EGYPTIAN AND KUWAITI ARABIC IN CONTACT:

THE CASE OF KUWAITI /k, tʃ/ AND /θ/

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Abstract

Studies of dialect have recently attracted the interest of sociolinguists who are trying to seek answers as to how and why mutually intelligible linguistic varieties may influence one another when they come into contact, and more importantly the linguistic outcomes of such contact. These studies show that it is very unlikely that adult immigrants can fully and accurately acquire a non-native variety.

Chambers (1992) argues that the acquisition of a second dialect is governed by a number of linguistic rules. In a previous study (Dashti 1997), the author examined the acquisition of three phonological variables, namely, (q) (ʤ) and (ð) of Kuwaiti Arabic together with their variants by Egyptian Arabs whose native Arabic variety is Egyptian Arabic. It was suggested then, that the acquisition of both the variable (k) and the variable (θ) in the speech of Egyptian Arabs are also worth investigating in future research. This study aimed at investigating the acquisition of the Kuwaiti variables (k) and (θ) and their variants by Egyptian acquirers in the light of Chambers' principles. 40 subjects were interviewed and 40 hours of tape-recorded conversation were collected, phonetically transcribed and then statistically analysed. Analysis showed that both variables were complex and difficult to acquire by Egyptians. On the other hand, marriage, gender, and length of stay were insignificant.

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Resumen

Los estudios sobre los dialectos han atraído recientemente el interés de los sociolingüistas que están tratando de buscar respuestas a cómo y por qué variedades lingüísticas mutuamente inteligibles pueden influirse entre sí al entrar en contacto, y más importante aún a los resultados lingüísticos de tal contacto. Estos estudios muestran que es muy poco probable que los inmigrantes adultos puedan adquirir completamente una variedad no nativa.

Chambers (1992) sostiene que la adquisición de un segundo dialecto se rige por una serie de reglas lingüísticas. En un estudio anterior (Dashti 1997), el autor examina la adquisición de tres variables fonológicas, a saber, (q) (ʤ) y (d) del árabe kuwaití árabe, junto con sus variantes, por parte de árabes egipcios cuya variedad nativa árabe es el árabe egipcio. Se sugirió entonces que la adquisición tanto de la variable (k) como de la variable (θ) en el habla de los árabes de Egipto podían ser objeto de estudio en futuras investigaciones. Este trabajo tiene el objetivo de investigar la adquisición de las variables kuwaitíes (k) y (θ) y sus variantes por los hablantes de Egipto a la luz de los principios de Chambers. 40 sujetos fueron entrevistados y se recogieron 40 horas de conversación grabada, que fueron fonéticamente transcritas y luego analizadas estadísticamente. El análisis mostró que ambas variables eran complejas y difíciles de adquirir por los egipcios. Por otro lado, el matrimonio, el sexo, y la duración de la estancia eran consideradas insignificantes.

Palabras clave

contacto de lenguas, adquisición fonológica, variación lingüística

1. Introduction

It is reasonable to assume that the migration of people is a leading cause of contact-induced change; in other words, migration is a key extralinguistic factor leading to externally-motivated change. In every case of migration, except where a homogeneous group of people moves to an isolated location, language or dialect contact ensues (Trudgill 1986). This paper is mainly an investigation within the framework of second dialect acquisition where two mutually intelligible dialects (Egyptian and Kuwaiti dialects) come into contact. However, the term Egyptian Arabic throughout the study refers to Cairene Egyptian Arabic. It is not an investigation within the framework of long-term accommodation. It is worthwhile distinguishing, though,

between accommodation and acquisition. Despite the fact that they may sometimes overlap, the former is a linguistic behavior by which a speaker modifies his/her accent or dialect to that of a particular interlocutor in a particular setting. Chambers (1992) claims that acquisition, on the other hand, refers to those linguistic processes by which an individual more permanently adopts features of another variety, which are mutually intelligible with his/her own in the longer terms. Trudgill (1986: 4) notes that "if accommodation, through the adoption of a feature from an alien linguistic variety, is frequent enough, then that feature may become a permanent part of a speaker's accent or dialect, even replacing original features".

Migration movements in the Arab world have been one of the most significant social phenomena since the twentieth century onward. From a sociolinguistic perspective the greatest effect of these migrations has been an increased contact between various Arabic vernaculars particularly in the cities (Vicente 2007). Studies of dialect contact (e.g. Al-wer 2003a, 2003b, 2005a, 2005b, 2007; Rys & Bonte 2005; Dashti, 1997; Chambers & Trudgill 1999; Trudgill 1986; Britain, 2006, 2009; Britain & Vandekerckhove 2009) and second dialect acquisition (Berthele 2002; Watts 2000; Wells 1973; Payne 1976, 1980; Vousten & Bongaerts 1995; Chambers 1992; Britain 1998) and accommodation through language (Giles 1973) have recently attracted the interest of sociolinguists who are trying to seek answers as to how and why mutually intelligible linguistic varieties may influence one another when they come into contact, and more importantly the linguistic outcomes of such contact. These studies show that it is very unlikely that adult immigrants can fully and accurately acquire a second dialect.

Chambers (1992) argues that the acquisition of a second dialect is governed by a number of linguistic rules. In a previous study, Dashti (1997), examined the acquisition of three phonological variables namely, (q) (ʤ) and (ð) of Kuwaiti Arabic together with their variants by Egyptian Arabs whose native Arabic variety is Egyptian Arabic. It was suggested then, that the acquisition of both the variable (k) and the variable (θ) in the speech of Egyptian Arabs are also worth investigating in future research. This study aims at investigating the acquisition of the Kuwaiti variables (k) and (θ) and their

variants by Egyptian acquirers in the light of Chambers' principles. Both linguistic and social analysis would be sought.

2. Theoretical assumption and literature review

2.1. Background

Dialect contact is characteristic of expansion diffusion within a dialect area (L. Milroy 2002). It is also characteristic of relocation diffusion when the migrants move to a place where the majority language varieties are mutually intelligible with their own (Kerswill 2006). Here, one of the processes involved among others is second-dialect acquisition (Chambers 1992; Kerswill 1996).

Lewis (1982: 9-19) and Boyle *et al.* (1998: 34-38) refer to a number of parameters that must be examined in describing and categorizing cases of migration. These include: time, motivation and socio-cultural factors. As to time, "Migration" implies a degree of permanence in the move; migrant groups tend to be "committed to the project of living in other people's countries", despite in many cases retaining "diasporic yearnings" for a return to the homeland. Milroy (2002) claims that on the basis of evidence from language attitude research, sociolinguists commonly assume that an ideological motivation underlies the long term maintenance of distinctive local norms in the face of pressures from numerically and socially more powerful speech communities. Learner motivation is thought to be amongst the most influential factors in the successful acquisition of a second or foreign language and in second dialect acquisition scenarios as well. This may be because, as Skehan (1998: 49) observes, "It [motivation] can overcome unfavourable circumstances in other aspects of language learning". The role of motivation and attitude was also addressed in Vousten & Bongaerts (1995) study on second dialect acquisition. They examine the acquisition of a Limburg dialect (viz. that of Venray) as a second language by children who were raised in Standard Dutch. A large part of his study reports on an attitude and motivation test in which he made use of the Attitude/Motivation Test Battery (AMTB) of Gardner (Gardner 1985), of Spolsky's

identity scales (Spolsky 1969) and of a matched-guise experiment (cf. Lambert *et al.* 1960). Vousten & Bongaerts (1995) further examined the effect of the attitude and motivation on the degree of success in dialect acquisition in 38 children who were selected from the group of dialect learners (i.e. children who reported that they spoke the local dialect) and in a control group of native dialect speakers. He did not, however, find any significant relationship between the affective factors (i.e. attitude and motivation) and the degree of dialect proficiency of children (see Vousten & Bongaerts 1995: 1).

Social network, too, is an important sociolinguistic parameter in second dialect acquisition scenarios. Baker (2006) offers three examples of how a small number of speakers can continue to maintain language networks when located within a dominant majority language environment. First, language maintenance can occur when there are strong religious beliefs associated with the minority language group. Second, when speakers can travel relatively easily between their homeland and their place of residence language maintenance can occur. Third, whenever speakers within a large city or border areas are socially and culturally active in their minority language, maintenance may occur. L. Milroy (1980) states that the social network concept investigates the kind of density of relationship which an individual has within the community. A link between two individuals, for example, will be uniplex if they are related in one capacity, such as doctor/patient. On the other hand, the link is multiplex if the ties are in more than one capacity, e.g. friends, neighbors. Density refers to the actual number of links that could exist between all the members of an individual's social network.

Most sociolinguistic studies of dialect contact have investigated speech only of those who were born and bred in a community and deliberately excluded newcomers since they were not thought to be classifiable as 'native' of, for example, New York, Norwich etc. Furthermore, most sociolinguistic studies on speech variation have mainly dealt with relatively stable non-immigrant speech communities such as Labov (1966, 1972), and Trudgill (1974). On the other hand, only a few studies have dealt with immigrant speech. Among these studies are Wells (1973), Payne (1976, 1980), Kerswill (1985, 1995), Vousten & Bongaerts (1995), Chambers (1992) and Jassem (1993).

2.2. Chambers' study

Chambers' pioneering work (1992), on second dialect acquisition gathered together the result of the rather sparse pervious research, conducted further empirical work himself, and took on board Trudgill's appeal to use variationist method in investigating the extent to which the limits on our abilities to fully acquire a second dialect can be accounted for by linguistic factors alone. He carried out a developmental study with six Canadian youngsters in two families that moved to southern England in 1983 and 1984. His eight principles represent, to put in his words 'generalization extrapolated from the behavior of my six subjects as they went about eliminating features of their native Canadian English dialects and acquiring features of the Southern England English dialects of their new home region' (Chambers 1992: 675).

This study will focus on four of Chambers' (1992) principles.

2.2.1. Simple phonological rules progress faster than complex ones

Chambers (1992) claims that in second dialect acquisition scenarios, 'simple phonological rules progress faster than complex ones. He claims that simple rules are automatic processes that admit no exceptions; complex rules have opaque outputs, that is, they have exceptions or variant forms, or a type of complexity that comes up especially in dialect acquisition-they have in their output a new or additional phoneme. Examples of simple and complex rules such as T-voicing (T-voicing involves the realisation of intervocalic /t/ as a voiced tap), fronting of the onset of /uw/ and /ow/, a change from [ɛi] in the old accent to [i] in the Venray accent, the Jamaican Creole insertion of /j/ following velars and preceding low vowels and Canadian Raising are found in (Chambers 1992; Payne 1980; Vousten & Bongaerts 1995; Britain 1998) respectively. Examples of complex rules such as 'Vowel backing", the 'short-a', the emerging of Jamaican Creole /ie/ or Jamaican English /e:/ before tautosylabic /r/, and the complexity of ʊ-^ split are found in (Chambers 1992; Payne 1980; Britain 1998) respectively.

2.2.2. The acquisition of complex rules and new phonemes splits the population into early acquirers and later acquirers

This principle claims that the acquisition of complex rules and new phonemes splits the population into early acquirers and later acquirers. His study (1992) showed that of those who acquired the complex rule (Vowel Backing) and some other rules, the younger subjects were able to acquire the rule earlier than the others. This might indicate that age is as crucial in second dialect acquisition as it has often been claimed to be in second language acquisition. Payne (1980) found similar results as well.

2.2.3. In the earliest stages of acquisition, both categorical rules and variable rules of the new dialect result in variability in the acquirers

Chambers (1992) claims that it is obvious that we would not expect the Canadian children to instantaneously acquire the British dialect completely. It is likely to be a gradual process related to many other individual and social factors. One of the examples that Chambers provides as a categorical rule of southern England English is R-lessness, which refers to the exclusion of non-prevocalic /r/ in words like *summer, plaster, water, north, urban, and birthday*. His study of the six Canadian children claimed that his subjects had made very ineffectual progress in acquiring R-lessness, in addition to the fact that their acquired usage of it is not categorical.

2.2.4. The elimination of old rules occurs more rapidly than acquiring new ones

Chambers argues that the process of dialect acquisition involves not only coming to sound more like the people in the new region but also coming to sound less like the people in the old region. So, for example, T-voicing is a rule of Canadian English, and intrinsically must be removed from the speakers' phonologies. R-lessness, on the other hand, is a rule of southern England English, and must be acquired in the speaker's phonologies. His findings suggest that eliminating a rule like, T-devoicing occurs more rapidly than acquiring R-lessness.

2.3. Other studies

Boyanayyah (2011) investigated variation and change in the dialect of Al-Huffuf, Sudi Arabia. He examined, quantitatively, the speech of 18 female and male speakers who were born there or moved later on. The study sample was divided into two age groups: older speakers (over 55) and younger speakers (19-35) and analysed three linguistic variables in correlation to the social variables of age and sex. Phonologically, the study examined the linguistic variation in the affrication of the velar stop (k) in the stem of words. At the morphophonemic level, two variables were investigated: the second person singular feminine suffix (-k), and the first person possessive or object singular suffix (-j). Data analysis revealed that both age and sex affect linguistic variation. However, age has more significant effect than sex.

Tagliamonte & Molfenter (2007) present a case study of second dialect acquisition where three children over six years old shift from Canadian to British English. Their analysis focused on a frequent and socially embedded linguistic feature, T-voicing (e.g., *pudding* versus *putting*). Their data showed that despite the fact that all of the children eventually sounded local, the acquisition process was complex. Frequency of British variants rose incrementally, lagging behind the acquisition of variable constraints, which were in turn ordered by type. Internal patterns were acquired early, while social correlates lagged behind. Acceleration of second dialect variants occurred at well-defined sociocultural milestones, particularly entering the school system. Successful second dialect acquisition was a direct consequence of sustained access to and integration with the local speech community.

Straw & Patrick (2007) conducted a research on dialect contact and second-dialect acquisition by adult and child Barbadian English speakers converging towards an East Anglian variety of English. They examined glottal variation in word-final /t/, comparing the local dialect of Anglo ('white') speakers in Ipswich to that of Barbados-born speakers living there, and to British English varieties more generally. Both Afro-Caribbeans and Anglos in our study maintain dense and multiplex local networks focused on their respective ethnic communities. All their subjects have extended family members living in Ipswich. First-generation Barbadians came directly to Ipswich, rather

than taking the usual route of arriving in larger cities and later moving to smaller towns. They came to take up specific job opportunities, or by invitation from family members already settled in the area. They analyzed the interview speech of four Anglos and four Barbadians. The sample covers both sexes and two age-groups: 68-74 (retired) and 40-50 (middle aged). The retired Barbadians came to Ipswich in the late 1950s as adults, while the middle-aged Barbadians came in the 1970s as children. They found out that the use of the (t) variable by Ipswich Anglo urban speakers does not suggest diffusion from the London area – not, at any rate, as supported by the literature to date – while the partial resemblance between Barbadian immigrant and Anglo speakers argues for dialect acquisition.

Berthle (2002) examined the influence of social network on second dialect acquisition. He examined 14 German children acquiring Swiss German dialect in Fribourg, a Swiss town. He found out that his subjects were trying to show their solidarity with the peer group. His subjects' linguistic choices are "acts of identity in a small group of peers (Berthele 2002: 328). Berthele (2002) performed sociological research which aims at revealing the social network within the class of school children. He concluded that "the degree of social integration" is generally reflected in "the degree of linguistic conformity".

Dashti (1997) investigated the acquisition of the Kuwaiti variant [j] of the variable (ʤ), the Kuwaiti variants [g] [ʤ] [q] of the variable (q), and the Kuwaiti variant [ð] of the variable (ð) as acquired by Egyptian informants.

Examples of the Kuwaiti variant [j] are as follows:

(1)   ja:hil/ for /ʤa:hil/ 'child'   /jidi:d/ for /ʤidi:d/ 'new'

          /diya:y/ for /diʤa:ʤ/ 'chicken'   /wa:jid/ for /wa:ʤid/ 'a lot'.

Examples of the variants [g] [ʤ] [q] are as follows:

(2)   /gUmar/ for /qamar/ 'a moon'   /fo:g/ for /fawq/ 'above'

          /ħari:ʤə/ for / ħari:q/ 'fire'   /ʤidir/ for /qidr/ 'cooking pot'

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His quantitative analysis showed that Egyptians were able to acquire the Kuwaiti variants [j] and [g] of the variable (ʤ) and (q) faster than the Kuwaiti variant [ð] of the variable (ð). Moreover, some variants of the first two variables are acquired faster than other variants of the same variables. First, this may imply that the rules for (ʤ) and (q) are simpler to acquire by Egyptians than the rule for [ð], and the degree of acquisition varies according to different variants of a given variable. Second, the data showed that all rules in his data are complex to acquire than the other due to different linguistic constraints. In other words, the [j], [g] and [ð] can all be considered as complex to acquire by Egyptians but that [j] and [g] are relatively less complex to acquire than [ð].

Drews (1997) investigated the acquisition of nine phonological variables of Scottish Standard English among a British family of four who lived in America for eight years and then returned back to live in Scotland. Three of them are past the critical age for phonology when they moved back to Scotland. However, they all have acquired certain phonological aspects of Scottish Standard English. With regards to the critical age, the youngest informant demonstrated the most use of Standard Scottish English phonology, but he didn't demonstrate complete use of some features, particularly the acquisition of a new phoneme /ʉ/. This could be due to the fact that he was just slightly beyond the critical age when he was exposed to Scottish Standard English. At the opposite extreme, Chris who demonstrated very little use of Scottish Standard English because he was exposed to the variety after critical age. Despite being the oldest, Elizabeth partially acquired the most difficult feature, namely, rhoticity because she was exposed to Standard British English before permanently moving to Scotland. Critical age is most pertinent to the acquisition of phonemic differences. Those features which can be acquired in the later stages of the critical period are simpler and probably acquired first by all dialect learners. Complex features which seemed to be acquired later, have an earlier critical age. Moreover, realisational differences are acquired early in the acquisition process. Acquisition of these realisational differences seems to be the first step in acquiring phonological rules.

3. Methodology

The acquisition of the Kuwaiti variables (k) and (θ) respectively by Egyptian informants will be examined across the following parameters:

1. Gender

2. Length of stay

3. Motivation and attitudes towards the Kuwaiti dialect

4. Level of education

5. Social network

Both quantitative and qualitative analysis will be fused. Percentages of the occurrence of both variables and their variants in the speech of our informants will be quantified. All tokens will be analyzed quantitatively by calculating the frequency index of the different variants for the variable under investigation.

3.1. Identifying the subjects

One immigrant group in the population of Kuwait that we may identify as potential subjects for this study are Egyptians. The reason why Egyptians were chosen rather than other Arabs is due to the fact that the Egyptians form the largest Arab non-native group living in Kuwait (500.000 Egyptians according to the latest statistics, 2011). To test the above parameters, ten Egyptian females and ten Egyptian males were sought to be interviewed. For the sake of consistency, the researchers made sure that all their informants' native dialect is Cairene Arabic as Egyptian Arabic is extremely variable. All 20 subjects are married to Kuwaitis. Five of the women have been living in Kuwait for more than 10 years (informants 1-5) while the other five arrived to Kuwait sometime during 2011 (informants 6-10). The situation with the Egyptian men is slightly different as six of them have been living in Kuwait for more than 10 years but they got married to Kuwaitis later on and they frequently go to Egypt on visits (informants 1-6). The other four have been in Kuwait for almost a year (informants 7-10). Almost all the informants hold at least a college degree which indicates that they are well educated.

The researcher was hoping to find Egyptians with lower educational degrees to see how different levels of education may influence the acquisition of Kuwaiti variables, yet it was very difficult to trace such informants (especially males) married to Kuwaitis. Table 1 and 2 below show the subjects' distribution.

Subject	Age	Age on arrival in Kuwait	Level of education
1	36	25	College degree
2	42	27	College degree
3	35	23	College degree
4	35	22	University degree
5	38	22	College degree
6	25	24	University degree
7	23	22	University degree
8	26	25	University degree
9	23	22	College degree
10	35	34	University degree

Table 1. Distribution of female subjects

Subject	Age	Age on arrival to Kuwait	Level of education
1	33	22	University degree
2	45	26	PhD. Degree
3	36	24	University degree
4	39	23	University degree
5	41	27	PhD. Degree
6	38	29	College degree
7	33	32	University degree
8	29	28	Masters degree
9	26	25	Masters degree
10	30	29	University degree

Table 2. Distribution of male subjects

3.2.Tools

3.2.1. Recorded conversation

Recorded conversations were used as a technique to obtain spontaneous conversational speech from the informants. In these conversations the researchers

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specified the topics without fixing any order of the questions to be asked. In other words, the recordings did not take the form of a formal structured interview; rather, it was a general discussion focused on social matters, for example, their attitudes towards living away from their homeland and their social network and social activities. The overall strategy during the conversations was to ask about broad issues and give the lead as much as possible to the target subject to freely discuss some of these issues. All interviews were held at the participants' homes, and lasted for about an hour. A total of 40 hours of tape-recorded interviews were collected.

3.2.2. The variables under investigation: the linguistic variable (k)

The phonological inventory of Kuwaiti Arabic, hereafter (KA), has both the standard Arabic variant [k] — a voiceless velar stop — and **[ʧ]** a variant popular in eastern Arabian dialects identified as a voiceless alveolar affricate- as variants of the variable (k)**.** It is reasonable to mention that in KA, as in all Peninsula dialects that descend from the 'Najdi" type, /k/ is affricated conditionally-mainly in front high and sometimes back high vowel environment. Affrication in KA is also subject to morphophonemic rules: /k/ in the feminine suffix -*ik* is always affricated but not the /k/ in the masculine pronominal suffix -k; thus, ma:l-əʧ yours (fem) but ma:l-ək yours (masc). So there are two variables here: /k/ in the stem, which is affricated in front vowel environment generally, and /k/ in the pronominal suffix; affrication in the suffix carries "gender" information (has grammatical function) (Ingham 1994; Holes 2007). This entails the fact that tokens of the affricated variant in the pronominal suffix will occur only if the addressee is female. On the other hand, the variable (k) in the phonological inventory of Egyptian Arabic, hereafter (EA) is invariant. Here are a few examples of the Kuwaiti variant [ʧ] replacing the variable (k):

(3) ʧalb 'dog'   ba:ʧir 'tomorrow'   ʧam   'how much'

     ʧəbri:t 'sulfer'   ħatʧi 'talk'   fitʧʧa 'open it'   satʧʧin 'knife'

3.2.3. The linguistic variable (θ)

This variable identified as a voiceless interdental fricative is invariant in Classical Arabic and in KA. Cairene Arabic, on the other hand, does not have interdentals at all. Traditionally the interdental consonants /θ ð ðˤ/ corresponded to the /t s zˤ/. This is a feature common to some North African Arabic varieties, and is attested in *pre-modern* words. Examples where /θ/ in EA are as follows:

(4)   /taʕlab/, 'fox', from */θaʕlab/ ثعلب (and never /saʕlab/).
Likewise: /talg/, 'ice', from */θalʤ/ ثلج; /taman/, 'price', from */θaman/ ثمن
           /tala:ta/, 'three', from */θala:θa/ ثلاثة; /miħra:t/, 'plough', from */miħra:θ/ محراث.

Unlike other North African varieties, Egyptian Arabic also shows another feature where interdentals /θ ð ðˤ/ correspond to sibilant consonants /s z zˤ/, for example, (/sawra/, 'revolution', as opposed to /θawra/ ثورة). Historically speaking, though, [t] is the normal outcome of (θ) in Cairene Arabic; [s] replaces (θ) in loans from Standard Arabic in corporate in the colloquial. Now, [t,s] can hark back to (θ), but there are far more [t] and [s] which go back to (t), or (s) respectively, which will probably pose no problem at all for the acquirer because they correspond simply to (t) and (s) variables in Kuwaiti Arabic. From an empirical perspective regarding the Egyptians variant [t] and [s] of the variable (θ), it seems that no difference is made between the EA dialect and Standard Arabic vocabulary as pronounced by Egyptians. Moreover, /t,s/ as outcomes of (θ) have identical distribution in Egyptian colloquial as to their position in the syllable and may occur in any position, initial, medial, or final. To give a few examples:

(5)   /sawra/ "revolution" [θawra], /sanawi/ 'secondary' [θanawi:].
           For [θa:bit] "stable, fixed" both variants exist: /sabit/ and /tabit/.
           Medial and final [t]: / ħarat/ 'to plough' [ħaraθ] , /gitta/ 'corpse' [ʤuθθa].

4. Quantitative analysis

4.1. The variable (k)

		[k]	[t͡ʃ]
Early immigrants	Males	% 25.7	% 4.5
	Females	% 48.7	% 20.9
Recent immigrants	Males	%45.6	% 4.8
	Females	%46.9	% 2.1

Table 3. The realization of the (k) and its variants in the speech of male and female early immigrants (number of tokens 945) and recent male immigrants to the recent female immigrants (number of tokens 605)

We must state that a very few occurrences of the variant [ʃ] of the variable (k) were traced (only five incidences), and therefore were discarded.

4.2. The variable (θ)

		[θ]	[s]	[t]
Early immigrants	Male	% 3.4	% 28.5	% 20.1
	Females	% 5.0	% 26.1	% 16.6
Recent immigrants	Males	% 0	% 32.1	% 21.9
	Females	% 0	% 27.2	% 18.5

Table 4. The realization of the (θ) and its variants in the speech of male and female early immigrants: (number of tokens 378) and of recent male immigrants to the recent female immigrants (number of tokens 382)

5. Discussion

5.1. Linguistic explanation

The statistical analysis above clearly shows that when two mutually intelligible dialects are in contact linguistic change will affect phonological features. Our findings here do confine with earlier findings (Dashti 1997) that some variables are acquired

faster than others. Our subjects seem to be slower in acquiring the two variables under investigation compared to other variable. For example, in contrast to earlier research (Dashti 1997) where variants such as [g] of the variable (q) and the variant [j] of the variable (dʒ) are easy to acquire, this paper shows that similar to the variable (ð), the variant [tʃ] of the variable [k] and the variant [θ] of the variable (θ) are more complex to acquire than the rule of other variables and their variants simply because they don't exist in their phonetic inventory. Dashti (1997) also argued that all rules in his data are 'complex' in Chambers' sense, yet one is more complex to acquire than the other due to different linguistic constraints. It is believed that [tʃ] and [θ] can all be considered as complex for Egyptian immigrants to acquire but that they are more complex to acquire than for example [j] and [dʒ] investigated in earlier research.

To find explanations for the different degrees of complexity, we need to look at the phonetic inventories of EA and that of KA. These phonetic inventories inform us that neither [tʃ] nor [θ] exists in EA as variants of the variables (k) and (θ) respectively. Also they do not exist as separate phonemes. As to the variable (θ) EA inventory has both [t] and [s] as variants of [θ] whereas KA has only the variant [θ] for the variable [θ] despite the fact that /t/ and /s/ do exist in KA inventory as separate phonemes. It is worthwhile mentioning that /θ/ has disappeared in EA, merging with the stop /t/ and the sibilant /s/ as shown in the following examples:

(6) | EA | KA | CA | Meaning |
|---|---|---|---|
| /masal/ | /miθa:l/ | /mi θa:l/ | 'example' |
| /s:abit/ | /θa:bɪt/ | /θa:bit/ | 'steady' |
| /tɔ:r/ | /θɔ:r/ | /θɔ:r/ | 'bull' |

To reverse the formulae, it seems to be easier for Kuwaitis to acquire the Egyptian variants of (θ) since [t] and [s] do exist as separate phonemes in KA, than Egyptians to acquire the variant [θ] of the variable (θ) since [θ] does not exist in the phonological inventory of EA. Egyptians, here, are then required to eliminate the existing variants [t] and [s] before fully and accurately acquire the Kuwaiti form [θ]. In addition, they not only need to eliminate an old rule but also in Chambers (1992: 672) sense, 'add to their output a new or additional phoneme'. So when using KA, Egyptian immigrants need to

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eliminate [t] and [s] in words like /masal/ 'example' and /tɔːr/ 'a bull' to get /mɪ θaːl/ and /θɔːr/ respectively.

But looking at such complexity from an empirical perspective we see that regarding the variants [t] and [s] of the variable (θ), it seems that no difference is made between the Egyptian Arabic dialect and Standard Arabic vocabulary as pronounced by Egyptians and /t,s/ as outcomes of (θ) have identical distribution in Egyptian colloquial as to their position in the syllable and may occur in any position, initial, medial, or final. To give a few examples:

(6) Variant	EA	CA	Meaning
Initial [s]	sawra	[θawra]	'revolution
	sanawi	[θaːnawiː]	'secondary"
	sabit/tabit	[θaːbit]	"steady"
medial and final [t]	ħarat	[ħaraθ]	"to plough"
	gitta	[ʤuθθa]	"corpse"

We could say, then, that the Egyptian acquirer, who normally has no idea of these linguistic coherences, is confronted with the fact that his/her /s/ sometimes corresponds to [s] in KA, and another time to [θ]. And in the same vein, /t/ corresponds sometimes to [t] in KA, and another time to [θ**]** and this happens in different roots and words and not conditioned by any surrounding phonemes or different positions. So, we might conclude that a straightforward transfer rule cannot be formulated easily, which makes it complex.

Compared to classical Arabic (CA), it merits mentioning here that KA speakers mostly change the vowel of the first syllable /a/ to /i/ no matter the (K) variable is pronounced as [k] or [ʧ] variant. This feature is a typical feature of Kuwaiti morphology that is conditioned by syllable structure, i.e. it does not apply to all verbs. This kind of vowel change is popular with past tense verbs in KA, e.g.:

(7)   CA   KA   Meaning

       /baka/   /bɪʧa/   he cried

       /masaka/   /misak/   he held (something)

But we don't get the raising from /a/ to /i/ in */ħimal/ "he held". We know from literature that dialects that descend from the Najdi norm have a morphophonemic rule that raises the vowel in the first syllable of the perfective verb form in certain environments (Holes 2007; Ingham (1994). What is interesting, here, though, is the fact that whenever EA speakers (though very few as our data show) acquire the Kuwaiti Arabic variant [ʧ], they don't seem to acquire as well the vowel change. So, it is more likely to hear the following:

(8)   /baʧa/ but not /biʧa/   he cried

       /samaʧ/ but not /simaʧ/   fish

It is worth investigating, though in future research, why is this happening. One could probably, investigate phonetic/ phonemic environments or even morphological conditioning.

It is also worth mentioning that EA speakers are mostly successful to use either the Kuwaiti variants /ʧ/ instead of [k] when (k) is word initially e.g.,

(9)   EA   KA   Meaning

       / ʧinna/   / ʧinna/   it seems

       /ʧam/   /ʧam/   how much

       /ʧu:la/   /ʧu:la/   stove

       /ʧabr:t/   /ʧabr:t/   lighter

But not when (k) comes word final or in intervocalic position e.g.,

(10)   EA   KA   Meaning

      /Mufkaka/   /miftʃa:ʧa/   can opener

      /Siki:n/   /Saʧi:n/   knife

      /wirk/   /wirʧ/   hip

5.2. Social explanation

Although it appears that there may be certain linguistic factors governing the acquisition of certain phonological variables by our Egyptian subjects, it is also likely to be related to highly individual factors. We also need to confess that comparing inventories is not enough in order to explain learning problems. Extra-linguistic factors are as significant as linguistic factors in second dialect acquisition scenarios. Yet, despite the fact that the percentages shown in Tables (3) and (4) do not show any significant difference regarding gender, and length of stay as sociolinguistic parameters, the analysis shows that other social parameters are significant such as motivation, Education, and social network.

5.2.1. Motivation

In the case of Egyptian residents in Kuwait, motivation plays an important role, since Egyptians in general are used to the fact that their dialect is widely understood, and to some extent even spoken by other Arabs. Egyptian movies and episodes are extensively shown on all Arabic TV channels which gives Arab viewers an opportunity to be exposed all year round to the Egyptian dialect and hence, easy to comprehend by all Arabic speaking communities. Let alone the fact that quite a large number of expatriate teachers from Egypt are sent all over the Arab world. Our informants do know that their dialect is understood by all Kuwaitis, which makes them at ease when using Egyptian phonological forms rather than their Kuwaiti phonological equivalents. This feeling was so apparent during recorded conversation and while discussing social issues. For example, when informants were asked if they find any difficulty coping with KA some of the responses were as follows: 'oh no, not at all…. actually, most Kuwaitis converge to a mixture of KA and EA when we converse with each other. They like using EA. I know that EA can be perceived by most Kuwaitis' (male informant 2); 'I love KA, but sometimes I feel I sound funny. Besides I feel all Kuwaitis understand EA very well' (male informant 6); 'my Algerian friend usually uses English with Kuwaitis. I am glad I

am not Algerian. Everyone in Kuwait understands my EA when I sometimes fail to express a point in Kuwaiti Arabic' (male informant 4); 'when I go to Cairo for a short visit, I sometimes use KA with my family…they laugh and make jokes. When I ask why do they laugh, they say it's weird… EA is better than all Arabic varieties… stop taking like this' (male informant 1); 'when I first got married and started to talk in KA, my husband said I like you more when you use your EA' (female informant 4); 'although I speak very good KA, when I travel during our vacations to Arab countries, I usually use my EA… I feel it is more prestigious… even my children do not show any objection' (female informant 1). Our findings correspond with Milroy's (2002) claim that an ideological motivation underlies the long term maintenance of distinctive local norms in the face of pressures from numerically and socially more powerful speech communities.

5.2.2. Education

Education is another sociolinguistic parameter which influenced the use of Egyptian phonological forms by our Egyptian informants rather than their Kuwaiti phonological equivalents. Tables 1 and 2, clearly show that most of our informants are well educated since most of them have got BA degrees. It is well known that educated Egyptians know from their knowledge of the orthography of SA when to write ث, which gives them a reliable hint when to pronounce [θ] instead of [t.s]. But, surprisingly, our informants seem to refrain from using the Classical Arabic [θ] and maintain using the Egyptian forms. This is due to the fact that most literate Egyptians, even those highly educated, usually use Egyptian forms not only in informal settings but also in formal settings as well, for example, when on TV, or when presenting a public talk. This gives Egyptian residents in Kuwait a feeling of pride that their variants do carry prestige all over the Arab world. Having said that, does not imply that Egyptian residents do not favor the Kuwait dialect. The feedback the researcher got out of the interviews clearly suggests that Egyptians do favor all dialects spoken in the Gulf region, yet they believe that the Cairene variety carries prestige not only through Egypt but also through the Arab world. Versteegh (1997) states that with the growing influence of the mass media, Cairene speech has spread all over Egypt. Egyptians themselves usually call all southern

varieties of Egyptian Sa'idi, in contrast with the prestige dialect of Cairo. Egyptian Arabic is arguably the most practical dialect to learn for a number of reasons: geographically and historically Egypt lies at the heart of the Arab world. Its population (49 million) by far exceeds that of any other Arab country (Gary & Gamal-Eldin 1982). Practically everyone in the Arab world is exposed, directly or indirectly, to Egyptian Arabic. Films, cassettes of popular songs and television soap operas are exported on a massive scale to other Arab countries. It is generally held to be the most prestigious spoken variety and whichever country you visit you will find people can understand and adapt to Egyptian Arabic.

One limitation here, unfortunately, is that we do not know how the less educated Egyptians would have coped in similar circumstances. We will see in the next section how education is closely related to the notion of social network.

5.2.3. Social network

The concept of social network 'can be used to account for variability in individual linguistic behaviour' (L. Milroy 1980: 21). The social network concept investigates the kind and density of relationship which an individual has within the community. A link between two individuals could be uniplex, multiplex, or dense. Social network was investigated during the interviews. It was found that all informants' relationships with Kuwaitis are characterized as 'uniplex' and of 'low density' whereas those with Egyptians are 'multiplex' and of 'high density'. Both our male and female informants seem to associate with Kuwaitis in a single capacity only, namely, as co-employees. It is worthwhile mentioning that one gathering place where people of Kuwait usually get together is cafe's, either modern ones such as, Starbucks, etc., or those traditional ones that offer 'shisha'. Both types of café's were once male domains but are currently, frequented by females too. The researchers have noticed (from their observations) that Egyptians usually visit such café's only with other Egyptians. It is very unlikely and very rare to see a group of mixed nationalities. So it is through the Egyptians' strong ties with their own ethnic group members that acquiring KA variants is prevented or impeded. Their 'close-knit' network structure functions as a conservative force, resisting pressure

for change originating from outside the network (J. Milroy 1992: 177). In an early research by Dashti (1997), the Egyptian subjects under investigation, then, where of low educational background. Hence they seemed to have strong social ties with their Kuwaiti family members (husband's kin and other close Kuwait kin) which is a significant norm enforcement mechanism. I would suggest here that there is a close connection between level of education, social network and people's attitudes towards cross-nationality marriage. First of all, it is still unacceptable from a social view to see a Kuwaiti woman married to a non-Kuwaiti. However it is more acceptable to see Kuwaiti men married to non-Kuwaitis women. Socially speaking, Kuwait is still considered as a "masculine" dominated society, that is, Kuwaiti men have much more power than Kuwaiti women. Kuwaiti parents and male Kuwaiti male members still wouldn't favour the idea that a female member of the family would get married to a non-Kuwaiti. Until recently, most Kuwaiti women who got married to non-Kuwaitis are those who got high educational degrees and who according to Kuwaiti marriage norms, are viewed as too old to get married. The social scene has just undergone a slight change. Young female Kuwaitis, (though extremely rarely), especially those who get undergraduate or graduate degrees from educational institutions abroad, are seen to show courage in persuading their families of their intention to get married to non-Kuwaitis. If they succeed, they are not likely to be welcomed in Kuwaiti social gatherings. Hence their network with Kuwaitis would be characterized as 'uniplex' and of 'low density' whereas those with Egyptians are 'multiplex' and of 'high density'.

6. Conclusion

This paper was an attempt to investigate dialect contact and second dialect acquisition by examining phonological variables as they occur in the speech of Egyptian immigrants to Kuwait. It was an attempt to apply Chambers' principles in an Arabic context. It is apparent from this investigation that linguistic factors cannot alone account for differences in second dialect acquisition, though our conclusions are consistent with Chambers (1992) principles as far as complexity is concerned. However,

our data have shown that the degree of complexity must also be considered in second dialect acquisition. We have seen that some phonological variants such as [ʧ] and [θ] of the Kuwaiti variables (K) and (θ) respectively are more complex than other phonological variants (e.g., [j] and [g]) of the Kuwaiti phonological variables (ʤ) and (q) studied in earlier research (see Dashti 1998) due to both linguistic and extra-linguistic factors. As to social factors, the data showed that motivation, level of education and social network had a great impact on determining the nature and the extent to which a second dialect acquisition may take place.

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