or anything by saying this, but I just feel like, compared to the rest of my classmates, I do have that foundation already, or that higher level of understanding that my classmates may not have.

Both Kareem and Abud spoke about the expectations their teachers had of them. Kareem realized that his teacher expected him to be always active and talkative in class because of his background in Arabic. These types of teacher expectations led to feelings of responsibility for Kareem and Abud. In the case of not knowing the answer to a question, both Kareem and Abud appeared to feel embarrassed and upset with themselves because they, in a sense, failed to meet either their teachers' expectations or their own self-expectations as HLLs.

In addition to insights from interviews, classroom observations also revealed several incidents of classroom interaction between teachers and HLLs where participants made references to their heritage culture and background. For example, Fieldnote 3 below demonstrated how Horrya brought her social identity as an HLL to class. She connected a new vocabulary item to a famous Syrian TV series, which was part of her Arabic background. Grace, in Fieldnote 4, relied on her mother to help settle a grammatical debate in class. Both Horrya and Grace relied on their heritage background, whether by drawing from their cultural repertoire or by directly asking family members to help with class activity, to improve their comprehension of MSA.

Table 21. Fieldnote 3: Drawing from cultural background

Date	Class level	Observation
10/17/2022	201	- Teacher introduced the word "Sheikh" to class and wrote it on the board. He asked students if they recognized it. Horrya replied that she knew it meant a religious figure. She said she knows the word from the famous Syrian TV series "Bab El Hara".
		- The teacher was explaining verb patterns. He wrote: "كبر – يكبر – تكبير Takbeer, Yakbar,Kabbar " He said: "Takbeer has a different meaning in the Islamic culture related to call for prayer." Horrya replied: "That's what I was thinking about".

Table 22. Fieldnote 4: Relying on family to settle linguistic dispute

Date	Class level	Observation
10/26/2022	101	- Class was about plurals in MSA. - The teacher is American, not Arab. When the class tried to match the adjective جميلة (beautiful) to the irregular plural of family أسر there was a split opinion whether it should be جميلة or جميلات . Grace said " I think it's جميلة because I heard my mom say جميلة once. The teacher was not fully convinced and said she would do further research and let them know by next class. However, during the short break Grace called her mom and confirmed that it is جميلة and told the teacher about it.

In summary, qualitative findings from interviews and classroom observations revealed that participants valued their social identity as Arabic HLLs to a great degree, and their social identity affected their MSA classroom experience. Additionally, qualitative analysis and results allowed for robust triangulation with previously presented quantitative findings. With respect to research question 2, participants showed a connection between their translanguaging practices and their social identity awareness in the MSA classroom. Findings also offered great insight into research question 3 and suggested participants' awareness of social identity aspects, such as self-categorization as Arab and Arab American and their awareness of the encompassing community and class expectations, results in increased classroom pressure and vulnerability for Arabic HLLs.

CHAPTER 5: DISCUSSION

This dissertation examines Arabic HLLs' perceptions of translanguaging practices in the MSA classroom and how those practices mobilize the social identity of the participants meaningfully in class. Results demonstrate that participants have conflicting perceptions of translanguaging practices in their MSA classroom. Moreover, results indicate a link between translanguaging practices and social identity awareness by the participants, which is manifested in their classroom experience. In this chapter, a detailed discussion of the results is presented.

Conflicting perceptions and attitudes towards translanguaging practices

Results of this study are mostly in line with previous research that proposes translanguaging as a channel for learners to utilize their wide spectrum of linguistic repertoires (e.g., Creese & Blackledge, 2010; Wei, 2011), highlights the capitalization of the hybrid multilingual linguistic repertoires (e.g., Canagarajah, 2011; Cenoz & Gorter, 2020), and frames translanguaging as a strategy used by multilingual learners to break the conventional barriers between languages (e.g., Leung & Valdes, 2019; Otheguy, 2015). However, results also indicate that there is a potential discrepancy between Arabic HLLs' perceptions of translanguaging practices while studying MSA and their actual practices in class. Overall, participants showed positive attitudes to the concept of using their full linguistic repertoire while studying MSA. Quantitative data thus suggest that HLLs find translanguaging practices are helpful when studying MSA, particularly in speaking. Qualitative data from fieldnotes, interviews, and class notes suggest that HLLs of Arabic may have a tendency to incorporate translanguaging practices in their learning of MSA in class. Nevertheless, participants' perception of incorporating translanguaging practices in their writing was negative. At the same time, inspection of the class notes written by the participants revealed a wide array of translanguaging practices usage. This

conflicting view is somewhat surprising and underrepresented in previous research. In this section, results are discussed further to understand the nature of this conflicting perception Arabic HLLs have.

With respect to Arabic HLLs' perceptions of translanguaging in their MSA classroom, two themes emerged from the triangulated analysis: *the importance of Arabic dialectal backgrounds for learning MSA*, and *reliance on translanguaging practices in the classroom*. Concerning the importance of having Arabic dialectal knowledge while learning MSA, results show that having a dialectal background in Arabic is perceived as an asset by Arabic HLLs. In their classroom interactions with their teachers, HLLs utilized their Arabic dialectal knowledge to achieve communicative goals. This finding aligns with previous research that highlights that translanguaging in the classroom contributes to the meaning-making process (e.g., Creese & Blackledge, 2010; Garcia et al., 2017). Arabic HLLs used their heritage dialects and the vocabulary they acquired growing up in their Arabic households and heritage communities to fill the gaps of their MSA knowledge in class. Moreover, dialectal knowledge is perceived by Arabic HLLs as an advantage that aids them in learning MSA. Arabic HLLs believed that having a background in an Arabic dialect facilitated the understanding of some aspects of MSA in class (i.e., pronunciation, structure), and helped them keep up with the fast pace of class. Even when the teacher was strict about the use of MSA in class, Arabic HLLs still found their dialectal background helpful during pair and group work in class. This suggests that the linguistic knowledge gained by HLLs because of their heritage background (e.g., Arabic dialectal knowledge in the context of this study) is an asset that helps HLLs in learning their target language (e.g., MSA) as it promotes collaboration in class, which positively affects learning gains (Rabie-Ahmed & Mohamed, 2022).

The second recurring theme relates to the ways HLLs rely on their entire linguistic repertoire while learning MSA. While dialectal knowledge is very helpful during class interactions (teacher-student & student-student), examination of the participants' class notes showed how HLLs depended on a variety of translanguaging practices in their learning of MSA, which goes in line with previous research (e.g., Albirini & Chakrani, 2017; Al Masaeed, 2020; Said & Zhu, 2017). This dependence on translanguaging practices to learn MSA parallels very well with Wang (2019), concluding that her focal participant implemented translanguaging practices (by using English and Chinese in her notes and social media posts) to improve her comprehension of her English class material. Specifically, in the present dissertation, Arabic HLLs used transliteration in their class notes to voice out new vocabulary, especially in the beginning of their Arabic 101, likely because they were still learning the writing system in Arabic. Those with higher MSA writing proficiency showed a gradual decline in their use of transliteration and used MSA more often. Still, the use of English in class notes was very apparent. Specifically, they depended on English heavily for two main purposes; firstly, they used it for vocabulary translation and, secondly, they used it to explain and make meaning of MSA grammar aspects. This can be understood to signify how HLLs use different aspects of their diverse linguistic repertoire meaningfully for different learning objectives (e.g., dialect for class interactions, English for transliteration and grammar explanation).

Another important finding in this study is that the use of dialect was very scarce in the participants' class notes. Although they used their dialects in speaking activities and classroom interactions, participants chose to limit the use of their dialectal background in their written class notes. This limited use can be explained in light of the classroom declared objective, which is to focus on MSA. During the interviews, participants expressed how their teachers constantly

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encouraged them to use MSA instead of their dialects in class. This focus and stress on using MSA translates to writing in MSA on the board or in the majority of class activities. Therefore, participants did not heavily depend on their dialects in their class notes. Instead, they wrote in MSA (even when they transliterated) and translated to English. Similar to findings from Albirini and Chakrani (2017) and Al Masaeed (2020), Arabic HLLs shifted between the languages they knew to achieve their linguistic and communicative goals. However, the findings of this study highlight the Arabic HLLs' perspective regarding *why* they use translanguaging practices, which has yet to be captured in previous research. In addition to the analysis and examination of Arabic HLLs' questionnaire responses and written class notes, participants reflected on their perceptions and practices highlighting the importance and value of their heritage dialects and their entire linguistic repertoire in learning MSA. Thus, this study proposes that classroom instruction and teachers' declared focus (e.g., MSA for the context of this study) may affect HLLs' decisions of how they integrate their entire linguistic repertoire in their learning experience.

The results of this study suggest that Arabic HLLs perceive translanguaging practices as positive and helpful. Participants utilize their dialectal knowledge, their English language knowledge, and transliterations in learning MSA. The question that presents itself now is why the participants expressed a negative attitude towards using translanguaging practices in writing, as demonstrated by their responses in the translanguaging questionnaire, but still implement translanguaging practices in their written class notes. Previous research suggests that the reason lies in the participants' perception of writing in Arabic (e.g., Abourehab & Azaz, 2023). As a diglossic language, reading and writing in Arabic are usually perceived to be in MSA which is the formal form of Arabic. Arabic HLLs grow up listening and speaking dialectal Arabic, with very limited exposure to MSA reading and writing, leading them to study MSA in a formal class.

They aim to achieve "full" proficiency in Arabic by learning how to read and write in MSA. This objective is affirmed by teachers' constant reminders to students to stick to MSA, even while speaking in class. While this might be easier for non-heritage students because they have no prior background in Arabic dialects, Arabic HLLs are used to speaking in their dialects and it is very foreign to their culture to speak in MSA. This may explain their reliance on dialectical knowledge in classroom interactions with the teacher or with other HLLs. As Horrya stated in Excerpt 6, she used her dialect in speaking activities because it happened naturally when she was on the spot, and she refrained from using her dialect in writing activities because she had more time to think. As stated by Abourehab and Azaz (2023), Arabic HLLs are expected by their heritage and classroom ideologies to write in MSA only, which is expected to be their ultimate goal. Therefore, the existence of translanguaging practices in their written class notes is an indication of the usefulness of translanguaging as a means to learn MSA, not an end in and of itself. In other words, participants' class notes represent the process of learning, not the final objective. That said, it is understandable why participants responded negatively to using translanguaging practices in writing in the translanguaging questionnaire, while they in fact use translanguaging practices in their notes. Future studies may, therefore, anticipate this discrepancy between HLLs' perception of translanguaging in writing and their actual writing practices (e.g., class notes).

In addition, participants' negative attitude towards translanguaging practices in writing could be attributed to the language ideologies imposed on Arabic HLLs by their heritage communities (Abourehab & Azaz, 2023). Since research has indicated that Arabic is closely tied to social identity (e.g., religious and ethnic backgrounds) of HLLs (e.g., Bahari, 2023), Arabic HLLs might have developed strict language ideologies that consider the diglossic nature of

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Arabic and assign reading and writing to MSA, while speaking and listening is for spoken dialects. In the Arabic heritage community (and the MSA classroom), there is an ideology that MSA should only be used because it is perceived as the variety that enables HLLs to understand their history and religion (Abourehab & Azaz, 2023). Moreover, MSA is perceived by Arabic heritage communities (e.g., family, community elders) as a sign of full integration in the community (Bahari, 2023). Therefore, Arabic HLLs develop strict ideologies about the importance of learning MSA and the necessity to separate it from their dialectal knowledge and their English. Interestingly, these ideologies might in fact be stricter than the flexible nature of language mixing in U.S. HL communities, and particularly of Arabic where dialect, MSA, and English are constantly being mixed, especially among the younger generation (Britto & Amer, 2007). This strict ideology of separating languages in writing could be explained through the reaction Arabic HLLs receive from their teachers in class when translanguaging practices (especially dialect with MSA) occur. The fact that teachers constantly correct Arabic HLLs when they use dialects and instruct them to stick to MSA (Azaz & Abourehab, 2021) might have contributed to the formation of strict language ideologies by the participants where mixing MSA with dialect is not favorable. In fact, previous research has already indicated some discrepancy in belief and practice by teachers when it comes to translanguaging in the Arabic class (e.g., Azaz & Abourehab, 2021; Hillman et al., 2019) where teachers seem to believe that MSA and dialect should be separated in classroom instruction, yet they display a permissible nature when it comes to language mixing in class to promote students' communicative competence. Therefore, a conversation between teachers and students seems to be needed to address language ideologies in a realistic manner to reflect the actual practices of the Arabic heritage community and classroom objectives.

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HLLs' social identity perceptions

Prior to examining the connection between translanguaging and HLLs' social identity, an understanding of participants' perceptions of their social identity will allow for a meaningful interpretation of their social identity manifestation through translanguaging practices in class. Previous research on social identity (e.g., Abrams & Hoggs, 2004; Tajfel, 1981) concludes that self-categorization, as Arab and Arab-American in the context of this study, is the first indication of Arabic HLLs' social identity awareness. Results of the social identity questionnaire suggested the strong connection participants assigned to themselves in relation to their heritage culture. They expressed a high sense of pride in their heritage background, and they cherished this part of their identity and aspired to share it with the world. Furthermore, many self-identified both as Arab and Arab-American, but fewer identified themselves as solely American. Participants explained that they identified as Arab and Arab-American because they honored their Arab roots and where they came from and shared that this part of their identity was essential to them wherever they were in the world, be it in their heritage country or in the U.S. Moreover, being Arab-American for the participants was the best way to express themselves. Being only Arab or only American would be an inaccurate representation of who they really were, as they were part of both worlds and aspired to fit in in both. This parallels previous research in HLE generally (e.g., Leeman, 2015) that outlines the challenges that HLLs often have with questions of identity and claiming one label (i.e., American versus another (i.e., Arab).

The second factor of Arabic HLLs' social identity is their perception of the responsibilities and expectations that accompany heritage communities' social memberships (Korobov & Bamberg, 2004; Rex & Schiller, 2009). Results reveal how the participants perceived those responsibilities and expectations. In line with previous research that

acknowledges the importance of the awareness of responsibilities and expectations that come with identifying as a member of a heritage community (e.g., Oakes, 2001; Tsai et al., 2021), Arabic HLLs display this awareness through their acknowledgment of classroom and societal expectations resulting from their identification with their heritage background. In the social identity questionnaire, results indicate that many Arabic HLLs were likely aware of their teachers' expectations of them as HLLs and believed that their teachers had higher expectations of them compared to their non-heritage classmates. Participants also spoke of their teachers' high expectations of them in the interviews. Participants were aware that their teachers expect more from them. While they appreciated their teachers' confidence in them, they also admitted that it created extra pressure on them that could sometimes turn into guilt if they failed their teachers' expectations. Additionally, findings of the social identity questionnaire displayed that participants considered themselves representatives of their heritage society and they sought opportunities to share their heritage culture with people. Adding to the extra pressure put on them by their teachers, there was the pressure coming from their inner sense of responsibility towards their heritage community. In other words, this awareness of social identity resulted in a higher sense of pressure on Arabic HLLs in class, especially when they did not know the answer to a question. In addition to classroom responsibilities and expectations, participants expressed their awareness of their families' expectations of them (e.g., speaking fluent Arabic), as one of the main reasons they decided to study Arabic was to enhance their family connections and gain the appreciation of their families.

Bringing social identity to MSA classroom

Data from the social identity questionnaire and interviews suggest that Arabic HLLs have high perceptions of their social identity withing the Arab-American community with all the

responsibilities and expectations that accompany those perceptions (Korobov & Bamberg, 2004; Rex & Schiller, 2009). Results of the hiearchical cluster analysis, mixed-design ANOVA, and post hoc pairwise t-tests parallel previous research (e.g., Choi & Liu, 2021; Dong, 2021; Phillips & Genao, 2023; Ra, 2021; Walker, 2017; Wei & Zhu, 2013) that demonstrates a connection between translanguaging and social identity of learners. Two out of the three generated clusters (two thirds of the total number of participants) shared similar traits. Both clusters had positive perceptions of translanguaging and their social identity as HLLs. While previous research (Choi, 2019; Ng & Lee, 2019; Solmaz, 2018; Walker, 2017) suggests that translanguaging encompasses the reconstruction and manifestation of identities and social affiliations, the findings of this study propose a different perspective on the connection between translanguaging and social identity in class. Because cluster analysis is an exploratory test, no causational claims are being made. In other words, positive perceptions of translanguaging are not claimed to be the reason for higher social identity perceptions or vice versa. Still, findings suggest that the relationship between social identity and translanguaging appears to be bi-directional and both constructs influence one another. Comparing two clusters to the third one, participants in cluster one shared similar traits in terms of their negative perceptions of translanguaging and their low perception of their social identity as HLLs. This offers strong evidence that participants' perceptions of translanguaging and social identity as HLLs, whether positive or negative, are connected as previous research has concluded. However, it would be inaccurate to suggest a specific directionality of effect between translanguaging and social identity.

In addition to the statistical evidence of the connection between translanguaging and social identity of the participants, results also demonstrated that Arabic HLLs constantly made references to their heritage culture in the MSA classroom. In line with Abourehab and Azaz

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(2023), having a background in Arabic (e.g., cultural, linguistic) creates linguistic security for

Arabic HLLs in class because they establish a connection between their homes and MSA. In fact,

this has been found in other HLs as well (e.g., Driver, 2023). Bridging their social identities in

class (through relying on their dialectical, cultural, or familial connections) enforces Arabic

HLLs' sense of belonging in their heritage communities (Park & Chung, 2023) and contributes

to the maintenance of Arabic as a heritage language (Sehlaoui, 2008). Participants used their

heritage cultural knowledge to help them make sense of class content. When introduced with

new MSA vocabulary or structure, Arabic HLLs tried to create a connection with the new

language content and their heritage background. Horrya's attempt to draw from her cultural

background to understand the word "Sheikh" or from her religious background to relate the word

"Takbeer" to the Islamic call for prayer are clear examples of how Arabic HLLs mobilize their

social identity meaningfully in the Arabic classroom. Another channel that allows Arabic HLLs

to bring their social identity into class, and their Arabic learning in general, is seeking the help of

their family members to explain difficult or confusing MSA linguistic aspects. For instance,

Grace resorted to her mother when class struggled to decide which plural form was correct.

Arabic HLLs feel resourceful because they have ties to Arabic that go beyond the classroom. In

addition to normally seeking their families' or heritage community's help outside of class,

Arabic HLLs can rely on their heritage connection in class as well.

The effect of expectations on Arabic HLLs

Family and heritage community

In line with previous research (e.g., Cameron, 2001; Harris & Lee, 2021; Kim, 2020),

results of this study suggest that many Arabic HLLs aspire to achieve native-like proficiency in

Arabic in the future to become fully integrated in their heritage communities (whether in the U.S.

or with their extended families and social circles abroad). Family and heritage community expectations appear to be a main driving motivation behind Arabic HLLs' desire to improve their Arabic proficiency. Participants' decision to study Arabic formally in this study could also be explained in light of the influence of the heritage community on Arabic HLLs. According to Wen (2011), HLLs may desire to learn their heritage language due to socio-cultural influences. Many studies (e.g., Chao, 1997; He, 2008; Li & Duff, 2008) have argued that HLLs seek to connect with their heritage cultures through learning their heritage languages. The influence of the Arabic heritage community could be sensed in the participants' attitude towards learning Arabic. It was a recurring theme in the data that participants expressed their appreciation of their heritage culture and how they cherished this part of their identity, which motivated them to study MSA in the first place. Therefore, they wish not to be perceived as outsiders in their heritage communities. For example, Maryam spoke about the feeling of being singled out as an outsider in Egypt due to her Americanized accent of Arabic and how this might result in a different treatment by the locals to her and her family. In addition, Saheb highlighted that it was not enough to physically look Arab, one needed to communicate in Arabic to be fully integrated into the Arabic heritage community. Furthermore, Qaf stated that Arabic gave him a chance to connect with his grandparents on a deeper level through listening to their life stories in Arabic. Participants also reflected on the sense of appreciation they receive from their heritage community members when they communicate in Arabic. Growing up, Arabic HLLs tend to start to become more aware of their Arab heritage and may want to nurture that side of their identity. Noticing the positive reaction of their families when they can write online messages in Arabic and identifying as Arab or Arab-American while refusing to identify as only American may

indicate how important it is for Arabic HLLs to be in-group members of their heritage communities.

The fact that HLLs need to speak their heritage language to be fully integrated in their heritage community might be of extra importance to the Arabic heritage community, compared to other heritage communities in the U.S., because Arabic is deeply rooted in culture (Al Rifae, 2017), religion (Abourehab & Azaz, 2023; Bahari, 2023; Engman, 2015), and daily communications (Sehlaoui, 2008). Participants' choice of their pseudonyms was a manifestation of their cultural and religious ties to Arabic (e.g., Abud was a name of a religious mentor, Horrya referred to freedom of Palestine). Additionally, what makes Arabic a relatively special case of heritage languages is its diglossic nature where spoken and written forms are distinguishable from one another. Arabic HLLs come to the realization that speaking a dialect, or two, is not enough to fully know Arabic. Despite growing up in a household that speaks Arabic, HLLs discover that they still have huge gaps in their Arabic proficiency. Being able to fully communicate in Arabic not only brings HLLs closer to their families, but also grants them access to several cultural and social opportunities they would not have been able to be part of if they did not communicate in Arabic. Through dealing with the Arabic heritage community (immediate or extended families, community members), Arabic HLLs become influenced by the perceptions of that community and its views on people who do not speak Arabic.

Classroom

Results indicate that classroom expectations, either the teachers' or non-heritage classmates', have an effect on the participants' experience in class. As discussed earlier, data show that Arabic HLLs are aware of the existence of certain expectations from them in class. In the social identity questionnaire, HLLs expressed that their teachers and non-heritage classmates

had higher expectations from them because they were Arabic HLLs, which is in line with previous research (e.g. Block & Moncada-Comas, 2022; Brisson, 2018; De Costa, 2016; Linares, 2021; Maddamsetti, 2020; Pu & Evans, 2019; Sato et al., 2019; Yoon, 2008) concluding that HLLs encounter teachers and non-heritage classmates' expectations in class due to their heritage identity. During the interviews, participants mentioned that their teachers demanded more from them because of their heritage backgrounds. Participants also spoke about how their classmates always sought their help with class activities and linguistic aspects of MSA. In addition to HLLs' awareness of classroom expectations, highlighted also by previous research (e.g., Al Rifae, 2017; Kitchen, 2014; Lee, 2013), results of this dissertation manifest the participants' attitudes to such expectations in class. Parallel with previous research highlighting that HLLs' class behaviors and performances are shaped by their perceptions of the expectations of their teachers and classmates (e.g., Block & Moncada-Comas, 2022; Brisson, 2018; De Costa, 2016; Linares, 2021; Maddamsetti, 2020; Pu & Evans, 2019; Sato et al., 2019; Shi, 2023; Yoon, 2008), findings of this study detect behavioral change due to Arabic HLLs' awareness of the expectations of their teachers and classmates. Perceiving their Arabic heritage background as an advantage in class, participants acknowledged the fact that they might be in a more convenient position than their non-heritage classmates. This led to a positive attitude towards helping non-heritage classmates. For example, Abud stated that he "loved" helping his classmates and they "appreciated" his help. Another reaction to the participants' perception of the heritage background advantage is to abstain from class participation to allow other classmates with no heritage background more time to practice the language. Haroon explained that he refrained from class participation because he thought it was not fair for his classmates as they needed class time more than him to practice their pronunciation and other linguistic aspects. He justified his position by mentioning that he

could always practice more with his family at home, while his non-heritage classmates did not have similar opportunities as he did.

In terms of the effect of teachers' expectations on Arabic HLLs' classroom experience, results indicate that those expectations created extra pressure on the participants in class. Interestingly, when Arabic HLLs were called on to answer a question or participate in class discussion they did not necessarily feel more pressured than other classmates, which may be in line with previous research findings revealing no noticeable difference in the levels of linguistic insecurity between HLLs and non-HLLs (e.g., Driver, 2023). This low pressure that participants expressed regarding their classroom experience may be understood in terms of their desire to be representatives of their heritage communities in the classroom as highlighted by some previous research (e.g., Al Rifae, 2017; Kitchen, 2014; Lee, 2013). However, participants felt embarrassed only when they did not know the answer to the questions they were asked. Many participants expressed feelings like embarrassment and frustrations when they did not know an answer to a question in class, which is in line with previous research (e.g., Flores & Rosa, 2015; Higgins & Stoker, 2011) indicating that HLLs might feel disappointed and frustrated when they fail to meet the expectations of their community. Giving the wrong answer to Arabic HLLs meant letting their teachers down, and also letting themselves down because they thought they should have known the answer due to their heritage backgrounds. Together, results suggest claiming a heritage social identity in the Arabic class is accompanied by a package of expectations and responsibilities on the shoulders of Arabic HLLs, which may result in more classroom pressure on Arabic HLLs than on other students.

In conclusion, exploring Arabic HLLs' perceptions and attitudes towards translanguaging practices in the MSA classroom has provided valuable insights into the complexities of their

language learning experiences. This dissertation underscores the significance of embracing the rich linguistic repertoire and heritage background that Arabic HLLs bring to the classroom. By recognizing the positive attitudes towards translanguaging, acknowledging the importance of dialectal knowledge, and appreciating the profound impact of social identity, educators can create a more inclusive and effective learning environment. Furthermore, addressing the paradoxical attitudes towards translanguaging in writing and the pressure associated with high expectations can guide instructors in developing effective pedagogical strategies. Ultimately, this dissertation contributes to a broader understanding of language learning in diverse classrooms and underscores the value of accommodating the multifaceted nature of Arabic HLLs' classroom experiences.

Pedagogical implications

The insights gained from this dissertation have several pedagogical implications for educators and instructors involved in teaching MSA to Arabic HLLs. Although several studies revealed positive implications about translanguaging as a meaning-making strategy (e.g., Cenoz, 2017; Creese & Blackledge, 2010; Duarte, 2018; Fang & Huang, 2023; Hornberger & Link, 2012), and as an effective language learning theoretical framework (e.g., Blommaert, 2010; Cenoz, 2017; Creese & Blackledge, 2010, 2015; Hornberger & Link, 2012; Mary & Young, 2017), some researchers have revealed teachers' negative attitudes towards translanguaging as a pedagogical tool due to their lack of familiarity with the theory (e.g., Galante, 2020), or the challenge to balance between translanguaging and the target language (e.g, Ticheloven et al., 2019). In the case of MSA classes, Arabic teachers still struggle with the decision to adopt an integrated approach where dialect is taught side by side with MSA or stick to MSA-only policy. Findings of this dissertation suggest that understanding how Arabic HLLs perceive and employ

translanguaging practices and how their social identity contributes to their language learning

experiences can inform more effective teaching strategies. First, Arabic educators can start

fostering positive attitudes towards translanguaging in the MSA classroom. Acknowledging the

positive attitudes of Arabic HLLs towards translanguaging practices, particularly in spoken

communication, can create a more inclusive and supportive classroom environment (Garcia et

al., 2017). Educators should realize that by encouraging the use of Arabic HLLs' full linguistic

repertoire, including dialectal Arabic and English, they can help their students find more value in

the classroom where their heritage backgrounds are being recognized and appreciated. This

implication applies to HLE in which teachers should aim for an integrated approach in teaching

heritage languages to account for heritage backgrounds and utilize HLLs' social identity and its

positive connections to heritage language learning in class.

Second, Arabic educators can aspire to balance the use of Arabic varieties in class

(Albirini, 2014). Recognizing the importance of Arabic dialectal backgrounds, instructors can

incorporate activities that value and utilize these dialectal skills. Balancing the teaching of MSA

with an appreciation for learners' dialectal knowledge can enhance classroom interactions and

motivate students. This may be a challenging task for teachers, especially in mixed classrooms

where heritage and non-heritage learners study together, however a balance could be struck if

Arabic HLLs are allowed space in class to share their heritage background with their non-

heritage classmates, which would create richer group discussions and more valuable learning

outcomes. The fact that Arabic HLLs could come from different dialectal backgrounds could be

an obstacle for teachers to incorporate this wide array of dialects in class while trying to teach

MSA, particularly when there are major differences between the dialects and MSA (and even

between the dialects themselves). However, teachers who encourage the use of dialects in class

and refrain from prohibiting the use of dialects completely can avoid unrealistic expectations and unnatural language use by HLLs, who know from experience that spoken Arabic is different from MSA and depend on dialectal knowledge to form the anchor for their MSA studies. In the broader aspect of HLE, many languages have the element of diglossia embedded in them (e.g., Greek, Hebrew, Chinese, Yoruba). Therefore, acknowledging the positive effect of dialectal knowledge on HLLs' language learning experience is not limited to Arabic but extends to many (heritage)languages, and educators should realize the value of heritage backgrounds to HLLs.

In addition to incorporating dialectal knowledge into classroom instruction, Arabic educators should be aware of the substantial influence of social identity in language learning and its connection to translanguaging practices. In his systematic review of 114 articles that investigated translanguaging in applied linguistics, Özkaynak (2023) concluded that more than a quarter of those studies highlighted the effect of translanguaging on bilingual/multilingual identity construction along with its uses for teaching and learning academic content and languages (e.g., Canagarajah, 2011; Poza, 2018; Sayer, 2013). Recognizing that Arabic HLLs strongly identify with their heritage culture and language can lead to more culturally sensitive teaching practices. Encouraging the meaningful integration of students' heritage culture into the classroom can make the learning experience more engaging and relevant. Encouraging students to draw from their heritage culture and knowledge when learning MSA can make the language learning process more meaningful. This can include culturally relevant content, discussions, and projects that allow students to connect their heritage with their language learning (Leeman et al., 2011). Realizing the effect of social identity on Arabic HLLs would help teachers manage their expectations of them. Teachers should be aware of the high expectations placed on Arabic HLLs, both from their heritage communities and instructors. This awareness can lead to more

empathetic and supportive teaching approaches. Instructors can guide learners in managing the pressure associated with these expectations, emphasizing the importance of learning as a personal journey and celebrating progress, even when expectations are not always met.

Finally, a notable finding of this dissertation is the contradiction between negative perceptions of translanguaging in writing and the actual use of translanguaging in Arabic HLLs' class notes. Instructors can address this by explicitly discussing the role of translanguaging in the process of language learning. Emphasizing the practicality and advantages of translanguaging in learning MSA can help students, heritage and non-heritage alike, reconcile this apparent discrepancy. Additionally, teachers need to integrate the topic of Arabic language ideologies in their curricula. This would create a conversation between teachers and students about real-life practices of Arabic in the U.S. and the Arab world contexts. Such conversations would clear any misconceptions students have about Arabic practices in real life.

In conclusion, the pedagogical implications drawn from this dissertation emphasize the importance of recognizing the unique characteristics and needs of Arabic HLLs, and HLLs in general. By taking into account their positive attitudes towards translanguaging, their strong connection to their heritage culture, and the complex interplay of expectations, educators can better support these learners in their journey towards proficiency in their heritage languages and the meaningful integration of their social identity into their language learning experiences.

Limitations

While this dissertation has provided valuable insights into the perceptions of translanguaging practices and social identity of Arabic HLLs in the MSA classroom, it is essential to acknowledge several limitations that may affect the generalizability and interpretation of the findings. First, the sample size of participants who contributed quantitative

data in this dissertation may limit the generalizability of the findings. While there are no clear guidelines on the perfect sample size for cluster analysis, it is generally acknowledged that a larger sample size would yield more accurate results. However, the scarce number of Arabic HLLs in Arabic classrooms was a very decisive factor in the recruitment process. Although the Arabic programs approached for recruitment were located in areas with dense Arab populations, Arabic classes contained more non-HLLs than HLLs. This resulted in difficulties in recruiting a bigger number of Arabic HLLs for this dissertation.

This dissertation was conducted within a particular timeframe and within one context. Data were collected within one semester of the participants' studies and only focused on their classroom experience. Acknowledging that language learning experiences can evolve over time and can be affected by external factors, participants' attitudes and practices may be considered specific to the specific context of MSA classroom and the specific period of the study. External factors, such as family support, societal attitudes, and community involvement were not extensively explored. These factors may play a significant role in shaping the experiences of Arabic HLLs. Although the purpose of the dissertation was to focus on the classroom experience, future research could widen the context and involve more factors, such as the experience of HLLs with their families, heritage community, and religious sites, that contribute to Arabic HLLs experience.

Acknowledging these limitations is crucial for a more nuanced interpretation of the study's findings. Future research can address these limitations and provide a more comprehensive understanding of the complexities involved in the language learning journey of Arabic HLLs.

Future research directions

There are several promising avenues for future research that can expand our understanding of the complex dynamic of translanguaging practices and social identity. One potential direction is longitudinal research that tracks the language development and social identity evolution of Arabic HLLs over an extended period. Similar to previous research on Arabic learners (e.g., Al Masaeed, 2020) or Arabic HLLs (e.g., Al Rifae, 2017; Abourehab & Azaz, 2023), this dissertation reports on Arabic HLLs in one semester of their MSA classes, in this case mostly at the beginning level. A longitudinal study that follows the progress of students from beginner to advanced levels could present the field of heritage language education with valuable insights regarding the evolution of HLLs linguistic practices and how they relate to the HLLs' social identity perceptions as they receive increased exposure to formal MSA instruction.

Another future research direction is the exploration of Arabic educators' perceptions and attitudes towards translanguaging practices in their MSA classes. Previous studies (e.g., Azaz & Abourehab, 2021) investigated teachers' ideologies and attitudes towards integrating dialectal instruction in the MSA classroom. More studies that aim to obtain the teachers' perspective on the unique needs and strengths of Arabic HLLs would shed light on effective pedagogical approaches that are more inclusive and diverse. It would also raise teachers' awareness of the potential expectations placed on Arabic HLLs in class. This awareness would lead to more sensitive classroom instruction that takes into consideration the complex nature of Arabic HLLs' identity.

Future researchers could investigate the area of translanguaging in heritage communities. Since this dissertation focuses mainly on translanguaging practices in the classroom, future research could expand this view by exploring how Arabic HLLs employ translanguaging

practices within their heritage communities, outside of formal MSA classes. While previous studies investigated the role of religion in Arab families' decision to maintain Arabic with their children (e.g., Bahari, 2023), other studies examined the intersection between religious and academic identities of young students of Arabic (e.g., Engman, 2015), future studies could focus on the experience of Arabic HLLs in college as adults consciously decide to study Arabic. Since heritage communities have certain expectations from their members, including language maintenance, exploring Arabic HLLs' perceptions of translanguaging with their heritage communities would give great insights to the field. By understanding how HLLs react to the same construct in class and outside of class, a more comprehensive view of how HLLs' linguistic repertoire is used in various contexts could be very informative to the field of heritage language education. This will also allow for the investigation of the sociocultural factors that influence the language choices and practices of Arabic HLLs. For instance, researchers could examine the role of media, social networks, religion, and community interactions in shaping Arabic HLLs' language use.

Finally, future research needs to incorporate more diverse research methods and design. This dissertation employed a mixed-methods design in an attempt to present the field with robust and more representative findings. By combining qualitative and quantitative methods, future research can continue to offer a more comprehensive understanding of translanguaging practices and social identity of Arabic HLLs. By triangulating data from multiple sources, researchers can gain a richer picture of this complex interplay and provide findings that appeal to a wider community of researchers.

In sum, these potential future research directions can contribute to a more nuanced and comprehensive understanding of the language learning experiences of Arabic HLLs, and HLLs

in general. By further exploring the intersections of translanguaging and social identity, researchers can inform more effective language education strategies that account for the multifaceted nature of heritage language education.

Conclusion

In delving into the perceptions, attitudes, and practices of Arabic HLLs within MSA classrooms, this dissertation not only explores the intricate dynamics of translanguaging practices and social identity but also provides a perspective of the broader significance of HLE, translanguaging, and the impact on social identity. Arabic HLLs exhibit a profound appreciation for the full linguistic repertoire in the MSA classroom. While this study unveils HLLs' conflicting attitudes toward translanguaging practices, it also illustrates how embracing linguistic diversity enhances their understanding of MSA. Furthermore, this dissertation highlights the evident connection between translanguaging practices and social identity of Arabic HLLs. Participants, proudly identifying as both Arab and Arab-American, exemplify the intricate relationship between language and identity. They draw on their cultural heritage not merely as a backdrop but as a cornerstone in their language learning journey, shaping a profound sense of belonging in both worlds.

While the focus was on classroom experience, implications of this dissertation are not necessarily confined to this context only. Since HLE is a gateway to understanding the fabric of society, social interconnectedness and preservation of linguistic diversity are paramount. This work underscores the broader implications for the future of language teaching, Second Language Acquisition (SLA), language ideologies, and policies. Arabic, like many other languages in the U.S., is on the rise because of increasing levels of immigration and relocation, and the level of interest in maintaining, preserving, and studying Arabic is rising as well. Therefore,

understanding the dynamics of HLE, translanguaging, and social identity is not merely an academic exercise; it holds meaningful implications for the narratives we shape as a society. As individuals embrace and celebrate their linguistic heritage, they contribute to a mosaic of perspectives that enrich the collective cultural landscape.

This dissertation is a call to Arabic educators and policymakers to recognize and celebrate linguistic diversity in the Arabic classrooms and communities. The findings underscore the imperative of designing inclusive language policies that acknowledge the unique linguistic backgrounds of HLLs, fostering an environment where heritage languages are not just preserved but celebrated. Teachers need to engage in a dialogue to better understand the effect of translanguaging on the learning experience of HLLs and how they celebrate their social identities through bringing their linguistic heritage to class. Additionally, program directors and policy makers need to consider the intricate nature of HLLs in class by comprehending the amount of extra pressure and expectations they carry only because they have heritage backgrounds. By creating flexible and integrative policies, HLLs would feel that their heritage backgrounds are celebrated in class, rather than prohibited.

Beyond education, implications of this study extend to social initiatives. By understanding the vital link between language and identity, we pave the way for initiatives that promote inclusivity, understanding, and mutual respect. This dissertation underscores the role of language in fostering connections, breaking down barriers, and building bridges across diverse communities. In essence, this dissertation is not just an exploration of the experiences of Arabic HLLs; it is a call for the recognition of the intrinsic value of HLE, translanguaging practices, and the profound connection between language and identity. In today's global society, this dissertation challenges teachers, program directors, policy makers, and researchers to envision a

society where linguistic diversity is not merely preserved but cherished—a future where language is a means for gathering rather than separation, appreciation rather than abolishing, and unity rather than division.

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APPENDIX A: QUESTIONNAIRES

Translanguaging questionnaire

No.	Questionnaire Items
1	My home dialect helps me in studying MSA.
2	I often alternate between my home dialect and MSA in class.
3	While studying, I sometimes translate MSA words to my home dialect.
4	While studying, I sometimes translate MSA words to English.
5	When I do not know a word in MSA, I refer to my home dialect.
6	When I do not know a word in MSA, I refer to English.
7	While speaking, I mix between MSA and my home dialect.
8	While speaking, I mix between MSA and English.
9	While speaking, I mix between all three: MSA, my home dialect, and English.
10	While writing, I sometimes mix between MSA and my home dialect.
11	While writing, I sometimes mix between all three: MSA, my home dialect, and English.
12	I find it OK in the classroom to mix MSA with my home dialect and English to get my message across.

Social Identity Questionnaire

Self-categorization

No.	Questionnaire Items
1	I consider myself a representative of my heritage society.
2	I am proud of my heritage culture.
3	I consider myself an expert on Arabic culture.

4	I identify as Arab-American.
5	I identify as American.
6	I identify as Arab.
7	I always think of my heritage community before I do something opposed to the values they cherish.
8	I seek opportunities to share my heritage culture with people.

Teacher's expectations

No.	Questionnaire Items
1	In my Arabic Language class, my teacher has high expectations of me.
2	My teacher sees me as a native speaker of Arabic.
3	My teacher turns to me to check if a specific pronunciation is correct in my home dialect of Arabic.
4	My teacher counts on me to help my peers during group discussions.
5	My teacher turns to me to initiate group discussions.

Non-heritage students' expectations

No.	Questionnaire Items
1	My classmates consider me a native speaker of Arabic.
2	My classmates always ask me cultural questions because I am an Arabic heritage speaker.
3	My classmates always count on me to lead group discussions in Arabic class.

Embarrassment

No.	Questionnaire Items
1	I feel more pressure than other classmates because I am a heritage speaker.
2	I feel embarrassed when my teacher asks me questions about my heritage culture.
3	I feel embarrassed when my classmates ask me questions about my heritage culture.
4	I feel embarrassed when I do something that offends my Arab culture.
5	I feel embarrassed when I don't know the answer to questions related to my heritage culture.

APPENDIX B: INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

Arabic HLL Experiences?

1. Tell me about your family background and your connection to Arabic.

2. How is your Arabic study experience going so far?

3. What are your objectives of studying Arabic? Short-term and long-term?

4. What have you achieved so far?

5. What's next?

6. How is the class dynamic going? With the teacher and other students.

7. When you are asked a question (to read something or the meaning of something) how do you usually feel or react?

a. What if you do not know the answer?

8. In class, does it occur to you that you are more experienced in Arabic than your classmates? Why? Why not?

9. In what ways you try to engage with Arabic outside of class (campus, community, social networks, etc)

10. How close (or distant) are you to the Arab community?

11. How do you feel the Arab community perceives you?

12. How do you identify yourself: Arab – Arab/American – American?

Translanguaging

1. How often do you use your home dialect while studying? In what ways?

2. How beneficial do you find your dialect in class?

    a. Do you use it while taking notes? Assignments? Conversation?

    b. And how do you do that in writing? (transliterate?)

3. What are the best ways to use your dialect to help you improve your Arabic studying (either in class or outside of it)

4. What's your opinion on mixing MSA with dialect (and English)

5. How do you feel when you use your home dialect (in class or outside? Is there a difference?)

6. If you were to mix MSA, dialect, and English, in what order would you do it? why?

APPENDIX C: BACKGROUND SURVEY

(*Adapted from Jensen, 2007*)

1. Name: 2. Age:

3. Gender: 4. Email Address:

5. Where were you born?

6. If you were not born in the U.S., how old were you when you arrived in the U.S.?

7. What university are you enrolled in?

8. What is your major?

9. What is your native language?

10. How many years have you been studying Arabic?

         _____ year(s) in high school

         _____ year(s) in college

         _____ year(s)/month(s) in a country where this language is spoken

         _____ Total

11. Why are you taking Arabic? (Check all that apply)

☐ It's a foreign language requirement   ☐ I'm interested in this language /

culture

☐ My family / relatives speak this language   ☐ I want to major or minor in this language

☐ Future employment / job opportunities

☐ I want to communicate with friends who are native speakers of this language

☐ Other:

_____

12. Have you lived in or traveled to a place where people speak Arabic?

☐ No, I have never traveled to an Arabic-speaking place.

☐ Yes, I have been once or twice.

☐ Yes, I have been 3-5 times.

☐ Yes, at least once a year.

☐ Other

_____

13. What language(s) do you speak at home with your family?

_____

14. What language(s) do you speak most of the time?

☐ English

☐ Arabic

☐ A combination of Arabic and English

☐ Other

_____

15. What other languages do you speak or have you studied in the past?

_____

16. As a young child, did you first learn to read in English or in Arabic?

_____

17. What social media or technology do you use in the Arabic language outside of class time?

Report as much as you can on what apps/websites in the Arabic language you use (for

videos/chatting/sharing/information /news).

_____

18. What language did you use most during the following periods in your life?

	English	Arabic	Both
0-5 years old			
6-12 years old			
13-18 years old			

19. Please rate your Arabic abilities:

	None	Low	Intermediate	Advanced	Native-like
Listening					
Speaking					
Reading					
Writing					

20. Please rate your English abilities:

	None	Low	Intermediate	Advanced	Native-like
Listening					
Speaking					
Reading					
Writing					