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Homs Arabic: a Linguistic Profile

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To my family
To the City of Homs and to all Homsis
To Syria

*HOMS ARABIC:
A LINGUISTIC PROFILE*

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Notes on Transcription

The following symbols are used in the transcriptions. They are not phonetic definitions, but the equivalent IPA symbols are given in square brackets and are followed also by the corresponding Arabic characters, where they exist in Modern Standard Arabic.

The transcription system used in this research mostly follows Durand (2009: 29), but a few changes have been made to this transcription: the phoneme for [ħ] is noted as *ħ*, the one for [ʁ] is noted *ġ*. Non-phonemic emphatic notation (e.g. /ɾ/) is almost omitted except for the word *fikra* 'thought, idea'; it is only maintained for the two emphatic phonemes /m̄/ and /b̄/ in the following words: *māmā* 'mum', *bābā* 'dad' (≠ *bāb-ā* 'her door') and *mayy* 'water' (≠ *Mayy*, diminutive of *Maryam*). Emphatic /!/ is marked only in words and compound words containing *Allāh* 'God'.

Other velarized phonemes are explained in Chapter 3, "Phonology" but they are generally not marked in the transcriptions. All the final long vowels are transcribed with length. E.g. *yaenē* 'it means', *tānī* 'another, second', *hawālē* 'about', *'ilā* 'to', *hādā* 'this.' The glottal stop *hamza* /ʔ/ is marked where clearly pronounced, but sometimes it has not been marked at the beginning of the words, since it is implicitly understood.

The definite article is always marked *al-* but the *al* is not marked in the definite article if it is preceded by a vowel, e.g. *w l-bēt* 'and the house' realised as [ulbe:t], or at the beginning of a sentence if the article is not assimilated, e.g. *l-'umūr* 'the matters', while it is marked with the assimilated article such as in *aš-šax²š* 'the person'.

In addition, the superscripts /^w/ and /^y/ have often been used instead of the suffixed pronouns *-hā* and *-hon* since the phoneme /h/, if followed by a vowel, is not pronounced /h/ but is mostly replaced by the semivowel corresponding to the vowel which precedes the suffix, such as in the following example:

māmā ea-ṭūl eam yūžaeū^wā 'ižrī^yā w dahr-ā
'my mum constantly feels pain in her legs and back'

In those verbs in which a phonemic /y/ occurs, it is transcribed using /y/ but due to its position, it has to be pronounced as a vowel and read as /i/. Example: *byḥuṭṭō* 'they put'.

I have used conventional Western spellings for proper names and a few recognisable terms, even if I sometimes transcribed in italics the names in brackets or in a footnote, e.g. Hanano (*Hanānū*) or Yaqut al-Hamawi (*Yāqūt al-Ḥamawī*). I also used additional characters, such as *kh*, *ḥ* for *x*, *sh* for *š*, ' for *ε* especially in References.

All translations in the text are my own, except for the titles of the geographers' works, for example *Al-masālik w al-mamālik* 'The book of Roads and Kingdoms' by Ibn Ḥawqal, since a standard form of English translation of them already exists.

I tried to give in English the same meaning as that intended by the speakers interviewed in Arabic, so where necessary, I slightly changed the translation in the examples given in the chapters, since sometimes an isolated example extrapolated from the corpus did not give the same meaning as that intended in the full interview's translation.

The translator's goal is to think "How would an A speaker express in the same situation of a B speaker?".

Transcription of Arabic Phonemes in Homs Arabic

Standard Arabic	Phonemic transliteration	Examples
ء	'	<i>sa'al</i> 'to ask'
ب	<i>b</i>	<i>bard</i> 'cold'
ت	<i>t</i>	<i>taħt</i> 'under'
ث	<i>t / s</i>	<i>tyāb</i> 'clothes'
		<i>sawra</i> 'revolution'
ج	<i>ž / ġ¹</i>	<i>talž</i> 'ice/snow'
		<i>ğaras</i> 'bell'
ح	<i>ħ</i>	<i>rāħet</i> 'she went, she has gone'
خ	<i>x</i>	<i>xarbān</i> 'broken'
د	<i>d</i>	<i>dars</i> 'lesson'
ذ	<i>d / z</i>	<i>dahab</i> 'gold'
		<i>tazkara</i> 'ticket'
ر	<i>r</i>	<i>rīs</i> 'feathers'
ز	<i>z</i>	<i>zēt</i> 'oil'
س	<i>s</i>	<i>sūs</i> 'licorice'
ش	<i>š</i>	<i>šams</i> 'sun'
ص	<i>ṣ</i>	<i>šābūn</i> 'soap'
ض	<i>d / z</i>	<i>dyūf</i> 'guests'
		<i>bi-z-zabṭ</i> 'exactly'
ط	<i>ṭ</i>	<i>ṭayyāra</i> 'airplane'
ظ	<i>d / z</i>	<i>ḍuhr</i> 'noon'
		<i>zurūf</i> 'circumstances'
ع	<i>ε</i>	<i>eaṭšān</i> 'thirsty'

¹ The realisation of *ğīm* is not stable in HA, in fact it is noted that even if it is mostly realized as /ž/ likely due to Damascus Arabic's influence, the realization as /ğ/ seems to be the most authentic form since it is maintained in those speakers who speak in 'heavy' Homs Arabic. While /ž/ is always used by young people. It is also noted that within the same interview, some speakers interchange /ž/ and /ğ/.

غ	<i>ġ</i>	<i>ġāz</i> 'gas'
ف	<i>f</i>	<i>fō^q</i> 'on, upon'
ق	^q [?] / <i>q</i>	^q <i>āl</i> 'he said, he has said' <i>'iqtisād</i> 'economy'
ك	<i>k</i>	<i>kaff</i> 'slap'
ل	<i>l</i>	<i>lahmi</i> 'piece of meat'
م	<i>m</i>	<i>maktab</i> 'office'
ن	<i>n</i>	<i>nūr</i> 'light'
ه	<i>h</i>	<i>sahl</i> 'easy'
و	<i>w</i>	<i>walad</i> 'boy'
ي	<i>y</i>	<i>yōm</i> 'day'

Consonants

IPA	Transcription	Phonemes Description
[ʔ]	ʔ	laryngeal, plosive, voiceless
[b]	<i>b</i>	bilabial, plosive, voiced
[ɓ]	<i>ɓ</i>	bilabial, plosive, voiced, velarized
[p]	<i>p</i>	bilabial, plosive, voiceless
[t]	<i>t</i>	dental, plosive, voiceless
[θ]	<i>θ</i>	interdental, fricative, voiced
[s]	<i>s</i>	dental-alveolar, fricative, voiceless
[ʒ]	<i>ʒ</i>	palatal, fricative, voiced
[dʒ]	<i>dʒ</i>	palatal, affricate, voiced
[ħ]	<i>ħ</i>	pharyngeal, fricative, voiceless
[g]	<i>g</i>	velar, plosive, voiced
[x]	<i>x</i>	uvular, fricative, voiceless
[d]	<i>d</i>	dental, plosive, voiced
[ð]	<i>ð</i>	interdental, fricative, voiced
[ð̠]	<i>ð̠</i>	interdental, fricative, pharyngealized, voiced
[z]	<i>z</i>	dental-alveolar, fricative, voiced
[r]	<i>r</i>	dental-alveolar, trill, voiced
[ɾ]	<i>ɾ</i>	dental, trill, voiced, velarized
[ʃ]	<i>ʃ</i>	palatal, fricative, voiceless
[s̠]	<i>s̠</i>	dental-alveolar, fricative, voiced, pharyngealized
[d̠]	<i>d̠</i>	dental-alveolar, plosive, voiced, pharyngealized
[t̠]	<i>t̠</i>	dental-alveolar, plosive, voiceless, pharyngealized
[ð̠]	<i>ð̠</i>	dental-alveolar, fricative, voiced, pharyngealized
[ʕ]	<i>ʕ</i>	pharyngeal, fricative, voiced

[ɣ]	<i>ḡ</i>	uvular, fricative, voiced
[f]	<i>f</i>	labiodental, fricative, voiceless
[q]	<i>q</i>	uvular, plosive, voiceless
[k]	<i>k</i>	velar, plosive, voiceless
[l]	<i>l</i>	dental, lateral, voiced
[ɭ]	<i>ɭ</i>	dental, lateral, velarized, voiced
[m]	<i>m</i>	bilabial, nasal, voiced
[ɱ]	<i>ɱ</i>	bilabial, nasal, velarized, voiced
[n]	<i>n</i>	dental, nasal, voiced
[h]	<i>h</i>	laryngeal, fricative, voiceless
[w]	<i>w</i>	bilabial, voiced semi-vowel
[v]	<i>v</i>	labiodental, fricative, voiced
[j]	<i>y</i>	palatal, voiced semi-vowel

Vowels

Short Vowels

IPA	Transcription	Phonemes Description
[a, ɑ]	<i>a</i>	unrounded, front, low
[ə]	<i>ə</i>	unrounded, central, mid-vowel
[e]	<i>e</i>	unrounded, front, midvowel
[i]	<i>i</i>	unrounded, front, high
[o]	<i>o</i>	rounded, back, mid-vowel
[u]	<i>u</i>	rounded, back, high

Long Vowels

IPA	Transcription	Phonemes Description
[a:]	<i>ā</i>	unrounded, front, low
[e:]	<i>ē</i>	unrounded, front, mid-vowel
[i:]	<i>ī</i>	unrounded, front, high
[o:]	<i>ō</i>	rounded, back, mid-vowel
[u:]	<i>ū</i>	rounded, back, high

Abbreviations and Symbols

DA	Damascus Arabic
HA	Homs Arabic
SA	Standard Arabic
CA	Classical Arabic
EALL	Encyclopedia of Arabic Language and Linguistics
Lit.	literally
//	phoneme
[]	phonetic variant
>	turns into
C	consonant
V	short vowel
v:	long vowel
F	feminine
M	masculine
Pl	plural
Sg	singular
Adj	adjective

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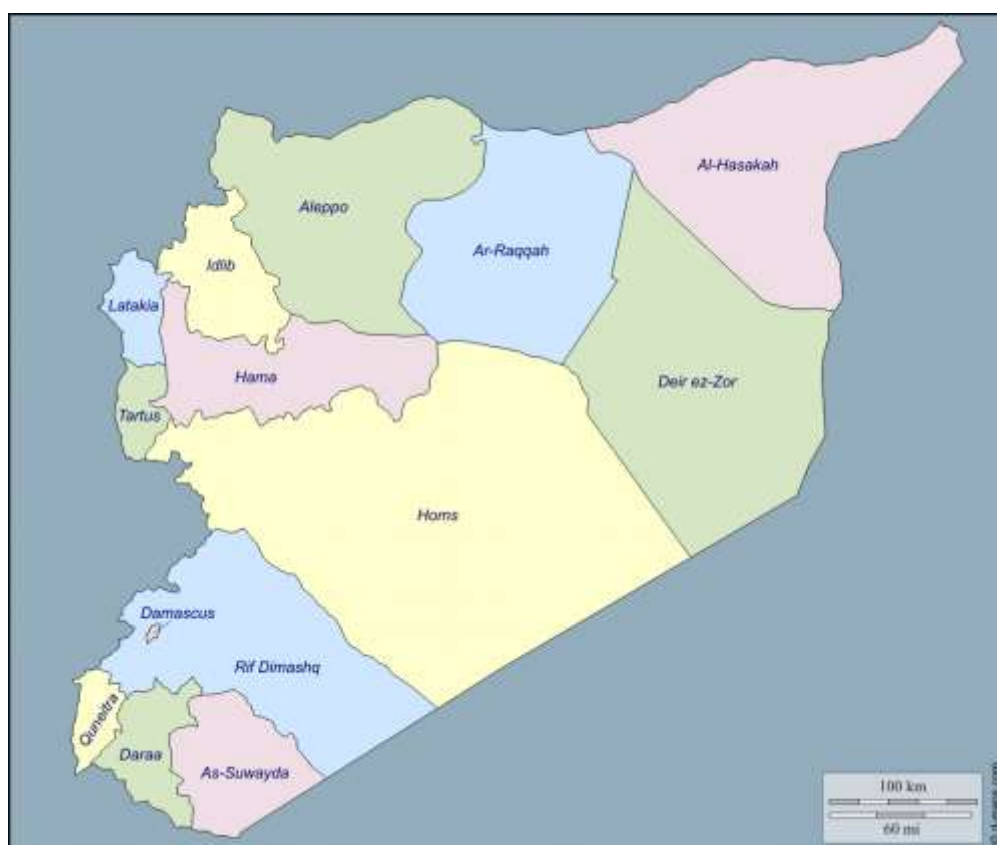
I will always be grateful to the many people that I met during my field work in these last few years and for the time that they sacrificed to give interviews. They were all welcoming and patient with me.

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Preface

This research deals with the urban variety of Arabic spoken in the City of Homs, or Hims, the third important city in Syria situated in its biggest province.



A map of Syrian provinces² (muḥāfaẓa pl. muḥāfaẓāt)

Unfortunately in recent years Homs has become well-known because, since the beginning of the protest, it had a central role in the initial demonstrations, which then spread to the whole country and quickly turned into the current Syrian Civil War which has virtually destroyed the majority of Syrian cities and their population. Before this tragic war, Homs was a kind of "happy country" where no problem was too hard to overcome.

Homs has benefited from a strategic position which made it the link between the interior cities and the Mediterranean coast and it also gave us very important personalities such as Roman Emperors and Empresses - worth mentioning is

² <https://www.citypopulation.de/Syria>

Caracalla, whose mother was Julia Domna, and his cousin, Alexander Severus, whose mother was Julia Mamaea, the daughter of Julia Domna's sister, Julia Maesa.

A more recent claim to fame its progeny, Steven Jobs, who had Homs blood in his veins since his biological father Abdulfattah Jandali was a migrant from this Syrian city.

Yet, despite its importance in Syria's history and culture, Homs remains a poorly-documented city in the Western world, in all fields, and especially in that of linguistics.

In Homs, a form of Arabic unique to the city has bloomed. It corresponds to the Arabic typical language of this peculiar area: for brevity, it will be indicated as "HA" for the purpose of this dissertation.

In order to understand why Arabs from Syria can elaborate a language that thrives so well in Homs, we must focus on the above-mentioned position of the city, situated at a crucial trade crossroads, very much appreciated by the Arabic speakers who used to pass through this geographical region in the past. After Syria's conquest, the new Arabic speakers who settled in Homs ensured the growth of a language which was rooted in that area, and which became an important landmark for the new conquerors and future generations.

We need to be aware that Homs Arabic is deeply anchored in pre-Arabic experiences. In other words, it originated from those people who arrived in Homs speaking other languages. They contributed to establish the local language. Shall we call it "dialect"³ or "language" or better "local variety"? My father's origins have placed me in a privileged position to be able to address this question as well as to investigate the main linguistic aspects of Homs Arabic in the field of the Arabic Dialectology.

According to Habib (2010: 61): "the Homsis⁴ are known for being very proud of their dialect" and this variety is well-known by the rest of Syrian people because of

³ In this dissertation the use of the term 'dialect' is very rare since I prefer to indicate the Arabic languages as 'local varieties' or 'Syrian Arabic', 'Gulf Arabic', 'Algerian Arabic'. Nowadays the term 'dialect' seems to be, according to me, too simplistic since it is well-known that each Arabic variety is a language with its own peculiarities.

⁴ Throughout my thesis the city is indicated as Homs and its inhabitants as Homsis for singular and Homsis for plural. HA or Homs Arabic refers to the language.

the wide use of *u*, as in Jerusalem Arabic, especially in initial closed syllables (Kalach 2016: 338), e.g.:

<i>xuḍra</i>	'vegetables'
<i>šugl</i>	'job'
<i>kull</i>	'each, everything'

For all these words in Damascus, we should hear the higher-mid central vowel ə [ə] instead of *u* [u]: *xəḍra*, *šəgl*, *kəll*.

On final words in an utterance or exclamations, long vowels are significantly prolonged, especially in the speech of those who have left Homs a long time ago. This prolongation recalls the old dialect of Damascus called *mbōžā*⁵ (Langone 2012: 9). E.g.:

<i>šū hā:d</i>	'what is this?'
<i>ḥāži εā:d!</i>	'stop it! Enough!'
<i>la-wē:n?</i>	'where [are you going]?''
<i>hēkē:?</i>	'is it so?'
<i>hādā:?</i>	'this one?'

The phenomenon could be accomanated to pausal forms, as described by Fleisch (1974), although the diphthongation (*šū* > *šaw*) is ever heard.

Several scholars have attempted a classification of the most important features of Arabic dialects, but none of these has described Homs Arabic, which is why this work is designed to provide a linguistic documentation of this local variety by defining the main phonological, morphological and syntactic features of *al-lahža l-ḥumšiyya*, but also presenting some interesting aspects of Homs history and traditions.

For my analysis, two main sources were used: firstly, a corpus of HA texts with transcriptions that I personally collected through interviews in Arab countries, and secondly, my own intuitions due to my strong knowledge of Homs variety due to my father's side family.

In the following lines I will describe the structure of each chapter of this dissertation.

⁵ *mbōžā*^q derives from *bažū*^q, a musical instrument 'trombone' whose sound recalls the intonation of old Damascene speech. It is the same kind of intonation used in one of the most famous soap operas (*musalsal*) in the Arab world: *bāb al-ḥāra* 'the door of the neighbourhood'.

Chapter I is articulated in three sections: the first defines the topic, introducing a brief presentation of Arabic varieties, focusing on the main classification of Levantine Arabic in order to put HA in a clearer context. The second paragraph is a detailed description of the methodology that I have applied for acquiring data and for transcribing the recordings, in addition to details about the informants and the topics we talked about in the interviews. The third part comprises an outline of the most significant sources consulted for my study which were mainly in Arabic for information about the city of Homs and its traditions. Papers and books in Arabic, English, French, German (for the grammatical sections only), and Italian provided information on the features of Arabic dialects.

The history of Homs does not come within the purpose of this study, but I have felt it necessary to give a brief historical overview in Chapter II. The first part details the most significant celebrations, personalities and traditions, which are presented to the reader in order to contextualise the importance of the city and of its local variety. The second section explains the Wednesday holiday in Homs, a celebration without specific rituals and the many stories about its origin, such as the one about the sun god or about Tamerlane's prank. In the same section there is also a selection of Homs jokes in transliterated and translated in order to better understand the irony which characterises this population. The last two parts of Chapter II focus on some traditional folk songs and rhymes, accompanied by explanation, that are usually sung during weddings (*zaġalīṭ* and *ḩarāḩa*) or Eid el-Fitr after the end of Ramadan. The aim of these last two sections is to attempt to preserve a specific part of the Syrian cultural and linguistic heritage, especially in this critical moment for the Country, and to add these folk songs in transcription in order to find out how they are really pronounced by local people. Indeed, it is possible to find the Arabic version, but never the transcribed and translated version of them.

From the point of view of Arabic Dialectology, Chapter III and Chapter IV represent the most significant parts of this study, which aims to provide a linguistic classification of Homs Arabic. More specifically, Chapter III is dedicated to the main phonological patterns of this Arabic variety including, for example, consonants, vowels, diphthongs and prosody.

Chapter IV is divided into three main parts: the first deals with the nominal morphology, e.g. nouns, particles, plurals, pronouns, interrogative and relative stems,

numerals etc., while the second part deals with the verbal morphology, presenting verb conjugations, and a third part about most common syntactic structures. The grammatical patterns are correlated by several examples mostly taken from the corpus.

Chapter V presents final comments on the findings, which highlight that we are in presence of a mixed sedentary typology sharing isoglosses with Lebanese and Palestinian varieties, as well as Iraqi. It includes all the texts transcribed and translated with details about the informants. I hope that these transcripts may enrich the comparative analysis of Syrian dialects in the field of Arabic Dialectology and Linguistics and that they may also be used as teaching material in the future.

1. Preliminary Remarks

1.1. Levantine Arabic

It is well known that there are many varieties⁶ of Arabic in existence. However, the Arabic-speaking area can be geographically divided into two main groups: an Eastern area (*al-mašriq*) that includes Eastern Arab countries and Egypt (Durand 2009: 172) and a Western area (*al-mağrib*) represented by the countries of North Africa.

Further distinctions also exist within countries and even between cities or villages; this is why the field of Arabic Dialectology is in constant need of updating and new research and it will always need new studies since the number of Arabic varieties is almost limitless.

As far as Levantine Arabic - *al-lahağāt aš-šāmiyya* – concerned, this linguistic term indicates the whole group of Eastern spoken varieties in Syria, Lebanon, Jordan and Palestine, in the area that was called Greater Syria (*bilād aš-šām*) where the urban varieties represent as a separate group, whilst some rural varieties do not really differ from them. However the varieties of Horan and central and southern Palestine are very different compared to urban varieties (EALL: 607).

According to Versteegh (1997: 221), the classification of Levantine Arabic comprises three main groups:

- Lebanese/Central Syrian group, consisting of Lebanese and Central Syrian varieties (e.g. Beirut and Damascus Arabic).
- Northern Syrian varieties (e.g. Aleppo Arabic and land suburbs, known as *aš-šāwi*).
- Palestinian/Jordanian group, consisting of the Palestinian town dialects, the Central Palestinian village dialects and the South Palestinian/Jordanian dialects.

Durand (2009: 175) classifies Levantine Arabic as follows:

⁶ The word 'dialect' is usually used in most works and studies, so this word will also be used in this thesis; however, I personally prefer 'local varieties' or the adjective related to the country plus Arabic: e.g. Egyptian Arabic, Syrian Arabic, etc.

- a sedentary typology represented by the varieties spoken in the capital cities such as Damascus, Beirut, Jerusalem.

- A northern rural typology in Lebanon and Palestine.

- A southern rural typology in South Palestine and Jordan.

- A Bedouin typology in the nomad areas of Syria and Palestine.

According to Behnstedt (2008: 151), Levantine Arabic can be divided into two main groups: Syro-Lebanese including the dialects of Cilicia, Antioch on the Orontes and the Palestinian varieties including Jordan because of the huge presence of Palestinians in the territory.

Bedouin Arabic prevails in the central and eastern regions of Syria, while in the north-eastern regions dialects are considered as a separate group together with the varieties around Palmyra and Al-Qaryatayn. The Coastal varieties (Latakia, Mḥardi, Banyās and Ṭarṭūs), the Cilician and Antiochian varieties, as well as the Anti-Lebanon and the Lebanon dialects have to be considered a distinct group.

As Versteegh states in his study *The Arabic Language* (1997: 153):

"Most dialects in the Syro-Lebanese area exhibit the typically sedentary features of voiceless realisation of *q* as *ʔ*, stops for interdentalals, loss of gender distinction in the second and third person plural of pronouns and verbs. All dialects have preserved the three long vowels *a*, *i* and *u*. But the fact that they are all sedentary does not mean that they never have Bedouin features. Most Jordanian dialects, for instance, have /*g*/ for /*q*/, reflecting contact with Bedouin tribes. In the entire area, the prestige dialects of the capitals (Damascus, Beirut) are rapidly replacing the countryside dialects. This is an ongoing process that will contribute to the regional uniformity of the dialects."

The main features of Levantine Arabic are the following (Durand 2009: 175):

- inter-dental consonants *ṭ*, *ḍ* and *ḏ* are maintained in Bedouin and rural varieties, while they become *t*, *d*, *ḏ* in sedentary varieties.

- The phoneme *ǧīm* is pronounced [ʒ] in urban varieties and [dʒ] in rural ones.

- The phoneme *qāf* is maintained [q] in northern-rural dialects, while [ʔ] in sedentary varieties, [k] in central-rural and [g] in Bedouin varieties.

- The use of prefixed particles to verbs such as *b-* for the imperfective form, *εam* for the present continuous tense and *rah, ħa* for the future tense.

- Conditioned *'imāla* occurs in North Syrian varieties (e.g. Aleppo) and Lebanese varieties.

1.2. Methodology

My linguistic analysis is contingent upon recordings and notes regarding spontaneous conversations and interviews that I personally led during my research travels. I initially listened very carefully to my recordings; subsequently I transcribed them and then translated them into English. I tried to maintain, as much as possible, the original interpretation of Homs Arabic and for this reason the contracted form in English was favoured, to enable the reader to feel the spontaneity of the speech.

The data were collected in different periods, settings and circumstances: in 2009, during a summer field trip in Homs, and from 2013 to 2016 during various field trips, especially throughout Italy and some Arab countries such as the United Arab Emirates and Lebanon, given that the dramatic situation in Syria cannot guarantee a safe stay, forcing me to gather the data outside Syrian territory.

My father is originally from Homs and partially sharing the group identity was an enormous help in acquiring the material since I had the opportunity to record relatives, friends and friends of friends.

At the same time, it was challenging for me to convey the aim of my research since, as Arabic scholars and researchers well know, Arab native-speakers have difficulty accepting that studying "dialects" can be of academic interest since they consider them the low form of the noble language, the *Fuṣḥā*. I knew the majority of the informants, but I also interviewed some people that I met for the first time during my fieldwork.

Thanks to my paternal Homs origin, almost every conversation or interview, used for this dissertation, is characterised by naturalness and spontaneity since the speakers felt comfortable during the recordings, with a few exceptions, where the informants were not particularly happy at being recorded as they felt it was unnatural, but they kindly accepted to help me. In most cases, I led one-on-one interviews. I mentioned personal details such as area of residence, age, gender and level of education (this can influence the code switching from HA to SA).

Before starting the recording, the interviewees were informed that they would be recorded and they were not forced to talk about a certain topic. On the contrary, it was suggested they choose their own subject from everyday life without thinking too hard about what to say or what not to say, since the aim was to record natural informal conversations and to give them the chance to say and express whatever they wanted in order not to be influenced by the interviewer. Only when faced with moments of hesitation were they asked some questions, which were not written down since I did not consider them spontaneous or important. On occasion, I recorded spontaneous conversations between two or more speakers who were informed that the recording device was on, and who did not mind.

I have also taken into consideration just a small number of expressions, sentences or single words that I wrote down following the recordings, during spontaneous conversations, so these examples were produced by the same Homsis I consulted, in order to identify certain rules concerning phonology, morphology and syntax, such as verb conjugation, numerals and so forth. Therefore, all the examples have been extracted from authentic Homsis speech for the whole study. It is also worth noting that informants often addressed their talk to a feminine person because they were talking to me.

The recordings that took place in Homs (2009⁷) were conducted using a common question, which was: "What do you think about *ēāmmiyya* and *fuṣḥā*? Which one do you prefer and why?". Each interview lasted about 3-5 minutes.

The texts dated after 2013 involved Homsis who left their native land at least three years ago (referring to 2016) due to the Syrian conflict, or who were already living abroad even before the conflict because of marriage or employment outside Syria. I met the informants during various field works in Arab countries in these last years.

The topics they talked about during the interviews refer to everyday life: for instance, cooking, memories of childhood, the lifestyle and traditions in their native city, their opinions about the foreign countries they were living in, but also personal experiences in Syria before and after the Civil War or their own comments about the current situation.

⁷ I started to collect research material about Homs Arabic also before Ph.D. since I was surprised that no linguistic studies have been made about the variety spoken in the city.

The recordings took place at informants' homes or my home, in hotel lobbies. The duration of these interviews was between 8 and 25 minutes. Some speakers had more than one interview since they were more outgoing than others.

The informants were 28, males and females who were all born in Homs and studied there. More specifically, the majority of them have degrees in Modern Languages, Medicine, Economics or Engineering, while the remainder studied until high school. All belong to middle-upper class, they all live or used to live near the city centre and they speak the urban variety of HA.

All the speakers were Sunni Muslims and their ages ranged from 15 to 70 years old (the age refers to the time of the recordings). This broad sample also enabled research to be conducted comparing the speech of the younger and older speakers in order to identify and understand the more authentic and established features of HA.

To protect speakers' privacy and encourage naturalness, I decided not to mention their full names, but only use their initials. For the same reason, the names of children or other relatives in the transcriptions were also modified to avoid any connection that could give too many details away regarding these people.

Each text and speaker is numbered and personal details about the informant are given: name initials, gender, age, level of education and country of residence, and every detail refers to the moment of the recording, as follows:

Speaker 1: M.Ġ., male, 51 years old, degree, Homs, Syria.

Speaker 2: D.Š., female, 39 years old, degree, Homs, Syria.

Speaker 3: L.As., female, 32 years old, degree, Homs, Syria.

Speaker 4: N.Ġ., female, 28 years old, degree, Homs, Syria.

Speaker 5: B.Ṭ., female, 35 years old, high school, living in the UAE since 2008.

Speaker 6: K. A., female, 15 years old, high school student, Homs, Syria.

Speaker 7: E.Ṭ., male, 70 years old, middle school, Homs, Syria.

Speaker 8: R.Ṭ., female, 32 years old, degree, living in Saudi Arabia since 2000.

Speaker 9: H.Al-A., male, 53 years old, middle school, Homs, Syria.

Speaker 10: K.Ṭ., male, 35 years old, degree, living in Saudi Arabia since 2009.

Speaker 11: A.K., female, 58 years old, middle school, Homs, Syria.

Speaker 12: Q.B., female, 29 years old, degree, living in Saudi Arabia since 2006.

Speaker 13: M.Ġ., male, 21 years old, high school, Homs, Syria.

Speaker 14: D.Š., female, 32 years old, high school, Homs, Syria.

Speaker 15: F. K., female, 49 years old, high school, Homs, Syria.

Speaker 16: KH.Ṭ., male, 35 years old, degree, living in Saudi Arabia since 2009.

Speaker 17: A.K., male, 38 years old, high school, living in Egypt since 2012.

Speaker 18: N.Ṭ., female, 41 years old, high school, living in the UAE since 2006.

Speaker 19: Y.Ṭ., male, 56 years old, high school, living in Lebanon since 2012.

Speaker 20: A.M., male, 64 years old, degree, living in the UAE since 2013.

Speaker 21: Nd.Ṭ., female, 49 years old, graduate in Engineering, living in the UAE since 2013.

Speaker 22: K.K., female, 37 years old, degree, living in Qatar since 2011.

Speaker 23: Ma.K., female, 35 years old, degree, living in Qatar since 2012 but before Qatar lived in Saudi Arabia for 2008.

Speaker 24: M.A., male, 58 years old, degree, living in Qatar since 2012 but before Qatar lived in other European and Arab countries since 1983.

Speaker 25: S.K., female, 38 years old, degree, living in Qatar since 2015 and in Egypt from 2011 until 2014.

Speaker 26: Y.M., female, 68 years old, high school, living in the UAE since 2011.

Speaker 27: M.K., male, 59 years old, degree, living in Saudi Arabia since 1990 but he left Homs when he was 16 years old.

Speaker 28: Mh.K., male, 59 years old, degree, living in Italy since 1983.

1.2.1. Sources for the Research

The body of available research on Homs Arabic has barely touched upon its linguistic aspects and because of the present and tragic state of the city caused by the ongoing civil war, access to local libraries for further investigation *in situ* is not feasible. Consequently, this present study is based on:

- the authentic corpus of transcripts and notes to extrapolate the main features of this Syrian variety;
- the few studies available on Homs Arabic and culture;
- the literature published on Damascus Arabic or other Syrian local varieties, which helped me to create a comparative linguistic profile.

The mentioned corpus includes transcriptions - collected in 2009 and from 2013 to 2016 - from 28 informants who were born in Homs. At present they live in Homs or abroad for different reasons.

Through the linguistic analysis of the above-mentioned transcriptions, it has been possible to classify the main phonological and morphosyntactic features of HA, in addition to presenting a collection of transcriptions, which may well be the first of its kind in this field of Arabic Dialectology.

Since it has not been possible to find specific references about the urban variety spoken in the City of Homs, the best recourse has been the wide range of the literature on Levantine varieties, especially on Syrian Arabic. Most of the mentioned works in this dissertation have been very helpful for the subject under discussion.

Arabic and the first studies were published in the 19th century. Worth mentioning are *Proverbs et dictions de la province de Syrie* (1883) of Carlo De Landberg, the first collection of Syrian and Lebanese Arabic proverbs, and *Contes de Damas* (1887) by the Danish Johannes Oestrup whose work consists in a collection of short stories.

The 20th century gave us many considerable studies, in chronological order: a linguistic study of Syrian and Palestinian Arabic *Sprachatlas von Syrien und Palästina* (1915) by Gotthelf Bergsträsser who later wrote *Zum arabischen Dialekt von Damaskus. I. Phonetik- Prosatexte* (1924), based on texts in the local variety spoken especially by Christians and that presented a phonological description of Damascus Arabic.

In 1935 two important works were published: *Contes, legends, coutumes populaires du Liban et de Syrie* by Michel Feghali, a study including texts about habits and aspects of the Syrian and Lebanese societies translated in French. The second work was written by Adrien Barthélémy, a dictionary of dialects in Latin characters, *Dictionnaire arabe-français (Dialectes de Syrie: Alep, Damas, Liban, Jérusalem)*. Claude Denizeau added a supplement of this vocabulary in 1960: *Dictionnaire des Parlers arabes de Syrie, Liban et Palestine (Supplément au dictionnaire arabe-français d'A. Barthélémy)*.

An important atlas regarding Syrian Arabic was *Les parlers arabes du Ḥōrān. Atlas* (1940), by Jean Cantineau. This author wrote, in 1953, with Youssef Helbaoui *Manuel élémentaire d'arabe oriental (parler de Damas)*, a textbook in transcription including grammar rules, lexicon, texts and translation.

1964 is a very important year for the studies about Damascus Arabic: Ariel Bloch and Heinz Grotzfeld published *Damaszenisch-arabische Texte mit Übersetzung, Anmerkungen und Glossar*, a valuable collection of about 50 texts in DA, collected in

1956 by Hans Wehr, translated into German enclosing a glossary. Grotzfeld wrote also *Laut- und Formenlehre des Damaszenisch-Arabischen* and, one year later, *Syrisch-Arabishe Grammatik (Dialekt von Damascus)*. Worth of particular mention is *A reference Grammar of Syrian Arabic* (1964) by Mark W. Cowell, in which the Author thoroughly describes all the grammatical patterns including numerous examples that come from a variety of native-spoken sources. Regarding dictionaries, was published *A Dictionary of Syrian Arabic. English-Arabic*, by Karl Stowasser and Ani Moukhtar.

Furthermore, in 1966 Bernhard Lewin wrote *Arabische Texte im Dialekt von Hama. Mit Einleitung und Glossar*, a study dedicated to a Central Syrian dialect including an interesting collection of transcripts and their German translation.

A considerable handbook is *Manuel de Parler Arabe Moderne au Moyen Orient* (1970) by Jean Kassab, which details phonological, morphological and syntactic features correlated by numerous examples of Syrian and Lebanese Arabic, and includes long texts in which grammatical rules are applied as per the explanations of each chapter. In 1977 Arne Ambros published *Damascus Arabic*, a detailed Damascene grammar. As far as Aleppo Arabic concerns, Abdulghafur Sabuni wrote *Laut- und Formenlehre des Arabischen Dialekts von Aleppo*.

From among the grammatical description of Syrian varieties worthy note the three volumes *Der arabische Dialekt von Soukhne (Syrien)* published in 1994 by Peter Behnstedt, based on the Arabic spoken in *As-Suxna*, a village in the province of Homs that significantly differs from the urban variety analysed in this dissertation. Few years later, in 1997, Behnstedt published *Sprachatlas von Syrien. Band I: Kartenband, Beiheft*, a monumental atlas, correlated by linguistic maps, that covers the Arabic dialects of Syria and other spoken languages.

In 1998 Mary-Jane Liddicoat, Richard Lennane and Iman Abdul Rahim published *Syrian Colloquial Arabic, a Functional Course*, a valuable textbook, except for the transcription used, written in Arabic, transcription correlated by English translation about topics of daily life.

Two years later, in 2000, was published the second volume *Sprachatlas von Syrien. Band II: Volkskundliche Texte* by Peter Behnstedt.

In 2003 was printed in Damascus *Mawsūeat al-eāmmiyya as-sūriyya* by Yāsīn ʿabd ar-Raḥīm, a Syrian dictionary composed by four volumes. Of great interest

Schede grammaticali di arabo damasceno (2005), by Wasim Dahmash, a brief collection of datasheets showing the main aspects of DA supported by many useful examples of authentic usage by Syrian speakers.

Der Arabische Dialekt von Nabk (Syrien) by Sabine Gralla was published in 2006, an accurate study of the local variety spoken in Nabk, a city North of Damascus and South of Homs. It describes the main phonological, morphological and syntactic elements of Nabk dialect correlated by ten transcriptions and their German translation.

Worth noting the studies by Jérôme Lentin *Damascus Arabic* (2006) and *Árabe levantino* (2008) by Peter Behnstedt. Concerning ethnotexts *Contes féminins de la Haute Jézireh syrienne. Matériaux ethnolinguistiques d'un parler nomade oriental* (2006) by Lidia Bettini.

As far as the classification of Arabic dialects is concerned, it is worth mentioning *The Arabic Language* (1997) by Kees Versteegh and *Dialettologia araba* (2009) by Olivier Durand.

Recent studies dedicated to a variety of the Homs Province were published between 2010 and 2012 by Rania Habib. In her first paper, *Rural Migration and Language Variation in Hims, Syria* (2010), on the variable use of the voiceless uvular stop [q] and the glottal stop [ʔ] in the Colloquial Arabic of Christian migrants in Homs, the Author analyses the speech of migrant rural speakers from the village Oyoum (*ʿUyūn al-wādī*) and the second generation of migrants, meaning native Homsi speakers who reside in the districts of *al-Ḥamīdiyye* and *ʿAkrama*.

In her following paper, *Frequency effects and lexical split in the use of [t] and [s] and [d] and [z] in the Syrian Arabic Christian rural migrants* (2011), the study focuses on the lexical split that resulted from the diachronic change of the Standard Arabic interdental fricatives in the Arabic variety spoken by a community of Christian rural migrants to Homs in which the author states that each variant occurs in specific words.

The most recent paper, *'Imāla and rounding in a rural Syrian variety: Morpho-phonological and lexical conditioning* (2012), deals with the above-mentioned rural variety of *ʿUyūn al-wādī* and it aims to identify the conditioning cultural environments and generalisations for *'imāla* and rounding variety in this village.

In *Der Arabische Dialekte von Mḥarde (Zentralsyrien)* (2012), by Jean Yoseph, the Author focuses on the dialect in Mḥarde, a Syrian city located Northwest of

Hama, where the inhabitants are predominately Christians. The study includes an exhaustive grammatical section and a collection of fifteen transcriptions and their translation into German.

Phonetics and Phonology of Damascus Arabic (2013) by Maciej Klimiuk, provides a very accurate description of Damascene consonants, vowels, diphthongs and all the aspects of phonology and phonetics; in addition, it is possible to consult a collection of ten texts recorded in Damascus by a Syrian Christian informer who talks about daily routine, which are transcribed and translated into English.

The most recent work on Syrian Arabic is *El dialecto árabe de Damasco (Siria): estudio gramatical y textos* (2016), by Carmen Berlinches. In this work, grammatical aspects of DA are presented in detail, including phonetics and phonology, nominal and verbal morphology, particles, syntax, and lexicon, it also includes a section on words taken from other languages such as Turkish, Persian, Greek and so on. The last section contains a large collection of texts from 50 informants, of which 44 are Muslims and 6 are Christians. The subjects of the texts are also interesting since they are about Damascus traditions and lifestyle.

The main sources used for the research on Homs history, culture and traditions were in Arabic. First and foremost is the book *ḩādāt wa muṩtaqadāt fī muḩāfazat ḩumṩ* (2011) by the Homsī journalist Khāled ‘Awād al-Aḩmad (*ḩāled ‘Awād al-Aḩmad*): it is a valuable panoramic outline of Homs customs and habits, especially from the past, which records this important heritage. For instance, it describes the traditional wedding, celebrations of Islamic festivities, old *ḩammāmāt* in Homs, Wednesday in Homs, typical food and beverages, and so on. The author's attention to detail is impressive and helped me to give context to my linguistic study. It includes some texts of folk songs written in Arabic, which I was able to extrapolate and then ask some of the speakers to read, in order to acquire a kind of standard Homsī pronunciation, and then proceed to the transcript and translation into English.

Secondly, I consulted some sources by famous Medieval geographers such as *Mueḩam al-buldān* by Yaqut al-Hamawī (Yāqūt al-ḩamawī, 1179-1229) and *Nuḩbat ad-dahr fī eaḒā’ib al-barr wa l-baḩr* by Shams ad-Dīn al-Dimashqī (ṩams ad-Dīn ad-Dimaṩqī, 1256-1327). A very more recent work, compared to the Medieval geographers' times, worthy note is *Ĝawla ‘atariyya baed al-bilād aṩ-ṩāmiyya* by Ahmad Wasfī Zakariyya (‘Aḩmad Waṩfī Zakariyyā, 1889-1964), edited for the first time

in 1934 during the French Mandate, that was also helpful for further source material since the Author illustrated the thought of the most famous Arab geographers like Ibn Hawqal (Ibn Ḥawqal), Ibn Battuta (Ibn Baṭṭūṭa) and Al-Idrisi (Al-'Idrīsī) about the City of Homs.

For decades, scholars have been trying to identify a standard model of speech for each Arab country but they have so far been unable to quantify the number of Arabic local varieties. Concerning Syria, it is known that in their own cities, Syrian people speak their own varieties, but DA has influenced and still influences them.

As a matter of fact, television plays a significant role in this process: for instance, the television series – *musalsalāt* - in which actors speak in DA, more recently *bāb al-ḥāra* 'the door of the neighbourhood' which is shot in Damascus, *banāt al-εēle* 'the girls of the family' as well as a Turkish series such as *Nūr*. The spoken language in these soap operas is Syrian Arabic of the Damascus variety. This variety is increasingly standardising so that it can be clear and understandable in the whole Arab world, above all to the countries of the Arabian Gulf which represent the main audience of the fiction and its most powerful financiers.

2. The City of Homs

2.1. Historical Background

Homs is strategically located in the fertile valley of the Orontes Asi (*al-εāṣī*⁸) river in the centre of Syria, between Damascus (162 km South) and Aleppo (193 km North).

Homs is considered the central link between the inland cities and the Mediterranean coast.

It is on a high hill approximately 500 m above sea level and thanks to its position, Homs is well-known for its fresh and breezy air. It is a fertile agricultural region: wheat, corn, cotton, fruit and vegetables are historically typical of this area.

Many geographers in the past have described the water, land and air of Homs, such as the Persian Ibn Ḥawqal⁹ (10th century) in his work *Al-Masālik w al-mamālik*.¹⁰

"حمص مدينة في مستواة خصبة، صحيحة الهواء، من أصح بلدان الشام هواء وتربة... وليس بها عقارب أو حيات، وإذا دخلت الحية أو العقرب إليها ماتت."

"Homs is a flat and fertile land, it has fresh air; its fresh air and soil are the finest among other *šām* countries...there are neither scorpions nor snakes and if a snake or a scorpion enters, it dies".

Al-Idrīsī¹¹ (1100-1165) wrote in his famous work, *Nuzhat al-muštāq fī 'ixtirāq al-'āfāq*:

" [...] أما أرض حمص، فإن مدينتها حمص وهي حسنة، في مستو من الأرض، وهي عامرة بالناس، والمسافرون يقصدونها بالأمّعة والبضائع في كل فن، وأسواقها قائمة، ومسرات أهلها دائماً، ومعاشهم رخيصة، وفي نساؤها جمال وحسن بشرة."

" [...] As for Homs, its city is a beautiful town, it is a flat land and full of people. Travellers go to Homs for its products and goods from

⁸ *εāṣī* means the Rebel, since the river runs northwards.

⁹ Born in Mesopotamia, he was a 10th-century Muslim geographer and writer.

¹⁰ *The book of Roads and Kingdom.*

¹¹ He was an Arab geographer born in Ceuta (Morocco) among his works, worth noting the Book of Roger, a world geography for King Roger II of Sicily.

every craft. Its markets are crowded, people always have fun, items are cheap, its women are beautiful and they have got nice skin".

The geographer Yāqūt al-Ḥamawī¹² (1179-1229) described Homs in his work *Mueḡam al-buldān* as follows:

" بلد مشهور قديم كبير مسور, وفي طرفه القبلي قلعة حصينة على تل عالٍ كبيرة وهي بين دمشق وحلب في نصف الطريق."

"A famous town, ancient, big and surrounded by walls; on the southern side there is a huge inaccessible castle located on a high hill; it is halfway between Damascus and Aleppo".

Ibn Baṭṭūṭa¹³ (1304-1368/69) gave a very positive description of Homs and its population, as follows:

" سافرت إلى مدينة حمص وهي مدينة مليحة, أرجاؤها مونقة وأشجارها مورقة وأنهارها متدفقة وأسواقها فسيحة الشوارع وجامعها متميز بالحسن الجامع وفي وسطه بركة ماء. وأهل حمص عرب, لهم فضل وكرم, وبخارج هذه المدينة, قبر خالد بن الوليد سيف الله ورسوله, وعليه زاوية ومسجد وعلى القبر كسوة سوداء."

"I have been to the city of Homs. It is a beautiful city, its surroundings are impressive, its trees are full of leaves, its rivers are full of water, its markets have wide roads and its beautiful mosque stands out and there is a source of water in its centre. The inhabitants of Homs are Arabs; they are kind and generous. Outside the city there is Ḥāled ibn al-Walīd's tomb (*sayf Aḷlah w rasūlu-hu*) and over it is a small mosque and on the tomb is a black drape".

The site of Homs was occupied by a city dating back to the end of the third millenium B.C.¹⁴.

This city had a fundamental importance for the many long centuries of linguistic predominance of the Aramaic. Homs was considered an essential economical and

¹² Yaqūt was an Arab biographer and geographer of Greek origins. He is the author of many works, among them *Mueḡam al-buldān*, a vast geographical encyclopediad which summed up nearly all the medieval knowledge of the globe.

¹³ Ibn Battuta, was a Moroccan Muslim scholar well- known for his travelling since his journeys lasted for a period of almost thirty years. This covered nearly the whole of the known Islamic world and beyond.

¹⁴ Following the data by <http://www.homstimes.com/history>.

geographical crossroads during the Hellenistic period, as well as during the Seleucid kingdom, then during Roman domination and the Byzantine Empire.

It has to be underlined the role of women in the history of Homs (Al-Aḥmad 2011: 82).

Four women with Homs origin became Roman Empresses: Julia Domna (latin, Iulia Domna), Julia Maesa (latin, Iulia Mæsa), Julia Mamaea (latin, Iulia Mamæa) and Julia Soemias Bassiana (latin, Iulia Soæmias)¹⁵.

The scholar Aḥmad Waṣṣfī Zakariyā (1889-1964), in his work *Ġawla 'atariyya baed al-bilād aš-šāmiyya*, lists all the important Roman personalities who dealt with Homs:

" وأنجبت حمص في تلك الحقبة رجالاً ونساء، منهم (جوليا دومنا) من أسرة الكاهن باسيانوس وقد كانت جميلة فطينة، تزوجها القائد الروماني (سبتيموس سيفيروس) الذي صار قيصرًا وكانت أكبر عون له في أجل أعماله. وبعد موت سبتيموس خلفه ابنه كراكلا [...] رسم على نقوده صورة هيكل الشمس المذكور، وأنعم على مسقط رأسه حمص بامتياز المدن الرومانية."

"At that time, Homs gave birth to important men and women, among them Julia Domna from the family of the priest Bassianus, and she was beautiful and clever. She married the Roman leader Septimus Severus who became emperor and she was his most important supporter in his activities. After Septimius' death [...] his son Caracalla succeeded him, and minted coins with the image of the above-mentioned sun god and he really took care of his hometown like the other Roman towns".

This ancient city was taken in 636 by Muslims, who renamed it Homs and remained under Arab rule. The Ottoman Sultan Selim I conquered Syria, including Homs, in 1516. The next political upheaval it would have been due to the First World War and the fall of the Ottoman Empire in 1918, when the French Mandate for Syria was established.

Among the most important historical buildings in the city of Homs, it is worth mentioning the Ḥāled ibn al-Walīd Mosque¹⁶. It houses the tomb of Khalid Ibn al

¹⁵ Julia Domna (170 -221) was married to the emperor Septimius Severus. She was mother of Caracalla and Geta who became emperors after the death of their father,. Her sister Julia Maesa (165-223/226) had two daughters: Julia Soaemias (180-222) was mother of Elagabalus and Julia Mamaea (190-235) was mother of Alexander Severus, they both became emperors.

¹⁶ Unfortunately in July 2013 the mosque has shelled and the shrine was completely destroyed.

Walid (died 642), one of the companions of the Prophet and one of the most important commanders of early Muslim armies.

Despite the mentioned important historical background, the inhabitants of Homs, *al-ḥamāšīna*, are firstly well known by most Syrian people, but also in the Middle East Arab world, for the jokes on them. Those jokes are concerned *al-ḥumšī* who does or says something strange or ridiculous for a bizarre reason. Secondly they have a reputation for being kind-hearted people, in a kind of childlike manner, as some native people affirm during their interviews:

"madīnt-ē mašhūra bi-ḥībit 'ahl-ā w kull ən-nukat by^qūlō ealā 'ahl ḥumš w by^qūlō l-ḥamāšni eand-on ēīd kull yōm əl-'arbaea".

(Speaker 1, text 1)

"My city is very well known for the locals' kindness and all the jokes are about the Homsis. It has been said that the Homsis have a special celebration on Wednesdays".

"l-ḥumšē 'awwal šē maerūf bi-basātt-u, basīt, mā eand-u gəšš, mā eand-u xidāe, byḍall əš-šabb əl-ḥumšē məḍyāf, 'absat min gēr-u, mā byfakker ^oktīr la-^quddām, bass byḍall šabb kwayyəs".

(Speaker 24, text 26)

"Homs people are known first of all for their modesty; they're simple, they're not scheming and they don't cheat... The Homsis is hospitable, more naive than people from other regions, and his vision of the future is a little limited, but he is still a very good person".

2.2. Wednesday in Homs: *yōm əl-'arbaea* and Homs Jokes

For hundreds of years, the city of Homs has been recognised for its jokes and cheerfulness; in fact, you cannot mention Homs without mentioning the Wednesday holiday (*yōm əl-'arbaea*), also called 'the fools' day' (*ēīd əl-mažānīn*). According to the oral folkloristic tradition, it is considered an extraordinary day, even though it is actually a celebration without any special rituals. Moreover, no related written sources have been found yet.

It is actually possible to find written proof of this Homs "madness" thanks to the works of important and respected scholars and geographers from past centuries, but certainly these beliefs have been exaggerated.

The Arab geographer Yāqūt al-Ḥamawī (1179-1229) thought he was affected by the pollution of madness in the city since he felt dizzy during a visit to Homs and he wrote in his geographical encyclopaedia *Mueğam al-buldān*:

"ومن عجيب ما تأملته من أمر حمص فساد هوائها وتربتها اللذين يفسدان العقل حتى يضرب بحماقتهم
المثل."

"What most struck me about Homs was the putrid air and land, which affected the mind until one is hit by their madness".

Šams ad-Dīn al-Ansārī ad-Dimašqī¹⁷ (1256-1327) wrote about Homs in his cosmographic work *Nuḥbat ad-dahr fī eağā'ib al-barr w al-baḥr*:

"أهل حمص يوصف عامتهم بقلة العقل ويُحكى عنهم حكايات شبيهة بالخرافات."

"Homs inhabitants are described as weak-minded people and stories similar to legends have been told about them".

The Arab geographer al-Idrīsī (1100-1165), who also entered the service of Roger II of Sicily¹⁸, wrote in favour of the air and the environment of Homs in his famous work *Nuzhat al-muštāq*:

" [...] وثرها طيب للزروعات واقتناء الغلات , وهوائها أعدل هواء يكون بالشام . ومدينة حمص مطلّسة,
لا يدخلها حية لا عقرب , ومتى أدخلت على باب المدينة هلكت في الحال."

" [...] its ground is good for cultivation and harvests, its air is the best that there is in *šām* (Syria). The city of Homs is blessed, neither a snake nor a scorpion enter and as soon as they enter the town, they die".

¹⁷ He was a medieval Arab geographer, completing his main work in 1300. Born in Damascus—this is why he called *ad-dimašqī* - he mostly wrote of his native land, the Greater Syria (*bilād aš-šām*).

¹⁸ Roger II (1095-1154) was the nephew of Normanconquest Robert Guiscard. Roger II was the first king of Sicily and his kingdom was based on a multi-ethnic culture between Normans, Byzantines and Arabs.

After long centuries, the scholar Aḥmad Waṣfī Zakariyā (1889-1964) held an opposite view about madness in Homs and he countered what the esteemed geographers such as Yāqūt, ad-Dimašqi and al-Muqaddasi (also known as al-Maqdisī) had affirmed and he wrote in his work *Ġawla 'aṭariyya baʿḍ al-bilād aš-šāmiyya* referring to the negative comments written on this matter:

"[...] وهذا مما شغل بالي عند مراجعة هذه الكتب الجغرافية القديمة , ما ذكره جميع مؤلفيها , ونخص بالذكر ياقوت المتحامل كثيرا , عن الخبال والحمافة المستولية كما زعموا على أهل حمص , وهم كما تعرفهم , لا يختلفون في الفطنة والنباهة عن بقية الشاميين , وحمص كانت وما برحت تنجب من شعراء والفضلاء عدداً غير يسير."

"[...] what made me reflect while I was reading these old books were the similarities in all the authors' accounts of the madness and foolishness of Homs' inhabitants, and especially that of Yaqut, the Prejudiced. As you know, Homsis are not different from other Syrians in their ability and intelligence; in fact, Homs is still producing a large number of poets and scholars".

The most credible story regarding the origin of the special day named *yōm al-'arbaʿa*, which has always been told orally and passed down from one generation to the next, tells of the arrival in Homs (1400) of the Turco-Mongol conqueror Timur Lank (Taymūr Lang, 1336-1405), historically known as Tamerlane. When the inhabitants of Homs discovered that he was within reach of the town, they met up and decided to dress up in a strange way: they dangled clogs on their chest, they covered their faces with sieves and they put together pieces of broken jars in order to make everything look crazy and odd. When the fierce warrior arrived, they welcomed him, waving with palm leaves and olive branches. When interpreters translated what the Homsis were saying, he happily sat on his throne receiving their gifts and loyalty.

Tamerlane and his counselors were so astonished and surprised by these friendly smiling people that they decided that it was not worth taking the city. This is how the Homsis saved their lives, thanks to their sympathy and jokes.

It is also said that Tamerlane spent that night in Homs and it was Wednesday, but in the early morning he and his warriors left the town and headed to Damascus, where the inhabitants were massacred. Unfortunately no official written sources have been

found to confirm this story, but it is possible to find references that refer to this event (Al-Aḥmad 2011: 77-82).

The above-mentioned story about Tamerlane crossed the centuries. The journalist 'Abīr al-Naḥḥās wrote in his paper (2010)¹⁹ what happened, according to the oral sources, when Tamerlane arrived in Homs, affirming that Tamerlane went to Homs after destroying Damascus and other cities around it; however the story seems to be similar to the version in Al-Aḥmad's book:

"[...] و سر هذا اليوم الذي يشتهر به الحماصنة غير محدد، و له عدة روايات، أشهرها و أهمها هي رواية خداع الحماصنة للمغول في هذا اليوم تحديدا، حيث علموا أن (تيمور لنك) قادم إليهم، و هو على أبواب مدينتهم بعد أن قام بتدمير دمشق و العديد من المدن التي مر عليها بجيشه، و تأكّدوا أنهم لن يتمكنوا من مجابهة جيوش المغول الجرارة، و كان يشاع في ذلك الوقت أن الهروب من المجنون أمر ضروري لكي لا يداهمك الجنون، فلبسوا ملابسهم مقلوبة و حملوا قباقيهم على أكتافهم، و بدؤوا بالطرق على البراميل فاتحين أبواب المدينة على مصراعها غير عابئين بجيش تيمور الذي مر بها مرورا سريعا هاربا من لعنة الجنون التي أصابت كل أهل المدينة بحسب اعتقاده، و من هنا بات سكان المدن الأخرى يتندرون بالقصة و يقولون إن: "الحماصنة جذبوها على تيمور لنك بهذا اليوم."

"[...] the secret of this Day which has made the Homsis famous is not very clear. There are many versions of it, of which the best known and most significant is the story about how the Homsis' tricked the Mongol on that day. When the Homsis discovered that Tamerlane was heading to the city and he would soon be there, after destroying Damascus and other cities he and his army had passed through, they realised that they could not face the mighty army. At that time there was a saying about the need to flee from the fool in order to avoid being struck by his madness, so they (the Homsis) wore their clothes back-to-front, dangled clogs on their chests and started beating on barrels, leaving the doors wide open, oblivious to Tamerlane's army, which passed through very quickly, fleeing from the curse of madness which had struck all the city's inhabitants. Since then, the inhabitants of the other cities have teased the Homsis saying that they made a fool out of Tamerlane that day".

¹⁹ Following <http://www.alarabiya.net/articles/2009/05/21/73415.html>.

Not only the Arab legendary environment is interesting, because we have also another story settled in the Roman times. This story, about the origin of *ʿīd al-ḥamāšīna* tells of a celebration on Wednesdays dedicated to a Roman god that was supposed to be venerated in a small village named *al-furqlus*, which belonged to the Homs' territory. The Syrian writer George Kadr in his book *'Adab an-nukta l-ḥumšīyya* (2006) introduced a similar reason for the origin of this celebration, affirming that this was a ritual celebration during the spring holiday, before the arrival of Islam, and it has been preserved in the popular memory of Homs.

Since there are no incontrovertible written sources about the episode of Tamerlane, nobody is able to confirm what really happened in Homs at that time. In my view, there could be substantial elements of truth in both Tamerlane's legend and the sacred celebration since these stories have survived up to the present day. It is not plausible that such tales could be completely invented by people over the centuries.

However, the written evidence by the Arab geographers Yāqūt and Ad-Dimašqī (between the 11th and 12th centuries) concerning the supposed "madness" of the Homsis chronologically precedes the story about Tamerlane, who actually lived in the 14th century and occupied Damascus in 1401. This suggests that, probably the "madness" has its roots many centuries before, when Homs was still Emesa with its temple to the sun god El Gebal and where unusual or strange rituals may have been carried out. The fact that the Homsis acted strangely in front of Tamerlane (14th century) to avoid the town's conquest, could be true. If we accept this possibility, then clearly it is indicative of their great cleverness rather than of their madness or naivety, since they avoided conquest by using their intelligence.

Because of all the stories and legends already described, Homsis have long become the main characters of jokes throughout the Middle Eastern Arab world. In neighbouring towns, as soon as their inhabitants meet a Homsī, they ask them what the latest joke about Homs is, since Homsis ironically tell jokes about themselves to make light of life's difficulties. People are obsessed with Homsī jokes to the point that it is possible to find some websites dedicated to these jokes or to Wednesdays in Homs. They do not do anything to counter this situation, nor are they offended by it.

Some informants told some jokes²⁰ during the interviews, and it would be explicative and pleasant to present a few of them here to better understand the irony that characterises this community and how Homsis tell jokes about themselves.

ʔtnēn ḥamāsni, kān fī ḥāyy ʔl-bāṣāt ʔd-dōrēn, rāḥō, ḥāyy mā mawḡūdi bi-ḥumṣ wa-lā bi-sūryā, kān mawḡūdi bi-London, fa-rāḥō rəkbū w wāḥəd rəkeb ʔl-bāṣ min taḥt w wāḥəd rəkeb min fōʔ, fa-baʔd rubaʔ sāʔa nadā-lu ḥādā ʔllī min fōʔ, ʔāl-lu: yā 'abū aḥmed...!

ʔāl-lu: šū?

ʔāl-lu: wēn ṣurtū 'əntō?

ʔāl-lu: waḷḷāhi naḥni ṣurnā ʔāṭeīn šē xamsi kilometer, 'əntō?'

ʔāl-lu: naḥni ʔam nəstannā š-šofēr!

Two Homsis get on a double-decker bus, which is not a common thing either in Homs or in Syria - it is in cities like London – anyway, they get on, and they decide to split up: one downstairs and the other upstairs, and after 15 minutes the one upstairs called to his friend:

'Abū Ahmad!' said the one downstairs.

'What's up?'

'Where have you been? We've travelled about 5 kilometres, and you?'

'We're waiting for the driver!'

fī wāḥəd ḥumṣē rāḥ ʔalā ḥamā fa-lāʔā bi-ḥamā nās ʔam tištəḡəl ʔam trakkəb ʔn-nās ʔalā ktāf-ā w yeubrō l-ʔāṣē min ṭaraf la-ṭaraf, waḷḷāhi ḥā-l-ḥumṣē kayyaf ʔāl: 'waḷḷah la-'arkab ʔalā ḥā-l-ḥamwē mišān yiwaṣṣəl-nē', fa-nəzel rəkeb ʔalā ktāf ʔl-ḥamwē w lammā wuṣlō ʔāl-lu:

'ənti taʔref lēš 'anā rkəbt ʔalā ktāf-ak?

ʔāl-lu: lēš?

ʔāl-lu: mišān yʔūlō ḥumṣē rəkeb ʔalā ḥamwē!'

ʔāl-lu: lək 'anā ḥumṣē ḡāyy 'ištəḡəl ḥōn!

²⁰ All jokes are included in the corpus of texts (Paragraph 5.2.). It has to be underlined that some jokes are translated using the simple present in English while in the Arabic version it has been used the past tense. This is a choice of translation since jokes in English are more meaningful using the present tense.

A Homsí guy went to Hama and found out that people there used to let others ride on their shoulders so they could cross from one river bank (of the Orontes) to the other. He found it funny and he decided to try a ride on a Hamawi's shoulders. Once they were done, the Homsí asked the other: 'Do you know why I took a ride on your shoulders?'

He answered: 'No, why?'

'I did this so people can say that a Homsí rode on a Hamawi's shoulders,' explained the Homsí.

The other replied: 'Well, actually I am a Homsí who came to work here '!'

ḥumṣē rāḡeε ealā bēt-u b-əl-lēl, ḥumṣē kān w sakrān, 'āxar əl-lēl fa-εam yḥuṭṭ əl-muḥtāḥ, mā εam yədxol, mā yaεref yḥuṭṭ əl-muḥtāḥ, fa-ṭəleε mart-u šāfet-u mə-l-šubbāk, 'ālet-lu: lək yā 'abū šāleḥ, šū nəsyān əl-muḥtāḥ, zəttə-llak yāḥ əl-muḥtāḥ? 'āl: lā', əl-muḥtāḥ maε-ē bass zəttī-lē l-buxś!

A Homsí guy is walking back home. He's drunk. It's dark and he can't unlock the front door. His wife's watching him from the window.

'Did you forget your keys? Shall I throw mine down to you?'

He replies: 'I do have my keys. Just throw me the keyhole!'

*fī wāḥed ḥumṣē 'āεed huwwi w mart-u, 'ālet-lu:
mā baεref lēš ən-nās byaḥkō dayman ealē-nā, 'āl-lā:
li'annu rās-ik yābes mitl ha-ṭ-ṭāwli!' (w da^{qa} a εa-ṭ-ṭāwli bum bum),
'ālet-lu : 'uf 'uf mīn εam ydu^{qa}?
'āl-lā: lā' xallī-ke 'āεdi 'anā b^qūm 'iftaḥ!'*

A Homsí couple is sitting together.

She asks him: 'why do people always talk about us?'

He answers: 'because your head is as hard as this table!' and he knocks on the table – knock! Knock!

She reacts: 'Oh boy! Who's knocking on the door?'

He replies: 'Don't worry, I'll get it!'

2.3. Folkloristic Songs during Weddings in Homs: *zalāġīṭ* and *ɛarāḍa*

Every culture, every group of people has their own traditions. Traditions are generally made up of a set of customs, beliefs and practices according to the historical, cultural and spiritual features of a community. Together they form an essential part of a country's history. It is thought that preserving and enhancing the cultural identity of the oral traditions and values of the Homs people is extremely important, especially in this tragic and delicate moment for Syria, where the civil war seems to have destroyed the joyful spirit that used to typify its city streets.

In this paragraph is presented a short selection of ethnotexts, more specifically folk songs, that could create interest. Worth mentioning the studies conducted in this field by Carlo De Landberg (1883), Oestrup (1887), Feghali (1935), Bettini (2006), Langone (2012). The main informations, as well as the folk songs, have been extrapolated from the study of the Syrian scholar Khāled 'Awād al-Aḥmad (2011:11-28).

The folk songs presented have been read by more than one Homsī native speaker, but I have transcribed them with the pronunciation used by those people in order to obtain a kind of standard local pronunciation. In any case, it should be stressed that the pronunciation of these songs may well be different if we compare speakers from district to another.

The folk customs slightly vary from region to region within Syria, however some communities have managed to safeguard some specific habits, which are likely to be displayed during celebrations, such as weddings. Indeed wedding rituals are similar in the Middle Eastern macro-geographical region, but is worth mention customs and traditions to contextualize the folk song presented in this section.

A wedding is considered a very special event, both in the urban and in the rural areas, and the wedding celebrations are still accompanied by folk songs today: women usually sing the *zalāġīṭ*²¹ (or *'ahāzīz*) while men sing the *ɛarāḍa*.

Nevertheless some rituals have changed as time goes by, for example, the bride's dressing: the role of *al-māšīṭa*²², has been replaced by a hairdresser, as well as the role

²¹ In HA they are called *zaġālīd*.

²² The person who used to dress the bride.

of *al-'āyma*²³ has been substituted for beauticians and make-up artists. Nowadays these professionals take care of the bride in their own beauty salons.

Another role has also disappeared, that of the *xāṭiba*, the woman who used to go from home to home with the function of arranging marriages. This figure was very common, especially in the countryside. The *xāṭiba* would spot unmarried women and after watching their lifestyles and household skills, she would choose the most talented one. The *xāṭiba* would then describe the girl to the future husband, and if he seemed really interested, she would give his mother her address, so that he could proceed with asking for her hand in marriage with the bride's approval.

The groom would not see his future wife personally: he would rely solely on the *xāṭiba*'s description. In fact she used to describe her face, the colour of her eyes, her cooking abilities, and so on. Then the man would go with his family for the woman's hand. In the countryside, the groom's family would later on arrange an entire day to be spent in town, dedicated to the purchase of all the things they needed for the wedding and, of course, the bride's trousseau. It generally included fabrics, jewels, henna and some presents for the bride's relatives. Coming back from the city markets, just before entering the town or village, the women would set all the stuff in straw trays, put them on their heads and show them to everybody. They would walk around the village, singing folk songs, praising the groom and inviting all the people to join the celebrations at the future husband's place.

The main difference between a wedding in the countryside and a wedding in the urban areas was that in the city, after reading the *fātiḥa* and paying the dowry, the bride's mother and sister would generally go to the markets and buy the trousseau for the future wife. Then she would have to show the clothes and the kitchen items to the groom's relatives. Then, after the display, she would normally bring everything back to the groom's house. The whole ritual was accompanied by folk songs, of course.

As all of the other rituals mentioned above, the tradition of exhibiting the trousseau has almost been lost with time, and only conservative families still do it. A typical *'ahzūža*, sung by women, says:

(1) *hā w sabea bu^qaž bi-bu^qžt-ik*

ها وسبع بقج بقجتك

(2) *hā w t-tāmnī bi-š-šandū^q*

ها والثامنة بالصندوق

²³ The person who used to put on the bride's makeup by performing specific beauty rituals.

(3) <i>hā yxallē šawāreb 'abū-k</i>	ها يخلي شوارب أبوك
(4) <i>hā yallī mā εāz-ik la-maxlū^q</i>	ها يا اللي ما عازك لمخلوق
(5) <i>lī lī lī līš</i>	لي لي لي ليش
(6) <i>hā^q ab^q āb-ik 'izā min sēr</i>	ها قبقابك إجا من سير
(7) <i>hā w fustān-ik žnāḥ^o t-ṭēr</i>	ها وفستانك جناح الطير
(8) <i>hā lā žihāz-ik εīrī</i>	ها لا جهازك عيري
(9) <i>hā w lā mahr-ik 'izā bi-d-dēn</i>	ها ولا مهرك إجا بالدين
(10) <i>lī lī lī līš</i>	لي لي لي ليش

Translation:

- (1) seven packages in your trousseau
- (2) and the eighth in your hope chest
- (3) may God protect your father's moustache
- (4) he that never let you want for anything
- (5) *lī lī lī līš*
- (6) your clogs have returned from your stroll
- (7) your dress is like the wings of bird
- (8) your trousseau isn't borrowed
- (9) nor has your dowry been used to pay debts
- (10) *lī lī lī līš*

The expression *lī lī lī līš* is called in Homs Arabic *zalgūṭa* and it is a high-pitch trill uttered by women. It is used when there is a reason to celebrate some occasions in order to express joy and delight, almost throughout all the Arab countries, especially at weddings.

Habits have changed and nowadays weddings are celebrated in wedding rooms, restaurants or hotels but in the past it was customary to celebrate the wedding at the groom's house or in the house of one of his relatives big enough to hold all the guests. This statement is confirmed by one of the informants:

"[...] *halla^q min zamān kull-on kānū yaemlō l-εurs bi-bēt əl-εarīs, εand 'umm əl-εarīs, bi-l-bēt w bətkūn hēke...bydayyfō hāyy ər-rāḥa t-ta^qlīdiyyi l-ḥumṣiyyi yallī hiyyi r-rāḥa l-maemūli s-sukkar, ^quṭae r-rāḥa min sukkar w našā' w mae fusto^q, yaenē ṣaḥn ḥəlwiyyāt, ^quṭae r-rāḥa mae šwayy ^omabbas mae mumken ḥabbet šōkōlāh, 'ēh kānet hiyyi lə-*

dyāfi tabaεit əl-εurs, min zamān...w l-εurs bi-bēt əl-εarūs, byžē l-εarīs, tyžē l-εarūs maε 'ahl-ā w byεuzmō^q arāybīn-on w žīrān-on w 'umm əl-εarīs tuezum^q arāybīn-ā w žīrān-ā w btyžē l-εarūs εa-bēt əl-εarīs byaεmlō ḥaflī bi-bēt 'aḥmā-hā, baedīn hāyy əl-εādāt ballšet titgāyyar šwayy šwayy, šār əl-εurs byšīr bi-maṭεam 'aw bi-šāli, baedēn šār bi-'otēl halla^q."

"[...] in the past, the wedding would take place at the groom's house: they used to offer the typical Homs party favours, containing sugar treats, pistachio sweets and so on. They would also contain some Jordan almonds or chocolates. That is the wedding treat they used to offer a long time ago. The wedding takes place at the bride's house: the groom comes, the bride and her family come, they invite relatives, neighbours, the groom's mother invites her family and neighbours too, and then the bride gets to her mother-in-law's place and starts celebrating there too. These traditions are changing with time, so now the weddings can take place in restaurants, banquet halls or hotels as well." (Speaker 22, text 24)

The bride used to arrive, and she was welcomed by the singing of the groom's sisters and their cousins and relatives (all women) such as in the following *zalḡūṭa*:

- | | | |
|--|---------------|------------------|
| (1) <i>^qūmū mə-d-darb la-tumru^q əs-sittāt</i> | لتمرق السنتات | قوموا من الدرب |
| (2) <i>^qūmū mə-d-darb la-tumru^q 'amīr²t-kon</i> | لتمرق أميرتكن | قوموا من الدرب |
| (3) <i>hāyy bənt šēx əl-εarab žāy tšarref-kon</i> | جاي تشرفكن | ها بنت شيخ العرب |
| (4) <i>lī lī lī līš</i> | | لي لي لي ليش |

Translation:

- (1) get out of the way to let the ladies go by
- (2) get out of the way to let the princess go by
- (3) she is the daughter of the sheikh who is coming to worship you
- (4) *lī lī lī līš* (trilled shouts of joy)

And the women of the groom's family reply as follows:

- | | |
|---|----------------------------------|
| (5) 'ahla w sahla ft-kon yā dyūf əl-əzāz | أهلاً وسهلاً فيكن يا ضيوف العزاز |
| (6) 'əntō əzāz w žītū min blād əzāz | انتو عزازي وجيتوا من بلاد عزاز |
| (7) 'ahlā min əš-šahəd 'ahlā min tyūr əl-bāz | أحلا من الشهد أحلا من طيور الباز |
| (8) 'ahlā min əl- ^q ərš law kān šāhb-u muetāzz | أحلا من القرش لو كان صاحبو معتاز |

Translation:

- (5) welcome, dear guests
(6) you are dear to us and come from a dear country
(7) sweeter than honey and nicer than a hawk
(8) you are more beautiful than a coin even if he who owned it needed it the most

Another very important typical and tradition at Homs weddings, which has been taking place for many years now, is called *al-earāda l-ḥumṣī*. It starts with the gathering of all the male guests at the groom's, or at one of the groom's relatives' homes, to help him get dressed. While they do that, they all sing the traditional wedding songs, have fun and make jokes. For example, they might prick the groom with a needle. This preparation phase is called *ət-tilbīsi*, "the dressing ceremony" in Arabic. Then the groom and his party go down the street, holding each other's hands and creating two rows. This sort of human caravan is called *earāda*. They also leave some room for other people who might want to join in during the parade and they go around the city, singing folk songs and playing the drums. Sometimes they stop in order to let others join them and at a certain point, a couple show up who have been paid, wearing traditional dress, and they perform a duel with swords and shields. This fake duel is stopped and quelled by somebody who arrives to calm things down. It is a tribute to the groom, as well as a show offered to all the guests.

It is often possible to hear this popular song:

- | | |
|----------------------------|--------------------|
| (1) mḥammad zēn zikr-u zēn | محمد زين ذكره زين |
| (2) mḥammad yā kaḥīl əl-ēn | محمد يا كحيل العين |
| (3) mḥammad xāṭab-u rabb-u | محمد خاطبوا ربوا |

(4) *w k̄ānet lēlet əl- 'itnēn*

وكانت ليلة الاثنين

(5) *w 'inša^{qq} əl-^qamar nişfēn*

وانشق القمر نصفين

(6) *min hēbet rasūl aḷḷah*

من هيبة رسول الله

Translation:

(1) Mḥammad is good, his memory is good

(2) Mḥammad whose eyes are drawn with kohl

(3) God has called him

(4) it was a Monday night

(5) the moon split in two

(6) because of the presence of God's prophet

Or even:

(7) *^qūmū la-nṣallē (ṣallēnā)*

قوموا لنصلي (فترد المجموعة: صلينا)

(8) *w əalē-k yā nabīnā (ṣallēnā)*

وعليك يا نبينا (فترد المجموعة: صلينا)

(9) *yā šāfiε²⁴ fīnā (ṣallēnā)*

يا شافع فينا (فترد المجموعة: صلينا)

(10) *hēk əl-^qibli (ṣallēnā)*

هيك القبلة (فترد المجموعة: صلينا)

(11) *yāḷḷah ṣallū (ṣallēnā)*

يا الله صلوا (فترد المجموعة: صلينا)

(12) *w ṣ-ṣalāh w ṣ-ṣōm ṣallū (ṣallēnā)*

والصلاة والصوم علوا (فترد المجموعة: صلينا)

Translation:

(7) let's pray (we pray)

(8) and for you who are our Prophet (we pray)

(9) for you our Prophet (we pray)

(10) here is the qibla (we pray)

(11) for God pray (we pray)

(12) pray and fast (we pray)

Then the groom and all his male guests reach the bride's house. He steps in with his father or his brothers. When the groom enters with his father, this 'ahzūža is dedicated to them by the groom's family members:

²⁴ *šāfiε* means 'who intercedes' (on Judgement day).

(9) 'abū flan rēt-ak dāyem

أبو (فلان) ريتك دايم

(10) yā rāēē l-ḥašāyem

يا راعي الحشاييم

(11) rēt-ak taeīš w tislam

ريتك تعيش وتسلم

(12) w taltamm εand-ak əl-lamāyem

وتلتئم عندك اللمايم

Translation:

(9) 'abū flān²⁵ we hope you will live a long life

(10) you who has servants

(11) we hope you may enjoy continued health

(12) we hope your house may be full of guests and joy

And then the bride's family replies to the groom's family:

(13) εarīs εarīs lā təndam εala māl-ak

عريس عريس لا تندم على مالك

(14) ḥawāžeb εarūst-ak xaṭṭ la-^qalām-ak

حواجب عروستك خط لقلامك

(15) hā ḥawāžeb εarūst-ak ^qūs məḥniyyi

ها حواجب عروستك قوس محنية

(16) hā tiswā banāt ḥārt-ak mi^rl mā

ها بتسوى بنات حارتك مثل ما هيه

hiyyi

(17) lī lī lī līš

لي لي لي ليش

Translation:

(13) oh groom, don't regret what you have spent

(14) the eyebrows of your bride are the line of your pen

(15) the eyebrows of your bride are like a bent arch

(16) she is worth more than all the women in the area

(17) lī lī lī līš

then women can also reply by singing:

(18) hā εarīs-nā lā təndam εala māl-ak

ها عريسنا لا تندم على مالك

(19) hā byrūḥ əl-māl w sitt əl-ḥusn²⁶

ها بيروح المال وست الحسن تبقى لك

təb^qā la-k

²⁵ Lit. 'father of a guy (fellow)'. The term *flān* is usually substituted by the name of the eldest son or daughter.

²⁶ Lit. 'the lady of the beauty'.

(20) *hā baṭlob min rabb əs-samā yẓīb-ā*
la-dār-ak

ها بطّلب من رب السما يجيبها لدارك

(21) *lī lī lī līs*

لي لي لي ليش

Translation:

(18) oh groom, don't regret what you have spent

(19) the money goes but the lady is yours

(20) the Lord has been asked to bring her to your house

(21) *lī lī lī līs*

l-mušaddar əl-ḥumṣī is another important custom: a folk band forms two teams who go on stage, they kneel and play traditional songs with the traditional Arab drums, the *durbakki*. These people are professionals and they generally perform a sing-off in front of the guests. One team praises the beauty of black-haired women, while the other praises the beauty of fair-haired women. So they praise the virtues of both, until each team has sung the same number of songs and the challenge ends.

Those who support the black-haired women can sing:

(1) *w s-samra kubbi bi-ṣ-ṣēniyyi*

والسمرا كبة بالصينية

(2) *yəthādū^w ā l- 'afandiyyi*

يتهادوها الأفنديّة

(3) *w l-bēḍa šar^a labaniyyi*

والبيضا شرقة لبنية

(4) *əa-l-mazābel kubbū əann-ā*

عالمزابل كُبوّا عنا

Translation:

(1) the brunette is a *kubbi bi-ṣ-ṣēniyyi*²⁷

(2) she pleases the lords

(3) the blonde is a *labaniyyi*²⁸'s leftover

(4) throw her in the bin

While the fair-haired women supporters can reply:

(1) *w l-bēḍa ruzz bi-ḥalīb*

والبيضا رزّ بحليب

(2) *kull mā byəbrod 'akl-u yṭīb*

كل ما بيبرد أكله يطيب

(3) *w s-samra^a urmit zbīb*

والسمرا قرمة زبيب

²⁷ Typical dish made with freshly minced lean meat mixed with burghul and flavored with spices.

²⁸ Typical dish made with kubbeh and yoghurt.

Translation:

- (1) The blonde is *ruzz bi-ḥalīb*²⁹
- (2) the colder it gets, the tastier it becomes
- (3) and the brunette is a raisin
- (4) throw her in the bin

On the second day, mostly in the past, in the afternoon, the bride's relatives used to leave the bride and groom's house and the women of the family would start singing:

- | | |
|---|-----------------------------|
| (1) <i>naḥna w mīn yə^qder yxāṣərṇā</i> | نحننا ومين يقدر يخاصمنا |
| (2) <i>yā lābsīn əl-xawātem bi-xanaṣərṇā</i> | يا لابسين الخواتم بخناصرنا |
| (3) <i>sa'alt rabb əs-samā l-εālī yunṣurnā</i> | سألت رب السما العالي ينصرنا |
| (4) <i>w bēn əl-εamā'em tislām εamāy³mnā</i> | وبين العمائم تسلم عمائنا |

Translation:

- (1) who has the courage to argue with us
- (2) we put rings on our fingers
- (3) I asked the Lord of Heaven for the victory
- (4) and among those who wear turbans, ours stand out

The bride's relatives might sing a different song, entrusting their daughter, niece or granddaughter to their in-laws, so that they will protect and take care of her forever, by singing:

- | | |
|--|------------------------------------|
| يا حمام الوادي | على الهادي على الهادي |
| <i>yā ḥamām əl-wādī (2)</i> | <i>εala l-hādī εala l-hādī (1)</i> |
| على قلوب الأعادي | سيروا سيركم الله |
| <i>εala ^qulūb əl-'aeādī (4)</i> | <i>sīrū sayyarkum Aḷlah (3)</i> |

Translation:

- (1) slowly slowly
- (2) doves of the valley

²⁹ A pudding made with rice, milk and sugar typical of Mashreq regions.

- (3) go that God helps you to walk
- (4) on your enemies' hearts

On the third day, it was very common for the bride's relatives to pay a visit to the bride and groom, bringing some presents, while at the weekend the bride used to go to see her parents, from morning till night. This visit was called *raddet rəžl*, meaning 'bring back the foot home' in Arabic because the bride used to go back to her family home. The bride and the groom were warmly welcomed and a rich lunch was prepared to celebrate them.

2.4 .Traditions during *ēīd al-fiṭr*: Folk Rhyme *yā ḥažž Mḥammad*

Before the end of fasting during Ramadan, Homs' streets are crowded since all the people go to the *suq* in order to buy new clothes and new shoes for the holiday *ēīd al-Fiṭr*. The celebration starts and the men go to the mosque for Prayer, then parents take their children to the graveyard to say a prayer for the deceased and the women go to carry flowers or myrtle.

After that, people go back home to have a rich breakfast all together and all the family members wish happy holiday to each other and the adults hand out the presents –*al-ēīdīyyāt*- to the children and teenagers, which usually consist of gifts of money.

The youngest members of the family usually go to have some fun at the amusement park where they can find sellers of sweets and drinks, a ferris wheel or a roundabout. Whoever goes on the roundabout, maybe with other children, usually sings the famous folk rhyme *yā ḥažž Mḥammad*:

- | | |
|---|----------------------|
| (1) <i>yā ḥažž Mḥammad...yūyā</i> | يا حج محمد... يويا |
| (2) <i>ēiyyern-ē ḥṣān-ak...yūyā</i> | عيرني حصانك... يويا |
| (3) <i>la-šudd w 'arkab...yūyā</i> | لشد واركب..... يويا |
| (4) <i>w 'alḥa^q 'iskandar...yūyā</i> | والحق اسكندر... يويا |
| (5) <i>w 'iskandar māṭ...yūyā</i> | واسكندر مات... يويا |
| (6) <i>xallaf banāt...yūyā</i> | خلف بنات... يويا |
| (7) <i>banāt-u sūd...yūyā</i> | بناته سود... يويا |
| (8) <i>zayy al-barūd³⁰...yūyā</i> | زي البارود يويا |

³⁰ In the Aleppan version this phrase becomes *mitl al-^qurūd* 'like monkeys'.

Translation:

- (1) oh *ḥaẓẓ mḥammad...yūyā*
- (2) lend me your horse...*yūyā*
- (3) to get on it and ride it...*yūyā*
- (4) and follow Iskandar...*yūyā*
- (5) Iskandar is dead...*yūyā*
- (6) he has left daughters...*yūyā*
- (7) black girls...*yūyā*
- (8) black as the shotgun...*yūyā*

The following lines have to be considered in the context of the French Mandate for Syria and the Lebanon (French: Mandat Français pour la Syrie et le Liban).

The origin of the folk rhyme *ya ḥaẓẓ Mḥammad* was inspired by an episode concerning Ibrahim Hanano³¹ (*Ibrahīm Hanānū*), the leader of a revolt against the French presence in northern Syria, more precisely in Aleppo.

When the French imprisoned the rebel Hanano in 1922, many people - among them many intellectuals - started to demonstrate asking for his release while he was awaiting his trial, arguing that Hanano was a political opponent and not a criminal. In response, the French started to arrest anybody who supported Hanano. The official who was responsible for Hanano's case was known as Iskandar and he, together with the French authorities, blocked the importation of rice and sugar to the City of Aleppo as a punishment towards those who supported Hanano. Aleppo's inhabitants suffered a famine and they could only find food smuggled by Lebanese merchants.

It is in these circumstances that *ya ḥaẓẓ Mḥammad* appeared in Aleppo and then spread throughout the other Syrian cities, including Homs, and it is still sung by children during Eid al-Fitr while they go on the swings.

Lately this traditional version has been sometimes modified by Syrian people during the demonstrations became one of the song that expresses a freedom tribute.

³¹ Ibrahim Hanano (1869-1935) was a member of an important family of Kurdish origin and he raised in Aleppo. He is considered one of the most important heroes of the resistance against the French mandate.

3. Phonology

3.1. Consonants

As is the case for other urban varieties of Syrian Arabic, most of the consonants of SA are pronounced in the same way in Homs Arabic. The phonemes are classified as in the following paragraphs.

3.1.1. Bilabial Phonemes

/b/, bilabial, plosive, voiced.

Examples:

<i>ʕarabiyyi</i>	'Arabic'
<i>bārdi</i>	'cold, cool'
<i>'ažāneb</i>	'foreigners'
<i>baedēn</i>	'after'
<i>kuzbara</i>	'coriander'
<i>balad</i>	'country'
<i>šabāb</i>	'guys, young people'
<i>kbīr</i>	'big, old'

/b̤/, bilabial, plosive, voiced, velarized.

In this study, the phoneme [b̤] has been marked only in the word *ḥāḥā* 'daddy'. According to Berlinches (2016: 42) [b̤] could be an allophone of [b] if it is in contact with emphatic consonants such as *baṭāṭā* 'potatoes', or *ḥanṭalōn* 'trousers'. Lentin (2006: 547) affirmed, referring to Damascus Arabic, that it is a marginal phoneme, presenting the following example: *bāb-a* 'her door' vs. *ḥāḥā* 'daddy'. The same example is also given in Cowell (1964: 7) in the section concerning velarization. In his recent work about Damascus Arabic (2013: 31-32), Klimiuk states that we cannot consider the example above given as a minimal pair since two sounds differ in the same word, not only one.

/p/, bilabial, plosive, voiceless.

It is a variant of the phoneme [b] and it occurs in those words borrowed from English or other foreign languages and not all Homsis, or better not all Arabs, are able

to clearly pronounce it since it is not originally an Arabic sound, even though the majority of people interviewed speak fluent English and some of them also French.

Examples:

<i>plīz</i>	'please'
<i>bīkān pawder</i>	'baking powder'
<i>diplōm</i>	'diploma'
<i>grūp</i>	'group'

/m/, bilabial, nasal, voiced.

Examples:

<i>xamsīn</i>	'fifty'
<i>madrasi</i>	'school'
<i>kamān</i>	'also'
<i>ēāmmiyyi</i>	'dialect, spoken variety'
<i>musalsalāt</i>	'soap operas'
<i>mamnūe</i>	'forbidden'
<i>ēālam</i>	'world, people'
<i>mumken</i>	'possible'

/m̥/, bilabial, nasal, voiced, velarized.

This phoneme is velarized only in these two terms even if it is not in contact with velar consonants: *māmā* 'mum' and *m̥ayy*³² 'water'. However it could be an allophone of [m] if a pharyngealized consonant occurs such as in *m̥aṭar* 'rain'.

/w/, bilabial, voiced, semi-vowel.

Examples:

<i>wāhed</i>	'one'
<i>ṭawīl</i>	'tall, long';
<i>qawāeēd</i>	'rules [of grammar]'
<i>ḥawāžez</i>	'check points'
<i>wadae</i>	'situation'
<i>ḥəlwi</i>	'beautiful ^f '
<i>wēn</i>	'where'

³² *m̥ayy* < *m^wayy* < *muwayy* (diminutive of *mā*).

3.1.2. Labiodental Phonemes

/f/, labiodental, fricative, voiceless.

Examples:

<i>fušḥā</i>	'Classical Arabic'
<i>ṣaff</i>	'class'
<i>^qirfī</i>	'cinnamon'
<i>fannān</i>	'artist'
<i>ḥafli</i>	'party'
<i>fransē</i>	'French'
<i>ḍēf</i>	'guest'

/v/, labiodental, fricative, voiced.

It is a marginal phoneme that occurs as a variant of [f] or [b] mostly in loan words from English or French. Examples: *sīvīyyāt* 'curricula'; *villa* 'villa/house'; *ḥrāvō* 'good, well done'; *vīza* 'visa'; but: *barandāt* 'verandas'.

3.1.3. Dental and Dental-alveolar Phonemes

/t/, dental, plosive, voiceless.

Examples:

<i>tisēa</i>	'nine'
<i>ṣiti</i>	'winter, rain'
<i>māxtālef</i>	'different'
<i>ḥattā</i>	'so that, to'
<i>'ixtiṣāṣ</i>	'specialisation'
<i>bānt</i>	'girl, daughter'
<i>zēt</i>	'oil'
<i>taḥrubī</i>	'experience'

It also represents the original interdental phoneme \underline{t} [θ] such as *tlāṭa* > *tlāti* 'three'.

/t̪/, dental-alveolar, plosive, voiceless, pharyngealized.

Examples:

<i>ṭa^qs</i>	'weather'
------------------------	-----------

<i>latīf</i>	'kind ^m '
<i>ṭaemi</i>	'flavour'
<i>mutaṭābi^qīn</i>	'matched ^{pl} '
<i>xaṭar</i>	'dangerous'
<i>ṭayyāra</i>	'aircraft'
<i>muwāṭen</i>	'citizen ^m '
<i>ṭur^qāt</i>	'roads'

/d/, dental, plosive, voiced.

Examples:

<i>madīni</i>	'city'
<i>dirāsi</i>	'study'
<i>ḗādāt</i>	'traditions, customs'
<i>hdiyyi</i>	'gift'
<i>ḗdīd</i>	'new ^m '
<i>madāres</i>	'schools'
<i>saeūdiyyi</i>	'Saudi Arabia'
<i>bandōrāt</i>	'tomatoes'

It also represents the original interdental phoneme *ḏ* [ḏ] such as *ḏahab* > *dahab* 'gold'.

/ḏ/, dental-alveolar, plosive, voiced, pharyngealized.

Examples:

<i>ḗarīḏa</i>	'large ^f '
<i>riyāḏa</i>	'sport'
<i>fāḏē</i>	'free, empty ^{m/f} '
<i>ramaḏān</i>	'Ramadan'
<i>ḏaxm</i>	'huge ^m '
<i>wādeḥ</i>	'clear ^m '
<i>baeḏ</i>	'some'
<i>waḏae</i>	'situation'

It corresponds also to the interdental [ḏ^s] such as *ḏ* > *ḏ*. Examples: *ḏuhr* 'noon'.

/n/, dental, nasal, voiced.

Examples:

<i>sini</i>	'year'
<i>nukat</i>	'jokes'
<i>bēn</i>	'between'
<i>'alwān</i>	'colours'
<i>naḥni</i>	'we'
<i>kənzi</i>	't-shirt'
<i>qānūn</i>	'law'
<i>nār</i>	'fire'

The variant [ŋ] occurs as a velar allophone if it is in contact with pharyngealized consonants such as in *ṇḏīf* 'clean'.

/s/, dental-alveolar, fricative, voiceless.

Examples:

<i>nās</i>	'people'
<i>sahli</i>	'easy ^f '
<i>yābes</i>	'hard, dried ^m '
<i>malābes</i>	'clothes'
<i>sāea</i>	'hour'
<i>sūryā</i>	'Syria'
<i>munāsabāt</i>	'occasions, events'
<i>masābeḥ</i>	'pools'

It also represents the original interdental phoneme \underline{t} [θ] such as *ṭawra* > *sawra* 'revolution'.

/ʃ/, dental-alveolar, fricative, pharyngealized, voiced.

Examples:

<i>ḥumʃ</i>	'Homs'
<i>xāʃʃ</i>	'specific, private ^m '
<i>ʃaʕbi</i>	'difficult ^f '
<i>maʃr</i>	'Egypt'
<i>maʃārī</i>	'money'
<i>rxīʃ</i>	'cheap ^m '

/z/, dental-alveolar, fricative, voiced.

Examples:

<i>ziyārāt</i>	'courtesy visits'
<i>εazīmi</i>	'invitation'
<i>zawāž</i>	'marriage'
<i>fīzyā</i>	'physics'
' <i>izā</i>	'if'
<i>tarkīz</i>	'attention, concentration'
' <i>inglīziyyi</i>	'English' ^f
<i>ramziyyi</i>	'symbolic' ^f

It also represents the original interdental phoneme ǰ [ð] such as *ustād* > *ustāz* 'teacher'.

/z/, dental-alveolar, fricative, pharyngealized, voiced.

This phoneme corresponds to the interdental [ð^s] which is also produced ẓ.

Examples:

<i>muḥāfaza</i>	'Governorate'
<i>ḥifāẓ</i>	'preservation'

/l/, dental, lateral, voiced.

Examples:

<i>xuyūl</i>	'horses'
<i>muqābali</i>	'interview'
<i>žamāl</i>	'beauty'
<i>mažāl</i>	'field'
<i>lahži</i>	'accent, dialect'
<i>mašākel</i>	'problems'
' <i>alf</i>	'one thousand'
<i>maḥall</i>	'shop'

/l/, dental, lateral, velarized, voiced.

The variant [l̤] occurs mainly in the words and compound words related to *Allāh* 'God', for example:

' <i>inšallāh</i>	'inshallah, God willing'
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māšāllah 'God willed it'
ḥámdəllah 'thank God'

/ɾ/, dental-alveolar, trill, voiced.

Examples:

mašhūr 'famous^m'
nahr 'river'
'arbaea 'four'
mudarrisīn 'teachers'
muzakkar 'masculine'
ḥārāt 'neighbourhoods'
xuḍra 'vegetables'
rīf 'suburbs'

/ɾ/, dental, trill, velarized, voiced.

In this study, the variant [ɾ] is marked only in the word *fikra* 'thought, idea', as in the whole *Šām*, but I was not able to define all the other cases in which this phoneme occurs. Nevertheless it could be considered an allophone of [r] if it occurs close to velar sounds such as *maṭār* 'airport' (Berlinches 2016: 43).

3.1.4. Interdental Phonemes

The interdental sounds *t̪*, *d̪*, *ɖ̪* are not maintained, according to other urban Syrian varieties as follows:

/t̪/, interdental, fricative, voiced > *t/s*.

t̪ > *t* Examples: *talž* 'snow, ice'; *tlāti* 'three'; *ktīr* 'a lot, much'; *mətl* 'like, as'; *tlātīn* 'thirty'; *'aktar* 'more'; *tānē* 'second, another'; *tnēn* 'two'.

t̪ > *s* Examples: *sawra* 'revolution'; *sānawē* 'high school'; *masalan* 'for example'; *maysā* 'Maytha' (proper name).

/ɖ̪/, interdental, fricative, voiced > *d/z*.

ɖ̪ > *d* Examples: *dahab* 'gold'; *hādā* 'this^m'; *hadāki* 'this^f'; *hadōl* 'these'.

ɖ̪ > *z* Examples: *muzakkar* 'masculine'; *'izā* 'if'; *'ustāz* 'teacher'; *kazā* 'so'; *zakī* 'clever^m'.

The preliminary findings by Habib (2011: 77-78) regarding the lexical split in the use of [t] and [s] and [d] and [z] in the variety spoken by a Homs community of Christian rural migrants from Oyoum al-Wadi, indicate that some words are specifically used with [t] and [s] and the same happens with [d] and [z]. The author defined this split as the stable lexical split phenomenon. It seems that many words from the corpora in urban Homs Arabic actually correspond to the four sounds mentioned above, with the words indicated in Habib such as *talž* 'ice, snow', *masalan* 'for example', *hādā* 'this', *ktīr* 'a lot, much', *izā* 'if'. Further research is required in this area.

/d/, interdental, fricative, pharyngealized, voiced > *d/z*

d̥ > *ḍ* Examples: *ḍuhr* 'noon'; *ḍahr* 'back'; *mnadḍaf* 'clean^m'; *nḍīf* 'clean'.

d̥ > *z* Examples: *wazīfi* 'job'; *būza* 'ice cream'; *manāzer* 'landscapes'; *muwazzafīn* 'workers, employees'; *nizām* 'system'; *zarīfi* 'nice'^f.

3.1.5. Palatal Phonemes

/ž/, palatal, fricative, voiced.

Examples:

žīrān 'neighbours'

'ažmal 'more beautiful'

žāmaea 'university'

žarāyed 'newspapers'

məžawwzi 'married'^f

žamb 'next to'

xalīž 'Gulf'

žaww 'weather'

/ğ/, palatal, affricate, voiced.

Examples:

šāğara 'tree'

nağğār 'carpenter'

ğaddi 'Jeddah'

ğumea 'Friday, week'

burgğ 'tower'

ḥawāḡez 'check points'
ḡēš 'army'

ح is mostly pronounced as voiced palatal ž [ʒ], but it is also pronounced ġ [dʒ], as used in the Aleppo region and rural regions; in fact the pronunciation of [dʒ] is a feature of rural Bedouin variety (Cowell 1964: 3). [dʒ] is also predominant in Mesopotamian Arabic and intermittent in Jerusalem. This sound seems to be more frequent among the male population especially by those who left the country a long time ago; it perhaps represents the older and more established pronunciation in HA. On the other hand, ž prevails in female speech, likely due to Damascus' influence, being perceived by Homsis as classier.

It is important to note that both ž and ġ sometimes assimilate, as in the whole Neo-Arabic the definitive article *al*, unlike in Standard Arabic, such as in *əž-žīrān* 'the neighbours'; *əž-žaww* 'the weather'; *əž-žāmaea* 'the university'; *əž-žāž* 'the chicken' or *əḡ-ḡumea* 'Friday, week', but sometimes it does not, as it happens in Iraq, such as in *l-žadd* 'the grandfather', *l-žabal* 'the mountain', *l-žaww* 'the weather' or *l-ḡamārek* 'the customs', *l-ḡumea* 'the week'. At this point in the research, it has not yet been possible to define a rule for this variation, although the word where this variation occurs most seems to be: *əž-žaww* > *l-žaww* > *əḡ-ḡaww* > *l-ḡaww* in men or women's speech.

/š/, palatal, fricative, voiceless.

Examples:

mintišra 'commonly used'
šē 'something'
'ašxāš 'people'
šātra 'good^f, clever^f'
šarikāt 'companies'
šurṭa 'police'
šōb 'hot'
mašḡūl 'busy^m'

/y/, palatal, voiced, semi-vowel.

Examples:

yōm 'day'

<i>dāyman</i>	'always'
<i>ḥayāt</i>	'life'
<i>ḥalwiyyāt</i>	'sweets'
<i>rādyō</i>	'radio'
<i>bayrūt</i>	'Beirut'
<i>siyāsi</i>	'politics'
<i>dubayy</i>	'Dubai'

3.1.6. Velar Phonemes

/k/, velar, plosive, voiceless.

Examples:

<i>maktūb</i>	'written ^m '
<i>kull</i>	'every, each'
<i>šukran</i>	'thanks'
<i>'aškāl</i>	'shapes'
<i>mulākami</i>	'boxing'
<i>kamān</i>	'too, as well'
<i>kīmāwē</i>	'chemical'
<i>makāteb</i>	'offices'

/g/, velar, plosive, voiced.

Examples:

In his paper, Ferguson (1969: 117), with reference to DA, stated that every occurrence of /g/ in Sedentary Arabic seems to be in those words borrowed from another variety of Arabic $q > g$ or from a foreign language such as French, English and Turkish.

It also seems to be a variant of the phoneme *k*, especially in loan-words. According to the data, the occurrence of /g/ is common in loan-words in HA as well, even though only one example has been found in the texts: *'inklīzī > 'inglīzī*.

3.1.7. Uvular Phonemes

/x/, uvular, fricative, voiceless.

Examples:

<i>tārīx</i>	'history'
<i>'uxt</i>	'sister'
<i>xubz</i>	'bread'
<i>'ixtilāf</i>	'difference'
<i>muxālafī</i>	'fine'
<i>xatf</i>	'kidnapping'
<i>xiyam</i>	'tents'
<i>wusx</i>	'dirty'

/q/, uvular, plosive, voiceless.

This phoneme occurs mainly in classicisms such as *qur'ān* 'Koran', *'arqām* 'numbers'; *qānūn* 'law'.

A common feature of Urban Syrian Arabic (Cowell: 1964, 4) is the shift of [q] to a glottal stop [ʔ], for example: *halla^q* 'now', *rəf^qāt* 'friends', *εa^ql* 'mind'.

Nevertheless in some words this phoneme occurs as [q] or [ʔ] such as *manāteq* or *manāte^q* 'areas'.

/ġ/, uvular, fricative, voiced.

Examples:

<i>luġa</i>	'language'
<i>šuġl</i>	'job'
<i>zġīr</i>	'little, small ^m '
<i>šaġlāt</i>	'things'
<i>ġabra</i>	'dust'
<i>ġasīl</i>	'clothes, laundry'
<i>ġār</i>	'bay leaves'
<i>ġadā</i>	'lunch'

3.1.8. Pharyngeal Phonemes

/ħ/, pharyngeal, fricative, voiceless.

Examples:

<i>ħumṣ</i>	'Homs'
-------------	--------

<i>ḥayawānāt</i>	'animals'
<i>naḥni</i>	'we'
<i>maḥrami</i>	'a napkin'
<i>ḥarāra</i>	'temperature'
<i>mālḥ</i>	'salt'
<i>ḥalab</i>	'Aleppo'
<i>baḥar</i>	'sea'
<i>ṣarāḥa</i>	'sincerity'

/ε/, pharyngeal, fricative, voiced.

Examples:

<i>ṣaεb</i>	'difficult ^m '
<i>mutaqāεed</i>	'retired ^m '
<i>baεdēn</i>	'after'
<i>bišee</i>	'ugly ^m '
<i>beīd</i>	'far ^m '
<i>eurs</i>	'wedding'
<i>εēli</i>	'family'
<i>maεrūf</i>	'well-known ^m '

3.1.9. Laryngeal Phonemes

/h/, laryngeal, fricative, voiceless.

Examples:

<i>hōn</i>	'here'
<i>'iltihāb</i>	'inflammation'
<i>šahrēn</i>	'two months'
<i>hiyyi</i>	'she'
<i>'ahl</i>	'family'
<i>^qahwi</i>	'coffee'
<i>hawā</i>	'air'
<i>maεhad</i>	'institute'

/ʔ/, laryngeal, plosive, voiceless.

Examples:

wasāʿel 'means'

lāʿanno 'because'

qurʿān 'Koran'

naṣāʿeh 'advice'

As stated above, in Urban Syrian Arabic, [ʔ] is also the realisation of [q] as in the following examples: *ʿadīm* 'old'; *taʿrīban* 'about, around'; *ʿarāybīn* 'relatives'. If it replaces the phoneme [q], it is always pronounced by native speakers.

In her study regarding the variable use of [q] and [ʔ] in the Colloquial Arabic of Christian rural migrants to the City of Homs, Habib (2010: 72-73) affirmed that the variant of native Homsī speakers is always [ʔ], while they use [q] in borrowed words from Standard Arabic, e.g. *murāqabi* 'control'; *mustaqarra* 'resident'; *mutaqaddimi* 'innovative'.

In HA the phoneme [ʔ] is usually maintained in the initial position, as in the following examples: *ʿahl-ē* 'my family'; *ʿawʿāt* 'sometimes'; *ʿimārāt* 'Emirates'; *ʿabadan* 'never'; on the other hand, it disappears in the final position, for example: *ʿaṣāʿ* > *ʿaṣā* 'dinner'; *masāʿ* > *masā* 'evening'; *warāʿ* > *warā* 'behind'.

In the medial position, it tends to be pronounced, especially in classicisms such as *masʿūliyyāt* 'responsibilities'; *bīʿa* 'environment'; *qāʿimi* 'list', as well as in verbs with a second *hamza* such as *saʿal* 'ask'. However, it is not maintained and becomes a long vowel in a sequence CV as in *raʿs* > *rās* 'head'; *taʿxud* > *tāxud* 'she takes'.

3.2. Vowels

3.2.1. Short Vowels

The short vowels in HA are *a* : *i* : *u*, to which we have to add *e* and *o* as allomorphs of *i*, *u*, and a schwa *ə* of uncertain status (Kalach 2015: 339).

	Front	Central	Back
Low	<i>i</i>		<i>u</i>
Mid-vowel	<i>e</i>	<i>ə</i>	<i>o</i>
High		<i>a</i>	

/a/, short, central, low, unrounded.

Examples:

<i>mazraʕ</i>	'land'
<i>balad</i>	'country'
<i>madrasi</i>	'school'
<i>wahdi</i>	'one ^f '
<i>ḥamā</i>	'Hama'
<i>sakrān</i>	'drunk ^m '
^q <i>alam</i>	'pen'

If the vowel *a* is linked to emphatic consonants, it is articulated as *â* [ɑ], for instance:

ṣafra > *ṣâfra* 'yellowish^f'

'*axḍar* > '*axḍâr* 'green^m'

ṣaḥrā > *ṣâḥrā* 'desert'

waṣat > *waṣât* 'middle, centre'

/i/, unrounded, front, high.

Examples:

<i>riyāḍiyyāt</i>	'maths'
' <i>iqtisād</i>	'economics'
<i>hindē</i>	'Indian ^m '

It occurs as a realisation of the morpheme *-at*, as in the following examples:

<i>sini</i>	'year'
-------------	--------

<i>sitti</i>	'six'
<i>ḥumṣiyyi</i>	'Homsī ^f '
<i>ṣāli</i>	'hall'

SA /i/ in tonic and pre-tonic position is continued (Kalach 2015: 339):

bi-widd-ī → *bidd-ē* 'I want'

/e/, unrounded, front, mid-vowel.

Examples:

<i>žarāyed</i>	'newspapers'
<i>lāzem</i>	'must, have to'
<i>mətwaffər</i>	'available ^m '
<i>tentēn</i>	'two ^f '
<i>mṣammem</i>	'planned ^m '
<i>malābes</i>	'clothes'

It is mostly used as an allophone of *i*, in post-tonic position, thus SA *i* > HA *e*. For instance: *xārež* 'outside'; *barāmež* 'programmes'; *'amāken* 'places'; *tāleb* 'student'.

/u/, rounded, back, high.

Examples:

<i>εumr</i>	'age'
<i>tudmor</i>	'Palmyra'
<i>wužūd</i>	'presence'
<i>nuṣṣ</i>	'half'
<i>ruḥt</i>	'I went'

/o/, rounded, back, mid-vowel.

Examples:

<i>kutob</i>	'books'
<i>'okkēh</i>	'ok'
<i>'otēl</i>	'hotel'

Regarding DA, Cowell (1964: 13) stated that:

"[...] before a word-final consonant, the difference between short *e* and *i* and between *o* and *u* is not significant in any case, and is subject to a great deal of regional and individual variation: *māšmoš*=*mušmoš*, *byəḥmel* = *byiḥmil*".

Worth noting that Versteegh in his work *The Arabic Language* (1997) assumes that Palestinian Arabic and most Lebanese varieties have three short vowels, /a/, /i/ and /u/. The other varieties have preserved the opposition between /i/ and /u/ only in unstressed final syllables (often transliterated as *e* and *o*), whereas in all other environments they have merged into one vowel phoneme /ə/.

In HA in the post-tonic position the phoneme *u* is lowered into [o], as well as *e* > [i] and this is one of the main peculiarities of *šāmi* Arabic:

kútoḅ 'books' *kutúḅ-kon*

šíreb 'he drank' but: *širíb-ā*

/ə/, unrounded, central, mid-vowel.

Examples:

<i>bənt</i>	'girl'
'ənti	'you ^m '
'əntō	'you ^{pl} '
<i>məxtələf</i>	'different ^m '
<i>əllī</i>	'that (relative stem)'
<i>mərtāḥa</i>	'relaxed ^f '
<i>wəllā</i>	'or'

/ə/ seems to occur more systematically in the imperfective prefixed morphemes, as for the following examples: *bə^qrā* 'I read'; *yəbtəsem* 'he smiles'; *bətfūt* 'she comes in, enters'; *bə^qūlē* 'you^f say'; *nələab* 'we play', even if the occurrence of /i/ is also common.

The vowel written raised above the line /^ə/ indicates the helping vowel, or anaptyxis, even though the pronunciation is the same as ə [ɜ]. It occurs in the following cases:

a) between two consonants in a final position:

mi^əl 'for example'

duh^ər 'noon'

bən^ot 'girl'

šax^os 'person'

šug^ol 'job'

dub^ol 'double'

b) to avoid a cluster of three or four consonants:

ktīr^oktīr 'very much'

tyāb^ozdīdi 'new clothes'

malea^otēn^ozġār 'two teaspoons'

biħubb^oktīr 'I like very much'

3.2.2. Long Vowels

	Front	Central	Back
Low	<i>ī</i>		<i>ū</i>
Mid-vowel	<i>ē</i>		<i>ō</i>
High		<i>ā</i>	

/ā/, unrounded, front, low.

Examples:

rūmāniyyi 'Roman^f'

kāmli 'total, entire^f'

mažāl 'field'

šubbāk 'window'

murāsalāt 'correspondence'

xilāl 'during'

^ouddām 'in front of'

As per observations on short vowel *a*, if it is linked to emphatic consonants, it is produced [â:], for example: *ħaḏâ:ni* 'kindergarten'; *šâ:rimīn* 'strict^{pl}'.

/ē/, unrounded, front, mid-vowel.

Examples:

bāntēn 'two girls'

ħumšē 'Homsī^m'

<i>lēš</i>	'why?'
<i>fādē</i>	'free ^{m/f} '
<i>'antē</i>	'you ^f '
<i>'amērkē</i>	'American ^m '
<i>ēēn</i>	'eye'
<i>tānē</i>	'second, another ^{m/f} '

/ī/, unrounded, front, high.

Examples:

<i>mīn</i>	'who'
<i>latīf</i>	'kind ^m '
<i>ṭabīēē</i>	'natural ^m '
<i>rīf</i>	'countryside'
<i>snīn</i>	'years'
<i>^qalīl</i>	'little, few ^m '
<i>taelīm</i>	'teaching'

/ō/, rounded, back, mid-vowel.

Examples:

<i>hōn</i>	'here'
<i>hōnīk</i>	'there'
<i>rādyō</i>	'radio'
<i>byaḥkō</i>	'they talk'
<i>bnōb</i>	'at all'
<i>trūḥō</i>	'you go'
<i>balkōn</i>	'balcony'

/ū/, rounded, back, high

Examples:

<i>b^qūm</i>	'I stand up'
<i>šū</i>	'what'
<i>mazbūt</i>	'right ^m '
<i>'ulā</i>	'first ^f '
<i>'usbūe</i>	'week'

<i>bidūn</i>	'without'
<i>sūrē</i>	'Syrian ^m '
<i>suhūli</i>	'facility'

The following points may be noted in HA (Kalach 2016: 339):

ē often replaces the suffix of the 1st person singular *ī*: *xāl-ē* 'my uncle', *εand-ē* 'I have', even if *xāl-ī* and *εand-ī* are common too. *ē* is also present at the end of a word, as in *šē* 'thing', *yaεnē* 'it means'. It is possible to state that *-ī # > ē* is generalised.

On the other hand, the long vowel *ī* is maintained if it occurs in medial position or in some particles, for example: *ktīr* 'very much', *fī* 'there is', *madīni* 'town', *ṭarī^q* 'avenue'.

ō often replaces the SA verbal morphemes *-ūna* and *-ū*: *yə^qdrō* 'they can', *yrūhō* 'they go'. It is also pronounced in words that have a foreign origin, such as *kīlōmāter* 'kilometres', *šōfāž* 'heating'.

ū occurs like in SA in medial position, such as in the words: *ṭūl* 'straight,during', *ruṭūbi* 'humidity', *mamnūε* 'forbidden^m'.

ā is maintained like in SA and there is no *'imāla* as in the following examples: *bāb* 'door', *nās* 'people'; *'imārāt* 'Emirates', *nhār* 'day', *hādi* 'calm', *'iltihāb* 'inflammation'.

According to the data, the use of [e] / [e:] in place of [a] / [a:], therefore *'imāla*, does not occur in HA, even though further investigation of this topic is needed.

3.3. Diphthongs

The two SA diphthongs *ay* and *aw* are, in most cases, replaced by *ē* and *ō* in a closed syllable:

ay > *ē*

Examples:

ṣayf > *ṣēf* 'summer'

layl > *lēl* 'night'

ḍayf > *ḍēf* 'guest'

aw > *ō*

Examples:

lawn > *lōn* 'colour'

faw^q > *fō^q* 'on, over'

mawt > *mōt* 'death'

yawm > *yōm* 'day'

In HA, *ē* and *ō* are maintained if suffix pronouns are added, unlike some Syrian coastal and Lebanese varieties where the diphthongs *ay* and *aw* are maintained:

bēt-ek 'your^f house'

bēt-ak 'your^m house'

šōt-ē 'my voice'

šōt-nā 'our voice'

In a few cases, the diphthongs *ay* and *aw* are maintained:

a) in classicisms, for examples: *fawran* 'immediately'; *ḍaww* 'light'; *sawra* 'revolution'; *dawrāt* 'courses'; *ḥayniyyi* 'ophthalmology'.

b) In the words containing *-ayy* and *-aww*, for example: *šaww* 'weather'; *tzawwažt* 'I got married'; *dawwart* 'I searched'; *tətxayyalē* 'you^f imagine'; *byəṭawwlō* 'they take a long time'.

c) In passive participles, relative deriving from verbs with *wāw* as the 1st root letter, and also in internal plurals, for example: *'awḍaḥ* 'clearer'; *mawžūdīn* 'presents'; *'awlād* 'children'.

d) In proper nouns, for example: *əd-dawḥa* 'Doha'; *dubayy* 'Dubai'.

3.4. Prosody

3.4.1. Syllable Structure

Similarly to the majority of Syrian varieties, in HA there are two types of syllables:

a) Open syllable, which ends with a short vowel or a long vowel, as follows:

Examples

Cv *šī/tī* 'winter'; *si/nī* 'year'; *lu/ġā* 'language'

Cv: *dirāsi* 'study'; *muqābali* 'interview'; *mažāl* 'field'

CCv *hdiyī* 'gift'

CCv: *tlātīn* 'thirty'; *tmāni* 'eight'; *byḥuttō* 'they put'

CCCv: Does not occur

b) Closed syllable, which ends with a consonant, as follows:

Examples

- CvC *min* 'from'; *nahni* 'we'; *mat/bax* 'kitchen'
- Cv:C *ēāmmē* 'dialect'; *banāt* 'girls'; *tabīb* 'doctor'
- CCvC *mkarkab* 'messy'; *nzalnā* 'we get off'
- CCv:C *tnēn* 'two'; *ktīr* 'very, a lot'; *kbīr* 'big'
- CCCv:C *s-smīd* 'the semolina'; *z-zgār* 'the kids, the small'

c) Double closed syllable, which ends with two consonants:

Examples

- CvCC *šakl* 'shape, way'; *eurs* 'wedding'; *šaff* 'class'
- CCvCC *šwayy* 'a little, a few'; *ž-žaww* 'the weather'
- CCCvCC Does not occur

3.4.2. Stress and Pausal Form

Stress is determined by the syllable structure of the word, hence it is not phonologically distinctive. Some considerations may be made regarding the stress in HA, the first being that it is very similar to DA stress. As far as words with only one syllable are concerned, the stress falls on that syllable, e.g. *dúbb* 'bear'; *lón* 'colour'. In words composed of more than one syllable, the stress falls on the last syllable containing a long vowel or on the short vowel in a double closed syllable, for example: *εažīni* 'dough'; *kābūs* 'nightmare'; *bantén* 'two girls'; *'axáff* 'lighter'; *'úxtek* 'your^f sister'. In those words that do not include a long vowel or a double closed syllable, it is the first syllable that is stressed, as in the following examples: *bášal* 'onions'; *mádxal* 'entrance'; *'ábadan* 'never'; *hásab* 'depending on'.

An etymologically long vowel is shortened when it loses the stress, unless a suffixed pronoun occurs, restoring its length and taking the stress, for example:

šuftū 'you^{pl} saw', realized [šúftu] > *šuftū-nī* 'you^{pl} saw me'

In terms of verbs, it has been noted that for the 3rd person singular and plural, the stress falls on the first syllable, unless a long vowel occurs. Examples: *'ákal* 'he ate'; *nážhet* 'she succeeded'.

In HA, the pausal form consists of lengthening the vowel in the last open syllable of the word, but it is not yet possible to state when this lengthening occurs, since it depends on the linguistic choices of the speaker, who decides at the time whether or not to prolong the vowel (Klimiuk 2013: 97). In reality, the pausal form supports the speaker to specify and emphasis their message and it usually occurs when expressing astonishment or surprise: for example, a mother who scolds her child could lengthen the vowel in order to seem stricter:

lək lēš hē:k? 'ənti kassert əl-ballō:r?

'why are you^m doing that? Did you^m break the glass?'

Or a father who has just discovered that his daughter did not go to school, could say:

əan žadd bənt-ē mā rāhet əa-l-madrasi:?!

'my daughter didn't go to school? Seriously?!'

It seems that the occurrence of this longer articulation has no fixed rules, but it is one of the most distinctive features of HA and it deserves further study in the near future.

4. Morphosyntax

In this chapter a morphological profile of HA is presented with the support of data sheets and explanations where considered appropriate in order to highlight the most significant aspects of nominal and verbal morphology, as well as syntax. This is a first linguistic approach to Homs Arabic and more research is necessary in the future.

4.1. Nominal Morphology

4.1.1. Gender of Nouns

a) Masculine

All the nouns which end in consonant are masculine. Examples:

<i>ɛarīs</i>	'groom'
<i>'abb</i>	'father'
<i>žədd</i>	'grandfather'

Although *zalami* 'man, guy' has been found which ends with *-i* but is considered a masculine noun. Furthermore, all the nouns deriving from defective verbs that end with *-ā*, *-i* or *-a* are considered masculine, for instance:

<i>šiti</i>	'winter'
<i>ğadā</i>	'lunch'
<i>ɛašā</i>	'dinner'

b) Feminine

The feminine of nouns includes all the nouns which indicate persons or objects that represent a feminine meaning, including names of cities and countries. Examples:

<i>bənt</i>	'girl'
<i>sətt</i>	'grandmother'
<i>ɛarūs</i>	'bride'
<i>'umm</i>	'mother'
<i>'uxt</i>	'sister'
<i>ṁayy</i>	'water'
<i>'arḍ</i>	'earth'
<i>šams</i>	'sun'
<i>qaṭar</i>	'Qatar'
<i>əḍ-dōḥa</i>	'Doha'

<i>dubayy</i>	'Dubai'
<i>'almānyā</i>	'Germany'
<i>ḥumṣ</i>	'Homs'
<i>bayrūt</i>	'Beirut'

The SA morpheme /-a(t)/ is mainly pronounced *-i*, when labial, dental-alveolar or palatal consonants follow, although *-e* is also heard. All these final *-i* sounds seem to be more similar to Lebanese varieties and Syrian varieties such as in Nabk (Gralla 2006: 34), whereas it is pronounced *-e* in Damascus and [-ε] in Amman. The morpheme /-a(t)/ is pronounced *-a* when preceded by velar, pharyngeal, laryngeal and pharyngealized consonants, as in the whole *Šām*:

Morpheme /-a(t)/ > <i>-i</i>		Morpheme /-a(t)/ > <i>-a</i>	
<i>murāqabi</i>	'control'	<i>tuffāḥa</i>	'an apple'
<i>sitti</i>	'six'	<i>ṭabbāxa</i>	'cook' ^f
<i>natīzi</i>	'result'	<i>ḡabra</i>	'dust'
<i>bārḍi</i>	'cold' ^f	<i>^quṣṣa</i>	'tale'
<i>mōzi</i>	'a banana'	<i>bēḍa</i>	'an egg'
<i>siyāsi</i>	'politics'	<i>xayyāṭa</i>	'tailor' ^f
<i>šāši</i>	'screen'	<i>ḥāfza</i>	'learned' ^f
<i>qazīfi</i>	'missile'	<i>bišea</i>	'ugly' ^f
<i>šōki</i>	'fork'	<i>bālḡa</i>	'adult'
<i>šagḷi</i>	'thing'	<i>da^qī^qa</i>	'a minute'
<i>kilmi</i>	'word'	<i>mwāžha</i>	'in front of'
<i>madīni</i>	'city'		
<i>^qahwi</i>	'coffee'		
<i>kuwayysi</i>	'good' ^f		

As for the pronunciation of the morpheme /-at/ after /r/, it has been noted that it becomes (Dahmash 2005: 29): /i/ when /r/ follows (example: *zḡīri* 'small') and /a/ when /ar/, /ār/, /ūr/, /ōr/³³, /ē/, /aw/ follow. Examples:

³³ Because in that case /r/ > *r*.

<i>mara</i>	'woman'
<i>ṭayyāra</i>	'aircraft'
<i>ṣūra</i>	'picture'
<i>dōra</i>	'turn'
<i>lēra</i>	'pound'

The feminine morphemes *-i*, *-e* and *-a*, are usually elided if in construct with a noun and they take the form *-et*, but even *-it* is very common in the more established form of HA. Examples:

<i>māddet ər-riyāḍiyyāt</i>	'mathematics'
<i>bi-šarket mu^qāwalāt</i>	'in a construction company'
<i>daržet əl-ḥarāra</i>	'the temperature'
<i>ēudet ^qirfi</i>	'a cinnamon stick'
<i>kull madīni la-hā lahğit-ā l-xāšša</i>	'each town has its own vernacular'
<i>bi-madīnit ḥumṣ</i>	'in the city of Homs'
<i>bištəgel mudarresit luğa ɛarabiyyi</i>	'I work as an Arabic teacher'

The morpheme *-at* in the older form of HA could be *-āy(i)* if it ends with an *-ā*, *-ā'*, or for words that express the singulative, as in the following examples:

muṣfāt > *muṣfāyi* 'colander'

ğasəlt ər-ruzz w ṣaffēt-o b-əl-muṣfāyi

'I washed the rice and I drained it with the colander'

ɛaraba > *ɛarabāyi* 'a cart'

byəštəro xudra b-əl-ɛarabāyi

'they take a cart with them to buy some vegetables'

4.1.2. Definite Article

The definite article /əl-/, as in SA assimilates /l/ if followed by 'solar letters' (i.e. coronal phonemes), while it is maintained if followed by 'lunar letters'. In HA same rules are maintained except for the phoneme /ž/: interestingly, it was observed that

both realisations exist in HA, for instance *əl-žaww* or *əž-žaww* 'the weather'; *əl-žāmaea* or *əž-žāmaea* 'the university'.

In HA the following forms of the definite article have been found:
əl- when the word that precedes it ends with a consonant. Examples:

xāššatan maε əl-mudarrisīn

'especially when dealing with teachers'

hattā^qalīl li- 'asmaε əl- 'axbār

'I barely watch the news'

mā kull əl-εālam fī-^yā təṭlaε la-barra

'yet not everybody manages to escape the country'

fī-^yā šōb bass mā mət^l əl-xalīž

'I mean you get some heat but it's not (as intense) as in the Gulf'

l- when the word that precedes it ends with a vowel. Examples:

masalan šū l-mažāl 'antē tabraεē fī-h

'they see which fields you are best suited to'

w l-ḥurriyyi š-šaxsiyyi

'and the personal freedom'

hādā huwwi l-qarār

'this was the choice'

As for Damascus Arabic, three-consonant clusters are not generally formed since a helping vowel usually keeps them apart (Cowell 1964: 25), so it is possible to have *lə*.

Examples:

lə-žnēni tabaεit əl-bēt 'the garden of the house'

lə-ğrād lə-l-bēt 'the house items'

lə-l-εēli 'to, for the family'

əl-ğāmeε lə-kbīr 'the Great Mosque'

4.1.3. Dual Forms

According to Levantine varieties, there are no dual forms for pronouns, demonstratives, adjectives or verbs, but only for nouns adding the morpheme *-ēn*. However, if the dual form is applied for feminine nouns ending with *-a* and *-i* or for the singulative, a *-t* is inserted between the nouns and the morpheme *-ēn*, as in the following examples:

<i>bənt</i>	'a girl'	>	<i>bəntēn</i>	'two girls'
<i>šahr</i>	'a month'	>	<i>šahrēn</i>	'two months'
<i>'alf</i>	'a thousand'	>	<i>'alfēn</i>	'two thousand'
<i>'usbūe</i>	'a week'	>	<i>'usbūēn</i>	'two weeks'
<i>farāe</i>	'a branch'	>	<i>farāēn</i>	'two branches'
<i>luġa</i>	'a language'	>	<i>luġtēn</i>	'two languages'
<i>sini</i>	'a year'	>	<i>sintēn</i>	'two years'
<i>kāsi</i>	'a glass'	>	<i>kāstēn</i>	'two glasses'
<i>bēḍa</i>	'an egg'	>	<i>bēḍtēn</i>	'two eggs'
<i>sāea</i>	'an hour'	>	<i>sāeatēn</i>	'two hours'

According to Blanc (1970: 42-57) by adding a *-t* + the suffix *-ēn* it is also possible to express a "pseudo-dual" for denoting paired body parts, as in the following examples:

<i>ēēn</i>	>	<i>ēēnēn</i>	>	<i>ēēntēn</i>	'(two) eyes'
<i>īd</i>	>	<i>īdēn</i>	>	<i>īdtēn</i>	'(two) hands'
<i>ižr</i>	>	<i>ižrēn</i>	>	<i>iž^ʔrtēn</i>	'(two) legs'

Dual forms are also replaced by periphrasis using the number *tnēn* 'two' for masculine and *tentēn* 'two' for feminine, as follows:

kānō^qāedīn^ʔtnēn ġamb baēḍ
'two people are sitting beside each other'

^ʔtnēn ḥamāsni
'two Homsis'

kānō wā^qfīn tnēn hēk sūd.
'we met two black men'

4.1.4. Plurals

a) External Plural

Masculine and feminine participles and many adjectives take the suffix *-īn*, mostly active participles, as well as the nouns that indicate a masculine gender in the singular. Examples:

Masculine	Feminine	Plural	
<i>mabsūṭ</i>	<i>mabsūta</i>	<i>mabsūṭīn</i>	'happy'
<i>mudarris</i>	<i>mudarrisi</i>	<i>mudarrisīn</i>	'teacher'
<i>mnīḥ</i>	<i>mnīḥa</i>	<i>mnīḥīn, mnāḥ</i>	'good'
<i>ḥalabē</i>	<i>ḥalabiyyi</i>	<i>ḥalabiyyīn</i>	'Aleppan'
<i>m²tzawwž</i>	<i>m²tzawwži</i>	<i>mətzaww²žīn</i>	'married'
<i>maktūb</i>	<i>maktūbi</i>	<i>maktūbīn</i>	'written'
<i>šāṭer</i>	<i>šāṭra</i>	<i>šāṭrīn</i>	'good at, capable'
<i>sāken</i>	<i>sākni</i>	<i>sāknīn</i>	'resident'
<i>⁹arīb</i>	<i>⁹arībi</i>	<i>⁹arībīn</i>	'near'
<i>mawžūd</i>	<i>mawžūdi</i>	<i>mawžūdīn</i>	'present, existing'

For nouns ending with *-i* and *-a*, the suffix *-āt* is added, as well as for loan words.

Examples:

<i>kilmi</i>	> <i>kalimāt</i>	'words'
<i>marra</i>	> <i>marrāt</i>	'times'
<i>šarki</i>	> <i>šarikāt</i>	'companies'
<i>šagli</i>	> <i>šaglāt</i>	'things'
<i>ḥāra</i>	> <i>ḥārāt</i>	'boroughs'
<i>žinsiyyi</i>	> <i>žinsiyyāt</i>	'nationalities'
<i>'otōstrād</i>	> <i>'otōstrādāt</i>	'highways'
<i>mōlāt</i>	> <i>mōlāt</i>	'malls'
<i>bāš</i>	> <i>bāšāt</i>	'buses'

but also *žawāz* > *žawāzāt* 'permissions, passports' and *imtiḥān* > *imtiḥānāt* 'exams'

Even if the tendency is to add *-īn* for participles and adjectives, it is worth noting that in HA the suffix *-āt*, as it is usual in rural and Bedouin varieties, is also used for

feminine plural like in CA, but it does not seem awkward; in fact, it is used very naturally. Examples:

halla^q ḥayāt ən-nisā hiyyi yaenē māšī ḥāl-on, fī minn-on mužtahidāt^oktīr

'let's say a woman's life is fairly good, there are some women who are more active'

b) Internal Plural

Where it is provided nouns and adjectives have an internal plural, including nouns of place and instruments for patterns *fæli* (*fueli*), *mafæl*, *fēl*, *faēl*. Examples:

žəmli > *žumal* 'phrases'

ğurfī > *ğuraf* 'rooms'

zğīr > *zğār* 'small, young^{pl}'

nđīf > *nđāf* 'clean^{pl}'

maktab > *makāteb* 'offices'

masbaḥ > *masābeḥ* 'pools'

fa^qīr > *fə^qarā* 'poor^{pl}'

ždīd > *žudad* or *ždād* 'new^{pl}'

4.1.5. Independent Personal Pronouns

Person	Pronouns
1 st sing.	'anā
2 nd sing. m.	'anti
2 nd sing. f.	'antē
3 rd sing. m.	huwwi
3 rd sing. f.	hiyyi
1 st pl.	naḥni (or nəḥnā)
2 nd pl. m./f.	'antō
3 rd pl. m./f.	hinni (or hinnin)

So it is possible to deduce that **inta* > *inti*, by analogy with *-at* ("إنتة"), and that **intī* > 'antē like *ktāb-ē* 'my book', and *yaenē* 'that means'.

The 3rd pl. variant *hinnin* must be of Aramaic origin (*hennen*) and it is rarely used; indeed, the most common realisation is *hinni*.

4.1.6. Suffixed Pronouns

Person	Pronouns after consonant	Pronouns after vowel
1 st sing.	<i>bēt-ē</i>	<i>warā-yē</i>
2 nd sing. m.	<i>bēt-ak</i>	<i>warā-k</i>
2 nd sing. f.	<i>bēt-ik</i>	<i>warā-ke</i>
3 rd sing. m.	<i>bēt-u</i>	<i>warā-h</i>
3 rd sing. f.	<i>bēt-ā</i>	<i>warā-hā</i>
1 st pl.	<i>bēt-nā</i>	<i>warā-nā</i>
2 nd pl. m./f.	<i>bēt-kon</i>	<i>warā-kon</i>
3 rd pl. m./f.	<i>bēt-on</i>	<i>warā-hon</i>

If we make a comparison between DA and HA it is possible to note that there are many elements between the two varieties, but in the more authentic form of HA it is possible to observe the following changes:

- the suffix of 1st person singular *-ī* becomes *-ē*;
- the suffix of 2nd person singular, feminine is *-ik*, maintaining *-i* like in SA;
- the suffix of 3rd person singular, masculine *-o* becomes *-u* like in SA.

However, the suffixes *-ī*, *-ek*, and *-o* are current because of the wide influence of the capital's dialect.

In the suffixes *-hā* and *-hon*, /h/ is generally not pronounced, unless it is preceded by a vowel *-a* or *-ā*, or it is only slightly perceived if speakers are trying to speak a 'purer' variety; then they tend to include /h/ to recall SA. Examples:

hawā-hā 'its air'

bi-bēt 'aḥmā-hā 'at the in-laws' house'

Moreover, in *-hā* and *-hon* the sound /h/, if not preceded by *-a/-ā*, is not pronounced /h/ but is replaced by the semivowel³⁴ corresponding to the vowel which precedes the suffix, as in the following examples:

/h/ → /w/

mā 'aḥlā hadīki l-'ayyām xarabū-^wā xrībi

'those were the good times, then. They spoiled everything'

³⁴I preferred to write the semi-vowels *w* and *y* in superscript since they are slightly pronounced.

bi- 'itālyā byaεmlū-^wā?

'do they do this in Italy too?'

baedēn masalan lāzem əl-'uxt bətzūr 'axū-^wā

'then, for example, the sister has to visit her brother'

/h/ → /y/

εand-ē kamān mazraea bitrabb ^əfī-^yā xuyūl earabiyyi 'ašīli

'I also have a plot of land where I breed Arabian thoroughbred horses'

māmqā εa-^tūl εam yužəεū-^wa 'ižrī-^ya

'mum constantly feels pain in her legs'

'ēh tattəšlē w bətzībī-^yā

'you call and you get her to pick you up'

4.1.7. Indirect Suffixed Pronouns

1 st sing.	'il-ē	-lē, -lī
2 nd sing. m.	'il-ak	-lak
2 nd sing. f.	'il-ik	-lik
3 rd sing. m.	'il-u	-lu
3 rd sing. f.	'il-ā	-lā
1 st pl.	'il-nā	-lnā
2 nd pl. m./f.	'il-kon	-lkon
3 rd pl. m./f.	'il-on	-lon

Deriving from the contraction of the prepositions /li/, /la/ and /'ilā/, a possessive stem /'il/³⁵ it is used in noun phrases. Examples:

l-kalimāt 'il-ā maεāni ktīr

'the words have richer meaning'

biḥubb luğ^t-t-ē l-earabiyyi ktīr ^əktīr w biḥəss-ā 'innu 'il-ā təem xāšš

'I love my language (Arabic): I think it has a unique flavour'

³⁵ /l-/ is also common, as in DA (Dahmash 2005: 63); in the texts it is possible to find both forms.

l-luḡa l-εāmmiyyi mā 'il-ā qawāεed

'dialect has no grammar'

'aktarīt əl-εālam εam tižī-^yā musāεadāt yaεnē əllī 'il-u ^qarāybīn bi-l-xalīz

'most people get help from their relatives from the Gulf'

əl-εarīs yałbəs ṭa^qm əl-εur^s w yaεmlū-lu l-εarāḡa tabaεit əl-εur^s

'the groom would get dressed and his friends would sing wedding folk songs to him'

bḡubb 'aḡkī-lkon εan ḡāl-ē

'I'd like to talk to you about me'

šū ra 'y-ak t^qūm tražzaε-lu yāh-ā, ^qāl-lī: lēš?

'what do you^m think about taking them back?'. He asked me why'

4.1.8. Reflexive Particle

The reflexive particle is also expressed by the particle *ḡāl* in HA, as in almost all Syrian dialects. Examples:

'ayy šē εand-u yaεnē bass byḡass ḡāl-u 'innu ḡēf byḡuṭṭ, εareftē?

'the important thing is that the people feel that all guests are giving something, no matter how much, you know?'

halla^q εam sāwē ḡāl-ē

'now I'm settling down'

w hadāk ^qām ḡāl-u: wāhed, tnēn, tlāti

'he stands up: one step, two steps, three steps'

žahhez ḡāl-ak yałla!

'come on^m, get ready!'

There is also a less common reflexive form using *nafs*, but only one example has been found in the texts of this research, as follows:

'izā kuntē min nōε əllī bəḡubbē ktīr masalan ṭawwrē nafs-ik, taεmlē dawrāt, əl-ḡayāt maftūḡa ^quddām-ik

'if you're a hard-working person, you'll probably get a very good job, if you're a career person and you like attending job training and keeping up-to-date, life will hold a lot of opportunities for you'

4.1.9. Demonstratives

	Sing. m.	Sing. f.	Pl. m./f.
Proximal ³⁸ demonstrative	<i>hādā, hād</i>	<i>hāyy³⁷</i>	<i>hadōl³⁶</i>
Distal demonstrative	<i>hadāk</i>	<i>hadīk (or hadīki)</i>	<i>hadōlīk (or hadōlīki)</i>

Examples of demonstratives in a pronominal function:

hādā balad-u

'this is his country'

hādā ḥarāmē ean žadd ḥarāmē

'he is really a thief' (Lit. 'This one is really a thief')

hādā huwwi l-εurs

'this is the wedding'

hāyy taḥḍīrāt⁴ abl əl-εurs

'these are wedding preparations'

hadōl⁴ ktīr tayybīn!

'these are so tasty!'

The *-i* added at the end of the word – *hadīki* and *hadōlīki* – seems to be more frequent when it refers to people who are the subject of the verb and occurs at the end of a sentence (Kalach 2016: 342):

wēn-ā hadīki?

'where is she?'

la-wēn rāḥō hadōlīki?

'where did they^f go?'

³⁶There is also the form *hadōle* ending with /e/.

³⁷We can also hear *hādī* as a feminine pronoun even if *hāyy* is the most commonly used.

³⁸I used the terms 'proximal' and 'distal' as in Cowell (1964: 552).

The stem *hād* is common and the long vowel *ā* is usually protracted more than usual during its intonation and *hād* occurs mainly at the end of a phrase (Cowell 1964: 553).

Examples of demonstrative pronouns:

šū hā:d?

'what is this?'

mišān šū hā:d?

'what is this for?'

Examples of demonstrative adjectives:

šū l-ḥaki hā:d?

'what are you talking about?'

w hādā š-šē 'akkadū-h miyyi b-əl-miyyi

'it is 100% certain this thing happened'

w ²l-laḥḥām hādā³⁹, maṣrē

'and this butcher is Egyptian'

byḍayyḥō hāyy r-rāḥa t-ta^qlīdiyyi l-ḥumṣiyyi

'they used to offer the typical Homs wedding favours'

fa- 'ištāḡalt bi-hāyy l-wazīftēn hadōlē ḥawālē 'arbaē ²snīn

'I had these two jobs for about four years'

'akād 'aštā^qēt la-balad-ē bi-hadōl at-tminⁱ snīn

'of course, I've missed my country during these eight years'

hadīk əl-manāte^q

'those areas'

'anā hadīki s-sini ruḥt

'I went (there) last year'

³⁹ It is also possible to put the adjective before the noun, for example: *w hādā l-laḥḥām* 'this butcher'.

We also find the invariable stem *ha-*, used on adjectival function, which is prefixed to the definite article:

bi-ha-l-madāres

'in these schools'

mi^ʔl ha-ṭ-ṭāwli

'like this table'

4.1.10. Demonstrative Adverbs of Location *hōn* and *hōnīk*

Examples for *hōn* 'here':

'anā ḥumṣē ḡāyy 'ištāḡel hōn!

'I am a Homsī who came to work here!'

'āh maṭl hōn maenāt-ā, bass hōn 'ašwab

'oh, so just like here, but here is even hotter'

l-ḥamāṣni hōn byaḥkō b-əl-εāmmē w naḥni hōn taεallamnā hēk

'the Homsīs here speak dialect: we learned this way'

Examples for *hōnīk* 'there':

'antē mā mumken tfūtē la-hōnīk lə 'ennu fī ḥawāžez la-l-šurṭa

'there's no way to access it because there are police check-points'

brūḥ la-εand ru^ʔāt-ē baεref ^ʔktīr nās hōnīki yaenē māši l- 'umūr

'I know many people there, so let's say things are going well'

hōnīki 'ahl əl-manṭi^ʔa 'aḡlabīt-on min 'ahl ən-nawar

'there most of the inhabitants are gypsies'

4.1.11. Demonstrative Adverbs of Time *ləssā* and *halla^ʔ*

halla^ʔ

now, right now, currently

ləssā , 'əssā

yet, still

Examples for *halla^ʔ*:

halla^ʔ nədemt lə 'annu tarakt, mā εād 'ə^ʔder ^ʔεod bidūn šuḡl

'now I regret doing it because I don't like being without a job'

'anā halla^q εāyši b-əl- 'imārāt

'I currently live in the UAE'

halla^q εand-ē maḥall ḥəlwiyyāt

'at the moment I have a candy (sweet) shop'

halla^q lāzem əs-sāea 'arbaea l-εaṣ^ʔr təržaeē εa-l-bēt

'nowadays you have to be home before 4 p.m.'

'anā halla^q addēš εumr-ē?

'how old am I now?'

halla^q could also mean 'so, well' for starting a sentence or for giving more emphasis to the meaning, but it is not always necessary to translate *halla^q* in other languages like in English because the sense is implicit. Examples:

halla^q baed šahar tfarražē hōn

'you'll feel the difference in a month'

halla^q 'antē εand-kon šōb w ruṭūbi wa-lā bass šōb?

'for example, is your weather humid and hot or just hot?'

halla^q kān 'ibn-ē yaṭlaε maε-ē εa-ž-žirān

'my son used to come with me to the neighbours'

It is interesting to note that *'assā*, which could derive from *as-sāea* or *li-s-sāea*, is very common in HA even though *lassā* is nowadays more likely to be used due to DA influence: probably *'assā* was more commonly used in the past in Homs and its occurrence over time has decreased in favour of *lassā*; indeed, speakers who used *'assā* are those who speak a more authentic form of HA. Nevertheless, this variation between *'assā* and *lassā* does not form any fixed grammatical rule at this point of my research since both are used.

Suffixes can be added to *lassā* and *'assā*: the negation must be placed after these demonstrative adverbs. When *'assā* or *lassā* are followed by a suffix that begins with a vowel a *-t* appears but the /ε/ disappears:

li-sāεa > li-sāεa-t-hu > ləssā-t-u 'he's still'

Examples for *ləssā*:

ləssāt-ak b-əl-bēt wəllā lā?

'are you^m still at home or not?'

ləssāt-nī⁴⁰ mrīḍa ktīr

'I am still very sick'

mā šərbō l-qahwi ləssā

'they have not drunk the coffee yet'

zǧīr, kunt ləssā 'awwal li-l-bakalōryā

'I was very young - it was long before my diploma'

ləssā bā^qē māddi w bətxarraǧ

'I've only got one exam left and I'll graduate soon'

honīki məsīhiyyi w 'islām ləssā byaḥkō hādā l-ḥakī t-t^qīl

'there Christians and Muslims still speak in that heavy way'

fī nās ləssā btaemel hēk w fī nās mā btaemel

'now some people still do it this way and others don't'

hadōlē əllī əyṣīn bi-l-ḥārāt əl-^qadīmi 'əssā by^qūlō

'only those who live in the old districts still say it'

fī-^yā ruṭūbi ktīr mə^ləl əl- 'imārāt w 'əssā 'aktar kamān

'there's as much humidity as in the UAE, even more'

mā fī-nē ḍall la-hōnīki li 'annu 'əssā ž-žaww 'aṣεab

'I couldn't cope with staying there that long, the weather is worse there'

hōn 'ašwab w 'əssā mā šufīē šē

'here is hotter and you still haven't seen anything'

⁴⁰It is worth noting that in the 1st sing.person-*nī* is added after *ləssā*, although there is the consonant -t that separates *ləssā* and the suffix; the suffix -*nī* is used after a verb and not -*ē*, like in *bēt-ē*.

yaenē minhağ daxm, 'əssā 'aktār min manāheğ sūryā
'a huge syllabus. A lot more than the Syrian teaching syllabus'

ləssāt-ik əam trūhē əa-ž-žīm mae 'uxt-ik?
'are you^f still going to the gym with your^f sister?'

ləssāt-nī əam ədros bi-l-žāmaəa
'I'm still studying at university'

kān əam y^qūl-lē 'innu 'umm-u ləssāt-ā bi-sūryā
'he was telling me that his mother is still in Syria'

Concerning Levantine Arabic, the use of *ləssā* is mentioned in Kassab (1970: 121) in the isolated form *ləssā* and with suffixes as *ləssā-nā*. Cowell (1964: 546) gives some examples about the use of *ləssā* specifying that the suffixes are not obligatory and it is also presented an example with '*baəd*' meaning 'still': *baəd-o təlmīz* 'he is still a student'. In Stowasser & Moukhtar's dictionary (1964: 225) it is possible to find *ləssā*, *ləssā(t)* + suffixed pronouns, meaning 'still', correlated by some examples, as: *ləssāt-on bi-rōma* 'they are still in Rome'
ləssā-k btəftaker hēk? 'Do you^m still think so?'

Also Dahmash (2005: 61-62) presents many examples about *ləssā* also in negative sentence with *mā*. Worth noting a recent study of Taine-Cheikh (2016: 531-539) regarding the use of *baəd* meaning 'still' and its variants. However '*əssā*' is not mentioned in any of these studies and it seems to confirm the assumption about the older origin of this term in HA.

4.1.12. Relative Stem

Homs Arabic has various stems for the relative pronoun, which are *əllī*, *yəllī* and *əl*, used for all genders and numbers. As far as the syntax⁴¹ is concerned, the rules do not differ from SA or other Arabic varieties.

Examples for *əllī*:

w hādā ṭabeən kull-u b-əl-əarabē li'annu naḥni l-madrasi əllī bidarres fī-^yā kull-ā 'ažāneb

⁴¹ Some grammatical elements in Arabic could belong to morphology and syntax at the same time, but I preferred to include 'Relative Stem' in Nominal Morphology.

'I do everything in Arabic because our school is for non-native speakers'

b-əḍ-ḍēea allī žamb ʔartūs ʔktīr fī mašākel

'however in the villages near Tartus there's lots of trouble'

mā mətl əž-žaww allī kān eāyšīn-u l-εālam, masalan twa^{qq}fē tətsallem

'it's not like back home where we used to stop to have a chat with someone'

*eand-ik masalan ən-nās allī tištəgel bi-dubayy yallī mā tə^qder tədfae mašārī ktīr ʔktīr,
bidd-ā tižē εa-š-šār^qa*

'for example, there are people working in Dubai but they don't earn enough money to live there, so they come to live in Sharjah'

š-šabāb allī eumr-on mə-l-εarbaēīn w taht harabō

'those who are forty or under have all fled'

bidd-ē ʔržae εa-l-bēt allī eišt fī-h

'I want to get back home, to the house where I've always lived'

kull hāyy lə-ʔšyā ʔabaēit əl-bēt yallī hiyyi ʔism-u hād žihāz əl-εarūs

'all these things are called the marriage trousseau'

l-εarūs btəḍubb kull lə-ğrād žābet-ā w tāxod-on εa-l-bēt yallī hiyyi bidd-ā tuskon fī-h

'she puts together what she has bought and takes it to the house where she'll be living'

bylabbas-ā d-dahab allī huwwi žāyeb-lā hdiyyi ʔabaēit əl-εurs

'he would obviously give her gold of the marriage and let her wear it'

allī is used after a word which ends with a consonant while *yallī* (also *yallī*) follows a word which ends with a vowel (Dahmash 2005: 67), but there are no fixed rules, so speakers can use both forms. As a matter of fact, the stem *allī* tends to be used more frequently in HA.

It is also heard the stem *əl-* means 'what, that' which is usually used in the city of Aleppo (Brustad 2000: 101) but it is also a typical feature of Iraqi Arabic. For example:

byāklō ʔakl əl-ʔumm əl-byḥubbū-h hinni

'they eat the food made by their mother that they love'

baedēn bḥuṭṭ kamān lə-bhārāt əl-byḥuṭṭū^w-ā b-əž-žāž

'then I put also the spices that they put in the chicken'

The particle *šū* generally has an interrogative function, but it can also be used in the relative function (Dahmash 2005: 69). Examples:

tae^arfe šū ɛamlet bənt-ik əl-yōm b-əl-madrasi?

'do you^f know what your daughter did at school today?'

šuftē šū šār baed-mā ruḥt?

'did you^f see what happened after I left?'

4.1.13. Interrogative Stems

šū

What?

šū bidd-ak min saeīd?

'what do you^m want from Saēīd?'

šū nasyān əl-muftāḥ?

'did you^m forget your keys?'

šū sm-u hāyy?

'what's that called?'

w^at-taḥḍīrāt šū bətkūn?

'what do the preparations consist of?'

halla^a šū bidd-nā nsāwē?

'now what shall we do?'

lēš

Why?

'ənti taeref lēš 'anā rkəbt ɛalā ktāf-ak?

'do you^m know why I took a ride on your shoulders?'

lēš əl-ḥumšē byḥuṭṭ xamsi lērāt bi-l-frīzār?

'do you know why a Homsī puts five lira notes in the freezer?'

lēš mā taerfī^y-ā?

'why don't you^f know her?'

hādā lēš māšē?

'why is he walking?'

^qāl-lu: lēš ražžaeū-^wā?

'he asked: why did they take it back?'

'*ēmtā,*
'*ēmat*⁴²

When?

'ēmtā ruḥtō ea-d-daktōr?

'when did you^{pl} go to the doctor?'

'ēmat εand-ik əl-faḥš?

'when do you^f have the exam?'

'ēmtā sāfartē ea-dubayy?

'when did you^f live in Dubai?'

la- 'ēmat mašgūl?

'when are you^m busy till?'

'ēmat εand-kon euḥli 'əntō?

'when do you^{pl} have holidays?'

^qaddēš,
'*ēš-^qadd,*
*kam*⁴³

How much?

How many?

šāyfi 'ēš-^qadd əl-εālam εam yieānō?

'do you^f have any idea how much these people have to suffer?'

lēkan 'ēš-^qadd εumr-ā?

'so, how old is she?'

'ēh ^qaddēš 'il-ē mā nzəlt?

'how long is it since I returned to my country?'

^qaddēš əl-maeāš?

'how much is the salary?'

žāyeb-lē lə-lsānāt, ^qāl kam wāḥed bidd-ik?

'he came back with the tongues. He asked me: how

⁴² Both forms are also used in affirmative sentences, for example: *mumken təḥlaē 'ēmat mā bidd-ik w 'ēmat mā bidd-ik tuduxlē* 'you^f can go out and come back whenever you want'.

⁴³ *kam* is used for countable nouns and it is usually followed by a singular noun (Cowell 1964: 572), while *^qaddēš* and *'ēš-^qadd* are used with uncountable nouns.

many tongues do you want?'

kam wāhed fī bi-ṣ-ṣaff?

'how many students are there in the class?'

wēn

Where?

wēn rāyeh? min wēn ḡāy?

'where are you^m going? Where do you^m come from?'

bass kull hōnīki ṭ-ṭur^qāt msakkra, wēn?

'all the roads are blocked off there. Where?'

fī nās εam yižō min ḡalab εam yrūḡō la-wēn?

'others came from Aleppo and where are they going?'

'azā rāḡ al-bēt wēn mən rūḡ?

'if they take the house off from us, where are we supposed to go?'

wēn ṣurtū 'antō?

'where have you been?'

kīf, šlōn

How?

kīf-ā l-māmā w l-bābā?

'how is your mother? And your father?'

kīf al-εēli?

'how is your family?'

šlōn zaεaltē l-walad?

'how did you^f make the boy so upset?'

šlōn hēk ṣār?

'how did that happen?'

šlōn mā fī εand-ak batinžān?

'how is it possible you^m don't have any eggplants?'

'ayy, 'anu

Which?

fī 'ayy sāea l-ḡafli?

'what time is the party?'

'anu fustān ḥābbi?
'which dress do you^f like?'

'anu wāḥed bidd-ak?
'which one do you^m want?'

'ayy yōm rāh trūḥē ea-š-šugl?
'which day are you^f working?'

bi- 'ayy bēt sāknīn halla^q?
'which house are they living in now?'

mīn Who?

mīn 'akal sandwīšt-ē?
'who ate my sandwich?'

mīn-u ha-z-zalami?
'who's this man?'

mīn eam ydu^{aq} ea-l-bāb?
'who's knocking on the door?'

šū-b-ak ḥabīb-ē mīn zaēel-ak?
'what's making you^m so upset, darling?'

mae mīn eam taḥkē ea-t-taliḥōn?
'who are you^m talking to (on the phone)?'

4.1.14. Prepositions

b-, bi 'in, at, by, with'

bi-nuṣṣ aṣ-ṣaḥrā
'in the middle of the desert'

*l-wāḥed byaṭeallam bi-bēt-u l-luḡa l-earabiyyi l-
eāmmiyyi*
'you learn dialect at home'

kunt šāṭra ktīr b-əl-ibtidā'ē
'I was very good at elementary school'

min, mən 'from, of, than'

kull dirāst-ē min əl-'ibtidā'ē 'ilā l-ḡāmasa kull-ā

b-əl-luġa l-fuṣḥā

'all of my studies, from elementary school to university, have been in Fuṣḥā'

maε 'ašxāš mumken ykūnō min ġēr əl-madīni

'with someone who comes from another city'

'aemār ət-tullāb min 'arba li-səttⁱsnīn

'the kids' ages vary between four and six years old'

baed 'after'

baed əl-ħarb əllī šāret εam 'əsməε^oktīr mašākel

'after the beginning of the war I received bad news'

baed hēk mā mumken trūḥē wa-lā maħall

'after that there's nowhere to go'

baed əs-sāea tneāš b-əl-lēl

'after midnight.'

^qabl 'before'

^qabl əd-ḍuhr

'before noon'

halla^q hāyy taħḍīrāt^q əl-εur^os

'so these are the preparations before the wedding'

^quddām 'in front of,
opposite'

mā la^qēt fī musta^qbal la-^quddām

'I felt I hadn't found my ideal path for the future'

lə'ennu fī^q uddām-u l-ħāra yallī fī-^yā mašākel^oktīr

'because right opposite it there's a very troubled neighbourhood'

bymurrō min^q uddām bēt əl-εarīs w min^q uddām bēt židd-ā l-əl-εarūs

'they drive past the groom's house, or the bride's grandparents' place'

<i>warā</i>	'behind, after'	<p><i>byur²kdō warā-hā</i> 'they used to gather around her'</p> <p><i>hādā rfi⁴ē ḡāyy ḡāyeb warā-yē sayyāret flefli ḡamra!</i> 'he's a friend of mine who's coming after me with a heavy load of chili peppers!'</p>
<i>εalā, εa-</i>	'on, about, to'	<p><i>kull ən-nukat by⁴ūlō εalā 'ahl ḡum^oš</i> 'all the jokes are about the Homsis'</p> <p><i>εamal-ē mušrāfa εalā bināy l-madāres</i> 'I work as a construction coordinator of the schools'</p> <p><i>'əmšē ṭūl ṭūl w bətluffē εa-l-yamīn</i> 'go straight on, then turn right'</p>
<i>εan</i>	'about, from'	<p><i>bə⁴der²ktīr εabber εan 'afkār-ē b-əl-luḡa l-fuṣḡā</i> 'I'm able to express my thoughts fluently in Fuṣḡā'</p> <p><i>l-barāmež əllī biḡaddasō εan ət-tārīx əl-⁴adīm</i> 'the programmes that are about ancient history'</p> <p><i>bə⁴rā žarāyed fī-^yā εan 'aḡwāl ḡum^oš.</i> 'I read newspapers involving news about Homs'</p>
<i>žanb</i> normally realised <i>žamb</i>	'next to'	<p><i>mištā⁴a 'ākol falāfel žamb əl-bēt.</i> 'I miss eating falafel in the neighbourhood'</p> <p><i>mā ruḡt 'abadan εand əl-laḡḡām əllī žamb əl-barīd</i> 'I have never been at the butcher's that is next to the post office'</p>

<i>bēn, bēnāt</i> ⁴⁴	'between'	<p><i>l-far^q bēn əl-luġtēn</i> 'the differences between the two languages'</p> <p><i>'aw^qāt bəxloṭ bēn əl-fuṣḥā w l-εāmmiyyi</i> 'I like using a mix of Fuṣḥā and dialect'</p> <p><i>l-luġa l-fuṣḥā mnəstaxdim-ā li-t-taεāmul bēn əš- šarikāt</i> 'we use fuṣḥā dealing with companies'</p> <p><i>mā fī šē bēnāt-on 'akīd</i> 'there is nothing between them, I'm sure'</p>
<i>maε</i>	'with'	<p><i>wa^qət bəteāmal maε 'aṣḥāb-ē</i> 'when I deal with my friends'</p> <p><i>hinni mabsūṭīn maε-ē ktīr</i> 'they are happy with me'</p> <p><i>kān 'ibn-ē yaṭlaε maε-ē εa-ž-žirān</i> 'my son used to come with me to the neighbours'</p>
<i>εand</i>	'with, at'	<p><i>bištəġel εand maḥall ḥātem</i> 'I work at Hatem's store'</p> <p><i>εand 'umm əl-εarīs</i> 'at the groom's mother's house'</p> <p><i>hādā εand ġalībit əl-'awlād</i> 'this is something that happens to most kids'</p>

⁴⁴ *bēn* is used for the singular + suffixed pronouns, as: *bēn-ē, bēn-ak, bēn-ik, bēn-ū, bēn-ā*, instead *bēnāt* is used for the plural, as follows: *bēnāt-nā, bēnāt-kon, bēnāt-on*.

<i>fō^q</i>	'on, at, over'	<p><i>l-waḍaε ^ʔktīr taεbān šāyer bi-ḥumoş, fō^q mā tətḥayyalē</i></p> <p>'the situation in Homs is even worse than you can imagine'</p> <p><i>əl-qānūn fō^q əž-žamīε</i></p> <p>'the law applies to everyone'</p> <p><i>wāhed rəkeb min fō^q</i></p> <p>'one got on upstairs'</p>
<i>taḥt</i>	'under, at'	<p><i>hadīki ġasəlt-ā taḥt əl-ḥanaḥfiyyi</i></p> <p>'I washed it under the tap'</p> <p><i>wāhed rəkeb əl-bāş min taḥt</i></p> <p>'one gets on the bus downstairs'</p> <p><i>ḍallēt sini ēāyşi bi-sūryā taḥt əl-mašākel w s-sawra</i></p> <p>'I stayed in Syria dealing with the revolution and its problems for a year'</p>
<i>la-, l-</i>	'to'	<p><i>hiyyi luġa ġamīli w şaεbi w saḥli la-mīn yaεrif-ā</i></p> <p>'it is a very nice and articulate language and easy for those who know it'</p> <p><i>bətfarraž la-şuġlē mažāl dirāst-ē 'anā</i></p> <p>'I can look for a job in my field of studies'</p> <p><i>bi-madrasi l-əl-banāt</i></p> <p>'in a high school for girls'</p>
<i>fi</i>	'in, at'	<p><i>ḥumş^q adīmi ġiddan fi-t-tārīx</i></p> <p>'Homs is historically very old'</p> <p><i>l-fuşḥā l-maktūbi tudarras⁴⁵ ḥattā fi-l-ġāmaεa</i></p> <p>'Fuşḥā is taught up to and including university'</p>

⁴⁵ Here the speaker used a classicism *tudarras*, a passive form.

ḥasab 'according to,
depending on' *ḥasab 'antē w šaṭārt-ik*
'depending on your own skills'
ḥasab šū bidd-ik 'antē
'depending on what you want'

4.1.15. Conjunctions

'aw 'or' *kān halla^q'awwal mā 'inta^qalnā tnēn w sattīn 'aw
sattīn 'alf*
'for example, we paid 62,000 or maybe 60,000
Dirhams when we moved here'

baedēn thuttē kās 'it ḥalīb 'aw laban
'then you^f add a glass of milk or yoghurt'

yā 'or' *'anā lāzem 'atrok əl-balad la 'annu yā bmūt yā beīš*
'I had to leave that place because I could either live or
die'

əš-šabāb yā byrūḥ ġēš, yā byrūḥ 'iḥtiyāt
'young guys are forced to join either the army or the
reserves'

bass, 'but, just,
lāken though' *'anā mā bḥuṭṭ šē bass məlḥ w fulful*
'I don't add anything else, just salt and pepper'

*l-ḥayāt bi-libnān mlīḥa kull šē mətwaḥḥer bass əl-
ḥayāt ġālē*
'life in Lebanon is good; you can find anything you
need, but it's expensive'

l-luġa l-εāmmiyyi ġēr maktūbi lāken mənṭišra ktīr
'dialect is not written, but it is very common
(spoken)'

fa 'so, therefore' *mā mumken tfūtē la-hōnīk lə'ennu fī ḥawāžez la-l-
šurṭa fa-mā mumken 'abadan trūḥē lā hōnīk*

'another thing is that there's no way to access it because there are police check-points, so nobody can go there'

'anā bidd-ē taksi bass please la-sayyidi, 'ēh, fa-tižē wallāh hiyyi la-εand-ik εa-l-bāb

'I want a taxi, but please only for women and so she'll come'

w 'and'

txarrağt εām 'alf w tisea miyyi w tmānīn

'I graduated in 1980'

wa^qət bəteāmal mae 'aṣḥāb-ē w 'ahl-ē w ž-žīrān bistaxdem ^ol-luğa l-εāmmiyyi

'I speak dialect when I'm with my friends, family and neighbours'

wəllā 'or, unless'
(wallā,
willā)

'amu wāhed šərbū hād wəllā hadāk?

'which one did they drink this one or that one?'

'axīran šū rāyḥa wəllā lā' εa-l-ḥafli?

'did you^f finally decide if are you going to the party or not?'

4.1.16. Subordinatings

'izā 'if'

'izā mnə^qder nahni nuxloṭ bēn əl-ḥāltēn bi-ḥadīs-nā
'if we could mix the two in our speech'

təṭlaεē b-ət-taksi la-ḥāl-ik 'izā 'əntē mā bətsū^qē

'you^f can also go out on your own if you^f don't drive, by taking a taxi'

'innu 'that'

biḥəss-ā 'innu 'il-ā ṭaem xāṣṣ

'I think it has a unique flavour'

wa^qət mən^qerā mnaεref 'innu hāyy fushā w bass hēk

'when we read something we know that is written in

Fuṣḥā - nothing more than this'

ḥattā 'until, even'

ḥattā l-baḥar mā byaṭḥarrak!

'the sea itself doesn't move!'

kull yōm yaṣḥar la-εand-on la-ḥattā ynāmō

'every day he stayed there until really late'

ka'annu 'as, like'

šū-b-u? ka'annu marīd

'what's wrong with him? He looks sick'

bard^o ktīr əl-yōm, ka'annu šiti

'it is very cold today like in winter'

la'annu, 'because'

li'annu,

lə'ennu

mā fī-nē ḍall la-hōnīki li'annu'əssā ž-žaww 'aṣḥab

'I couldn't cope with staying there that long. The weather is worse there'

mā kān εand-ē xayār tānē ḡēr qaṭar lə'ennu kān fī

ḥada ya^oder yaemil-lē vīza bi-qaṭar

'I chose to move to Qatar as it was my only option.

I had someone there to get a visa for me'

4.1.17. Elative

Elatives are invariable and mainly derive from adjectives based on the pattern 'afēal and its meaning, related to the adjective we are referring to, is 'more or most + meaning of the adjective'. In the comparative form it is generally followed by the particle *min*. In the superlative form, it is preceded by the definite article *əl-* and it could be followed by *min*, or the elative could occur before indefinite nouns, for example:

ḥumṣ fī waṣat sūryā w tuεtabar min 'aḡmal əl-mudon li-wuḡūd əl-xaḍār fī-yā

'Homs is in the centre of Syria and it's considered one of the most beautiful cities, thanks to its greenery'

They can be divided into the following categories:

a) Elative deriving from trilateral regular roots:

<i>žamīl</i>	'beautiful'	>	' <i>ažmal</i>	'more, most beautiful'
<i>garīb</i>	'strange'	>	' <i>ağrab</i>	'stranger, strangest'
<i>sahl</i>	'easy'	>	' <i>ashal</i>	'easier, easiest'
<i>basīf</i>	'simple'	>	' <i>absaṭ</i>	'simpler, simplest'
<i>ṣaeb</i>	'difficult'	>	' <i>aṣeab</i>	'more, most difficult'

b) Elative deriving from defective roots:

<i>ḥalu</i>	'nice'	>	' <i>aḥlā</i>	'nicer, nicest'
<i>ğālē</i>	'expensive'	>	' <i>ağlā</i>	'more, most expensive'
^q <i>awē</i>	'strong'	>	' <i>a^qwā</i>	'stronger, strongest'
<i>ğanī</i>	'rich'	>	' <i>ağnā</i>	'richer, richest'

c) Elative deriving from second and third radicals alike:

^q <i>alīl</i>	'little, few'	>	' <i>a^qall</i>	'less, least'
<i>muhāmm</i>	'important'	>	' <i>aḥamm</i>	'more, most important'
<i>xafīf</i>	'light'	>	' <i>axaff</i>	'lighter, lightest'
<i>ždīd</i>	'new'	>	' <i>ažadd,</i> ' <i>aždad</i>	'newer, newest'

4.1.18. Diminutive

The diminutive is formed on the patterns *faεεūl* and *faεεūli/a* in order to create nicknames or words of affection (Cowell 1964: 310).

Examples:

' <i>ax</i>	'brother'	>	<i>xayy</i>
' <i>uxt</i>	'sister'	>	<i>xayye</i>
<i>bənt</i>	'girl'	>	<i>bannūti</i>
<i>layān</i>	'proper name'	>	<i>layyūni</i>
^q <i>amar</i>	'proper name'	>	^q <i>ammūra</i>
<i>mḥammad</i>	'proper name'	>	<i>ḥammūdi</i>
<i>εabd əl-raḥīm</i>	'proper name'	>	<i>εabbūdi</i> or <i>raḥḥūm</i>

Also irregular diminutives occur for proper names, such as:

' <i>āya</i>	>	' <i>ayyūš</i>
<i>kinda</i>	>	<i>kandūš</i>
<i>bīsān</i>	>	<i>bīsū</i>

rānya > *rannūš*

Diminutives as *ktāb* 'a book' > *kutayyib* 'a booklet, a small book' are not used in HA since occur other forms such as: *ktāb* 'a book' > *ktāb* [°]*zġīr* 'a booklet, a small book'; *kalb* 'a dog' > *kalb* [°]*zġīr* 'doggie, a little dog'.

4.1.19. Cardinal Numerals

a) Numbers 1 and 2:

	Masculine	Feminine
1	<i>wāḥed</i>	<i>waḥdi</i>
2	<i>tnēn</i>	<i>təntēn</i>

The numeral 1 is used as a noun attribute in order to underline the idea of a single unit and the noun must be indefinite, for example: *šahar wāḥed* 'one month'; *bənt waḥdi* 'one girl'; *šahn wāḥed* 'one dish'. Or the numeral can precede the noun, as follows: *wāḥed ḥumṣē* 'a Homsī' when meaning 'a certain'.

To express 'a unit' *fard* is also common: *fard marra* 'once, at one time'.

The numeral 2 it is used alone or to specify the dual form of two objects or two persons: *hadōl əl-banāt ət-təntēn* 'these two girls'.

b) Numbers from 3 to 10:

	Isolated	In construct ([°] <i>idāfa</i>)	With few words ⁴⁶
3	<i>tlāti</i>	<i>tlit</i>	<i>tlitt-</i>
4	<i>'arbaea</i>	<i>'arbae</i>	<i>'arbaet-</i>
5	<i>xamsi</i>	<i>xam[°]s</i>	<i>xam[°]st-</i>
6	<i>sətti</i>	<i>sətt</i>	<i>sətt-</i>
7	<i>sabea</i>	<i>sab[°]e</i>	<i>sab[°]et-</i>
8	<i>tmāni</i>	<i>tmin</i>	<i>tmint-</i>
9	<i>tisea</i>	<i>tis[°]e</i>	<i>tis[°]et-</i>
10	<i>əšaara</i>	<i>əša[°]r</i>	<i>əša[°]rt-</i>

⁴⁶ These numerals are used with few words indicating time and quantities whose plural begins with a vowel, for example: *iyām* 'days', *ašhor* 'months'.

From 3 to 10, the numerals stand in construct with nouns in the plural. Examples: *tmin* ⁱ*snīn* 'eight years'; *xam*^o*s sayyārāt* 'five cars'; *tlit kāsāt šāy* 'three glasses of tea'.

c) Numbers from 11 to 19:

	Isolated	In construction (<i>'idāfa</i>)
11	<i>'idaeš</i>	<i>'idaešar</i>
12	<i>ṭnaeš</i>	<i>ṭnaešar</i>
13	<i>ṭləṭṭeaeš</i>	<i>ṭləṭṭeaešar</i>
14	<i>'arbaeṭaeš</i>	<i>'arbaṭaešar</i>
15	<i>xamuṣṭaeš</i>	<i>xam^oṣṭaešar</i>
16	<i>ṣəṭṭaeš</i>	<i>ṣəṭṭaešar</i>
17	<i>sabaṭaeš</i>	<i>sabaṭaešar</i>
18	<i>tmunṭaeš</i>	<i>tmənṭaešar</i>
19	<i>tiṣaeṭaeš</i>	<i>təṣaeṭaešar</i>

From 11 to 19, the numerals stand in construct with nouns in the singular. Examples: *tmənṭaešar yōm* 'eighteen days'; *'arbaṭaešar walad* 'fourteen boys'; *xam^oṣṭaešar marra* 'fifteen times'.

d) Multiples of ten:

20	<i>eašrīn</i>
30	<i>tlātīn</i>
40	<i>'arbaeīn</i>
50	<i>xamsīn</i>
60	<i>səttīn</i>
70	<i>sabeīn</i>
80	<i>tmānīn</i>
90	<i>tiseīn</i>

e) Hundreds and thousands:

100	<i>miyyi</i>	1000	<i>'alf</i>
200	<i>mitēn</i>	2000	<i>'alfēn</i>

300	<i>tlāt miyyi</i>	3000	<i>tlitt 'alāf</i>
400	<i>'arbae miyyi</i>	4000	<i>'arbaet 'alāf</i>
500	<i>xam^os miyyi</i>	5000	<i>xam^ost 'alāf</i>
600	<i>sətt miyyi</i>	6000	<i>sətt 'alāf</i>
700	<i>sabea miyyi</i>	7000	<i>sabaet 'alāf</i>
800	<i>tmān miyyi</i>	8000	<i>tmint 'alāf</i>
900	<i>tisae miyyi</i>	9000	<i>tisaet 'alāf</i>

From 19 to infinite, the numerals stand in construct with the singular. In construct *miyyi* > *mīt*. Examples:

tmint 'alāf lēra '8000 pounds'; *sabea mīt šaxš* '700 people'; *xam^os mīt dirham* '500 dirhams'.

4.1.20. Ordinal Numerals

	Masculine	Feminine
first	<i>'awwal</i>	<i>'ulā</i>
second	<i>tānī, tānē</i>	<i>tānī, tānē</i>
third	<i>tālet</i>	<i>tālti</i>
fourth	<i>rābee</i>	<i>rābea</i>
fifth	<i>xāmes</i>	<i>xāmsi</i>
sixth	<i>sādes</i>	<i>sādsi</i>
seventh	<i>sābee</i>	<i>sābea</i>
eighth	<i>tāmen</i>	<i>tāmni</i>
ninth	<i>tāsee</i>	<i>tāsea</i>
tenth	<i>ēāšer</i>	<i>ēāšra</i>

Worth observation is that *tānī* or *tānē* 'second' has the same form for both masculine and feminine; *tānī* means also 'other, another'.

Examples:

byākol banadōra tānī

'he eats another tomato'

ruḥt ea-l- 'urdon marra tānī

'I went to Jordan once again'

tānī marra ⁹*aett hawālē šahar*

'the second time I stayed almost a month'

bi-d-duwal əl-əarabiyyi t-tānī

'in the other Arab countries'

4.2. Verbal Morphology

The majority of verbs in HA derive from triradical patterns, although quadriradical regular and weak⁴⁷ verbs and the derived forms of the sound verbs from II to X⁴⁸ have also been taken in consideration. In this section a complete conjugation for each type of verb is presented, supported by linguistic comments on some aspects that have been considered relevant for the purpose of this research.

In this dissertation perfective and imperfective tenses have been presented also the imperative, besides active and passive participles (when used), while the subjunctive has not been included due to the fact that the inflection remains the same as the imperfect, but without any indicative prefix such as *b-*.

4.2.1. Regular Verbs

a) Pattern *a – o*: *faʿal*, *byuʿʿol*.

Conjugation of *katab*, *yuktob* 'to write'

	Perfect	Imperfect	Imperative
1 st sing.	<i>katabt</i>	<i>buktob</i>	
2 nd sing. m.	<i>katabt</i>	<i>btuktob</i>	<i>ktōb</i>
2 nd sing. f.	<i>katabtē</i>	<i>btuk²tbē</i>	<i>ktubē</i>
3 rd sing. m.	<i>katab</i>	<i>byuktob</i>	
3 rd sing. f.	<i>katbet</i>	<i>btuktob</i>	
1 st pl.	<i>katabnā</i>	<i>mnuktob</i>	
2 nd pl. m./f.	<i>katabtō</i>	<i>btuk²tbō</i>	<i>ktubō</i>
3 rd pl. m./f.	<i>katabō</i>	<i>byuk²tbō</i>	
Participles	Active	Passive	

⁴⁷ There also quadriradical-weak forms like *faršā*, *yfaršī* 'to brush'.

⁴⁸ Derived forms are designated with ordinal numbers in Western grammars, but not in Arab countries.

kāteb *maktūb*

b) Pattern *a – a: faeal, byifeal*.

Conjugation of *fataḥ, yiftaḥ* 'to open'

	Perfect	Imperfect	Imperative
1 st sing.	<i>fataḥt</i>	<i>biftaḥ</i>	
2 nd sing. m.	<i>fataḥt</i>	<i>btiftaḥ</i>	<i>ftāḥ</i>
2 nd sing. f.	<i>fataḥtē</i>	<i>btiftaḥē</i>	<i>ftaḥē</i>
3 rd sing. m.	<i>fataḥ</i>	<i>byiftaḥ</i>	
3 rd sing. f.	<i>fataḥet</i>	<i>btiftaḥ</i>	
1 st pl.	<i>fataḥnā</i>	<i>mniftaḥ</i>	
2 nd pl. m./f.	<i>fataḥtō</i>	<i>btiftaḥō</i>	<i>ftaḥō</i>
3 rd pl. m./f.	<i>fataḥō</i>	<i>byiftaḥō</i>	
Participles	Active	Passive	
	<i>fāteḥ</i>	<i>maftūḥ</i>	

c) Pattern *e – a: faeel, byifeal*.

Conjugation of *šareb, yišrab* 'to drink'

	Perfect	Imperfect	Imperative
1 st sing.	<i>šarabt</i>	<i>bišrab</i>	
2 nd sing. m.	<i>šarabt</i>	<i>btišrab</i>	<i>šrāb</i>
2 nd sing. f.	<i>šarabtē</i>	<i>btišrabē</i>	<i>šrabē</i>
3 rd sing. m.	<i>šareb</i>	<i>byišrab</i>	
3 rd sing. f.	<i>šarbet</i>	<i>btišrab</i>	
1 st pl.	<i>šarabnā</i>	<i>mnīšrab</i>	
2 nd pl. m./f.	<i>šarabtō</i>	<i>btišrabō</i>	<i>šrabō</i>
3 rd pl. m./f.	<i>šarbō</i>	<i>byišrabō</i>	
Participles	Active	Passive	
	<i>šāreb</i>	<i>mašrūb</i>	

d) Pattern *a – e: faɛal, byifɛel*.

Conjugation of *kamaš, byikmeš* 'to grasp'

	Perfect	Imperfect	Imperative
1 st sing.	<i>kamašt</i>	<i>bikmeš</i>	
2 nd sing. m.	<i>kamašt</i>	<i>btikmeš</i>	<i>kmēš</i>
2 nd sing. f.	<i>kamaštē</i>	<i>btik^ʔmšē</i>	<i>kmešē</i>
3 rd sing. m.	<i>kamaš</i>	<i>byikmeš</i>	
3 rd sing. f.	<i>kamšet</i>	<i>btikmeš</i>	
1 st pl.	<i>kamašnā</i>	<i>mnikmeš</i>	
2 nd pl. m./f.	<i>kamaštō</i>	<i>btik^ʔmšō</i>	<i>kmāšō</i>
3 rd pl. m./f.	<i>kamašō</i>	<i>byik^ʔmšō</i>	
Participles	Active	Passive	
	<i>kāmeš</i>	<i>makmūš</i>	

4.2.1.1. Pattern e-e: *fəɛel, byafɛel*

This pattern is a mixed typology between I and IV form.

Conjugation of *māsek, byamsek* 'to hold'

	Perfect	Imperfect	Imperative
1 st sing.	<i>msəkt</i>	<i>bimsek</i>	
2 nd sing. m.	<i>msəkt</i>	<i>btamsek</i>	<i>msēk</i>
2 nd sing. f.	<i>msəktē</i>	<i>btam^ʔskē</i>	<i>msikē</i>
3 rd sing. m.	<i>māsek</i>	<i>byamsek</i>	
3 rd sing. f.	<i>māsket</i>	<i>btamsek</i>	
1 st pl.	<i>msəknā</i>	<i>mnamsek</i>	
2 nd pl. m./f.	<i>msəktō</i>	<i>btam^ʔskō</i>	<i>msikō</i>
3 rd pl. m./f.	<i>māskō</i>	<i>byam^ʔskō</i>	
Participles	Active	Passive	
	<i>māsek</i>	<i>mamsūk</i>	

It is worth noting that in HA, in the prefix vowel of the imperfect the following can occur:

Pattern *a – o: /-ə/ or /-u/*, for example: *mnəktob* or *mnuktob* 'we write'

Pattern *a – a*: /-ə/ or /-i/, for example: *btəftāḥ* or *btiftaḥ* 'you^m open'

Pattern *e – a*: /-ə/ or /-i/, for example: *bəšrab* or *bišrab* 'I drink'

Pattern *a – e*: /-ə/ or /-a/, for example: *btəkmeš* or *btikmeš* 'she grasps'

Pattern *e – e*: /-ə/ or /-i/, for example: *yəmsek* or *yamsek* 'he holds'

The variation between /-ə/ instead of /-i/, /-u/, /-a/ in the prefix is not stable. Transcript analysis revealed that all informants mix and interchange /-ə/ with /-i/ and /-u/ and more rarely /-a/. Probably patterns with /-i/ and /-u/ are older and more established in the past, while the occurrence of /-ə-/ is likely due to DA influence. We can assume that in a more spontaneous and original form of Homs variety the tendency is to maintain -i, -a, -u.

4.2.2. Quadriradical Forms

a) Regular verb: conjugation of *bahdal*, *bybahdel* 'to scold'

	Perfect	Imperfect	Imperative
1 st sing.	<i>bahdalt</i>	<i>b²bahdel</i>	
2 nd sing. m.	<i>bahdalt</i>	<i>bətbahdel</i>	<i>bahdel</i>
2 nd sing. f.	<i>bahdaltē</i>	<i>bətbah²dlē</i>	<i>bah²dlē</i>
3 rd sing. m.	<i>bahdal</i>	<i>bybahdel</i>	
3 rd sing. f.	<i>bahdalet</i>	<i>bətbahdel</i>	
1 st pl.	<i>bahdalnā</i>	<i>mənbahdel</i>	
2 nd pl. m./f.	<i>bahdaltō</i>	<i>bətbah²dlō</i>	<i>bah²dlō</i>
3 rd pl. m./f.	<i>bahdalō</i>	<i>byəbah²dlō</i>	
Participles	Active	Passive	
	<i>mbahdel</i>	<i>mbahdal</i>	

4.2.3. Geminate Verbs in Simple Triradical Patterns

Geminate verbs are those verbs in which the second and the third radical are alike. Similarly to some Lebanese and Palestinian varieties, the following variations in HA have been observed for Pattern I:

a) *a – a* as *ḍall*, *yḍall* 'to remain';

Conjugation of *ḍall*, *byḍall* 'to remain'

	Perfect	Imperfect	Imperative
1 st sing.	<i>ḍallēt</i>	<i>bḍall</i>	
2 nd sing. m.	<i>ḍallēt</i>	<i>bəṭḍall</i>	<i>ḍall</i>
2 nd sing. f.	<i>ḍallētē</i>	<i>bəṭḍallē</i>	<i>ḍallē</i>
3 rd sing. m.	<i>ḍall</i>	<i>biḍall</i>	
3 rd sing. f.	<i>ḍallet</i>	<i>bəṭḍall</i>	
1 st pl.	<i>ḍallēnā</i>	<i>mənḍall</i>	
2 nd pl. m./f.	<i>ḍallētō</i>	<i>bəṭḍallō</i>	<i>ḍallō</i>
3 rd pl. m./f.	<i>ḍallō</i>	<i>byḍallō</i>	
Participles	Active	Passive	
	<i>māded</i>	<i>mamdūd</i>	

b) *a – u* as *ḥaṭṭ*, *yḥuṭṭ* 'to put'; *da^{aq}*, *ydu^{aq}* 'to knock'; *kabb*, *ykubb* 'to throw away'; *naṭṭ*, *ynuṭṭ* 'to jump'.

Conjugation of *ḥaṭṭ*, *biḥuṭṭ* 'to put'

	Perfect	Imperfect	Imperative
1 st sing.	<i>ḥaṭṭēt</i>	<i>bḥuṭṭ</i>	
2 nd sing. m.	<i>ḥaṭṭēt</i>	<i>bəṭḥuṭṭ</i>	<i>ḥuṭṭ</i>
2 nd sing. f.	<i>ḥaṭṭētē</i>	<i>bəṭḥuṭṭē</i>	<i>ḥuṭṭē</i>
3 rd sing. m.	<i>ḥaṭṭ</i>	<i>biḥuṭṭ</i>	
3 rd sing. f.	<i>ḥaṭṭet</i>	<i>bəṭḥuṭṭ</i>	
1 st pl.	<i>ḥaṭṭēnā</i>	<i>mənḥuṭṭ</i>	
2 nd pl. m./f.	<i>ḥaṭṭētō</i>	<i>bəṭḥuṭṭō</i>	<i>ḥuṭṭō</i>
3 rd pl. m./f.	<i>ḥaṭṭō</i>	<i>byḥuṭṭō</i>	
Participles	Active	Passive	
	<i>ḥāṭeṭ</i>	<i>maḥṭūṭ</i>	

The prefix vowel remains /-ə/ as in DA, but the short vowel that precedes the two identical radicals is /u/ instead of /ə/.

c) *a – i* as *ḥass*, *yḥiss* 'to feel' that can also occur as *a – ə* > *ḥass*, *yḥass*, however both are less common compared to the patterns /*a – a*/ and /*a – u*/. Although in Chapter III it was stated that SA /i/ in tonic and pre-tonic positions is maintained in HA, in this case the tendency is *ḥass*, *yḥass* or *mall*, *ymall* 'to get bored', with –ə as well, like in DA.

Conjugation of *ḥass*, *byḥass* 'to hold'

	Perfect	Imperfect	Imperative
1 st sing.	<i>ḥassēt</i>	<i>bḥass</i> or <i>bḥiss</i>	
2 nd sing. m.	<i>ḥassēt</i>	<i>bathass</i> or <i>bathiss</i>	<i>ḥass</i> or <i>ḥiss</i>
2 nd sing. f.	<i>ḥassētē</i>	<i>bathassē</i> or <i>bathissē</i>	<i>ḥassē</i> or <i>ḥissē</i>
3 rd sing. m.	<i>ḥass</i>	<i>byḥass</i> or <i>byḥiss</i>	
3 rd sing. f.	<i>ḥasset</i>	<i>bathass</i> or <i>bathiss</i>	
1 st pl.	<i>ḥassēnā</i>	<i>mānthass</i> or <i>mnāḥiss</i>	
2 nd pl. m./f.	<i>ḥassētō</i>	<i>bathassō</i> or <i>bathissō</i>	<i>ḥassō</i> or <i>ḥissō</i>
3 rd pl. m./f.	<i>ḥassō</i>	<i>byḥassō</i> or <i>byḥissō</i>	
Participles	Active	Passive	
	<i>ḥāses</i>	<i>maḥsūs</i>	

4.2.4. Weak Verbs

Weak verbs are those verbs with *wāw* or *yā'* as a root consonant and they can be divided into three categories:

- assimilated: verbs which have a *w-* or a *y-* as first consonant of the root;
- hollow: verbs which have a *w-* or a *y-* as second consonant of the root;
- defective: verbs which have a *w-* or a *y-* as third consonant of the root.

4.2.4.1. Assimilated Verbs

a) Verb with *-w* as first root consonant. Pattern *a – e*: *waṣaf*, *byūṣef* 'to describe'

	Perfect	Imperfect	Imperative
1 st sing.	<i>waṣaft</i>	<i>būṣef</i>	
2 nd sing. m.	<i>waṣaft</i>	<i>btūṣef</i>	<i>wṣēf</i>
2 nd sing. f.	<i>waṣaftē</i>	<i>btūṣfē</i>	<i>wṣafē</i>
3 rd sing. m.	<i>waṣaf</i>	<i>byūṣef</i>	
3 rd sing. f.	<i>waṣfet</i>	<i>btūṣef</i>	
1 st pl.	<i>waṣafnā</i>	<i>mnūṣef</i>	
2 nd pl. m./f.	<i>waṣaftō</i>	<i>byūṣfō</i>	<i>wṣafō</i>
3 rd pl. m./f.	<i>wasafō</i>	<i>btūṣfō</i>	

Participles	Active	Passive
	<i>wāṣef</i>	<i>mawṣūf</i>

b) Verb with –w as first root consonant. Pattern *e – a*: *wə^qee*, *byū^qaε* 'to fall'

	Perfect	Imperfect	Imperative
1 st sing.	<i>w^qəεt</i>	<i>bū^qaε</i>	
2 nd sing. m.	<i>w^qəεt</i>	<i>btū^qaε</i>	<i>w^qāε</i>
2 nd sing. f.	<i>w^qəεtē</i>	<i>btū^qaεē</i>	<i>w^qaεē</i>
3 rd sing. m.	<i>wə^qəε</i>	<i>byū^qaε</i>	
3 rd sing. f.	<i>wə^qεεt</i>	<i>btū^qaε</i>	
1 st pl.	<i>w^qəεnā</i>	<i>mnū^qaε</i>	
2 nd pl. m./f.	<i>w^qəεtō</i>	<i>btū^qaεō</i>	<i>w^qaεō</i>
3 rd pl. m./f.	<i>wə^qεō</i>	<i>byū^qaεō</i>	
Participles	Active	Passive	
	<i>wā^qee</i>	<i>Not used</i>	

c) Verb with –y as first root consonant. Pattern *e – a*: *yəbes*, *byəbas* or *byības*⁴⁹ 'to dry up'

	Perfect	Imperfect	Imperative
1 st sing.	<i>ybast</i>	<i>bības</i>	
2 nd sing. m.	<i>ybast</i>	<i>btības</i>	<i>Not used</i>
2 nd sing. f.	<i>ybastē</i>	<i>btībasē</i>	<i>Not used</i>
3 rd sing. m.	<i>yəbes</i>	<i>byības</i>	
3 rd sing. f.	<i>yəbset</i>	<i>btības</i>	
1 st pl.	<i>ybasnā</i>	<i>mnības</i>	
2 nd pl. m./f.	<i>ybastō</i>	<i>btībasō</i>	<i>Not used</i>
3 rd pl. m./f.	<i>yəbsō</i>	<i>byībasō</i>	
Participles	Active	Passive	
	<i>yābes</i>	<i>Not used</i>	

⁴⁹ This example has been taken from Cowell (1964: 75) since no example has been found in the corpus. However, I asked Homsis about this verb and it seems that for the 3rd p.m. *yības* is used instead of *yəbas*.

4.2.4.2. Hollow Verbs

a) Verb with –w as second root consonant. Pattern $\bar{a} - \bar{u}$: *fāt, byfūt* 'to enter, go in'

	Perfect	Imperfect	Imperative
1 st sing.	<i>futt</i>	<i>bfūt</i>	
2 nd sing. m.	<i>futt</i>	<i>bətfūt</i>	<i>fūt</i>
2 nd sing. f.	<i>futtē</i>	<i>bətfūtē</i>	<i>fūtē</i>
3 rd sing. m.	<i>fāt</i>	<i>byfūt</i>	
3 rd sing. f.	<i>fātet</i>	<i>bətfūt</i>	
1 st pl.	<i>futnā</i>	<i>mənfūt</i>	
2 nd pl. m./f.	<i>futtō</i>	<i>bətfūtō</i>	<i>fūtō</i>
3 rd pl. m./f.	<i>fātō</i>	<i>byfūtō</i>	
Participles	Active <i>fāyet</i>	Passive Not used	

b) Verb with –y as second root consonant. Pattern $\bar{a} - \bar{i}$: *šāl, byšīl* 'to take off, to lift, raise'

	Perfect	Imperfect	Imperative
1 st sing.	<i>šilt</i>	<i>bšīl</i>	
2 nd sing. m.	<i>šilt</i>	<i>bitšīl</i>	<i>šīl</i>
2 nd sing. f.	<i>šiltē</i>	<i>bitšīlē</i>	<i>šīlē</i>
3 rd sing. m.	<i>šāl</i>	<i>byšīl</i>	
3 rd sing. f.	<i>šālet</i>	<i>bitšīlē</i>	
1 st pl.	<i>šilnā</i>	<i>minšīl</i>	
2 nd pl. m./f.	<i>šiltō</i>	<i>bitšīlō</i>	<i>šīlō</i>
3 rd pl. m./f.	<i>šālō</i>	<i>byšīlō</i>	
Participles	Active <i>šāyel</i>	Passive Not used	

c) Verb with –w as second root consonant. Pattern $\bar{a} - \bar{a}$: *xāf, byxāf* 'to fear'

	Perfect	Imperfect	Imperative
1 st sing.	<i>xəft</i>	<i>bxāf</i>	
2 nd sing. m.	<i>xəft</i>	<i>bətxāf</i>	<i>xāf</i>

2 nd sing. f.	<i>xəftē</i>	<i>bətxāfē</i>	<i>xāfē</i>
3 rd sing. m.	<i>xāf</i>	<i>byxāf</i>	
3 rd sing. f.	<i>xāfet</i>	<i>bətxāf</i>	
1 st pl.	<i>xəfnā</i>	<i>mənxāf</i>	
2 nd pl. m./f.	<i>xəftō</i>	<i>bətxāfō</i>	<i>xāfō</i>
3 rd pl. m./f.	<i>xāfō</i>	<i>byxāfō</i>	
Participles	Active	Passive	
	<i>xāyef</i>	<i>Not used</i>	

4.2.4.3. Defective Verbs

a) Pattern *ā – ē*: *kawā*, *byəkwē* 'to iron'

	Perfect	Imperfect	Imperative
1 st sing.	<i>kawēt</i>	<i>bikwē</i>	
2 nd sing. m.	<i>kawēt</i>	<i>btikwē</i>	<i>'əkwē</i>
2 nd sing. f.	<i>kawētē</i>	<i>btikwē</i>	<i>'əkwē</i>
3 rd sing. m.	<i>kawā</i>	<i>byikwē</i>	
3 rd sing. f.	<i>kawet</i>	<i>btikwē</i>	
1 st pl.	<i>kawēnā</i>	<i>mnikwē</i>	
2 nd pl. m./f.	<i>kawētō</i>	<i>btikwō</i>	
3 rd pl. m./f.	<i>kawō</i>	<i>bykwō</i>	<i>'əkwō</i>
Participles	Active	Passive	
	<i>kāwē</i>	<i>məkwē</i>	

b) Pattern *ē – ā*: *nəsē*, *byinsā* 'to forget'

	Perfect	Imperfect	Imperative
1 st sing.	<i>nsīt</i>	<i>binsā</i>	
2 nd sing. m.	<i>nsīt</i>	<i>btinsā</i>	<i>'insā</i>
2 nd sing. f.	<i>nsītē</i>	<i>btinsē</i>	<i>'insē</i>
3 rd sing. m.	<i>nəsē</i>	<i>byinsā</i>	
3 rd sing. f.	<i>nisyet</i>	<i>btinsā</i>	
1 st pl.	<i>nsīnā</i>	<i>mninsā</i>	

2 nd pl. m./f.	<i>nsītō</i>	<i>btinsō</i>	<i>'insō</i>
3 rd pl. m./f.	<i>nisyō</i>	<i>byinsō</i>	
Participles	Active	Passive	
	<i>nāsē</i>	<i>mansē</i>	

c) Pattern *ē – ē*: *māsē, byimšē* 'to walk'

	Perfect	Imperfect	Imperative
1 st sing.	<i>mšīt</i>	<i>bimšē</i>	
2 nd sing. m.	<i>mšīt</i>	<i>btimšē</i>	<i>mšē, 'imšē</i>
2 nd sing. f.	<i>mšītē</i>	<i>btimšē</i>	<i>mšē, 'imšē</i>
3 rd sing. m.	<i>māšē</i>	<i>byimšē</i>	
3 rd sing. f.	<i>mišyet</i>	<i>btimšē</i>	
1 st pl.	<i>mšīnā</i>	<i>mnimšē</i>	
2 nd pl. m./f.	<i>mšītō</i>	<i>btimšō</i>	<i>mšō, 'imšō</i>
3 rd pl. m./f.	<i>māšyō</i>	<i>byimšō</i>	
Participles	Active	Passive	
	<i>māšē</i>	<i>Not used</i>	

d) Pattern *ā – ā*: *^qarā, by^qrā* 'to read'

	Perfect	Imperfect	Imperative
1 st sing.	<i>^qarēt</i>	<i>b^qrā</i>	
2 nd sing. m.	<i>^qarēt</i>	<i>bt^qrā</i>	<i>'^qra</i>
2 nd sing. f.	<i>^qarētē</i>	<i>bt^qrē</i>	<i>'^qrē</i>
3 rd sing. m.	<i>^qarā</i>	<i>by^qrā</i>	
3 rd sing. f.	<i>^qaret</i>	<i>bt^qrā</i>	
1 st pl.	<i>^qarēnā</i>	<i>mn^qrā</i>	
2 nd pl. m./f.	<i>^qarētō</i>	<i>bt^qrō</i>	<i>'^qrō</i>
3 rd pl. m./f.	<i>^qarō</i>	<i>by^qrō</i>	
Participles	Active	Passive	
	<i>^qāri</i>	<i>m^qri</i>	

This typology originally had an *'alif hamza* as third root letter, which became *–ā*, like the majority of Syrian varieties.

e) Pattern *ā – ē*: *eaṭā*, *byaēṭē* 'to give'

	Perfect	Imperfect	Imperative
1 st sing.	<i>eaṭēt</i>	<i>baēṭē</i>	
2 nd sing. m.	<i>eaṭēt</i>	<i>btāēṭē</i>	<i>eaṭē</i>
2 nd sing. f.	<i>eaṭētē</i>	<i>btāēṭē</i>	<i>eaṭē</i>
3 rd sing. m.	<i>eaṭā</i>	<i>byaēṭē</i>	
3 rd sing. f.	<i>eaṭet</i>	<i>btāēṭē</i>	
1 st pl.	<i>eaṭēnā</i>	<i>mnaēṭē</i>	
2 nd pl. m./f.	<i>eaṭētō</i>	<i>btāēṭō</i>	
3 rd pl. m./f.	<i>eaṭō</i>	<i>byaēṭō</i>	<i>eaṭō</i>
Participles	Active	Passive	
	<i>eaṭē</i>	<i>maēṭē</i>	

4.2.5. Hamzated Verbs

In SA, this verbal pattern includes those verbs which have a *hamza* [ʔ] as the first, second or third radical. However, in HA it is possible to classify only those verbs that have an '*alif hamza*' as the first or second radical. In fact, like in other Syrian varieties, the '*alif hamza*' as a third radical is assimilated to defective verbs: '*a > ā*', as in ^q*arā*, *byā^qrā* 'to read'.

a) Verb with '*alif hamza*' as first root letter. Conjugation of '*akal*, *byākol* 'to eat'

	Perfect	Imperfect	Imperative
1 st sing.	<i>'akalt</i>	<i>bākol</i>	
2 nd sing. m.	<i>'akalt</i>	<i>btākol</i>	<i>kōl</i>
2 nd sing. f.	<i>'akaltē</i>	<i>btāklē</i>	<i>kulē</i>
3 rd sing. m.	<i>'akal</i>	<i>byākol</i>	
3 rd sing. f.	<i>'aklet</i>	<i>btākol</i>	
1 st pl.	<i>'akalnā</i>	<i>mnākol</i>	
2 nd pl. m./f.	<i>'akaltō</i>	<i>btāklō</i>	<i>kulō</i>
3 rd pl. m./f.	<i>'akalō</i>	<i>byāklō</i>	
Participles	Active	Passive	
	<i>'ākel</i>	<i>ma'kūl</i>	

b) Verb with *'alif hamza* as second root letter. Conjugation of *sa'al*, *byas'al* 'to ask'

	Perfect	Imperfect	Imperative
1 st sing.	<i>sa'alt</i>	<i>bās'al</i>	
2 nd sing. m.	<i>sa'alt</i>	<i>btās'al</i>	<i>s'āl</i>
2 nd sing. f.	<i>sa'altē</i>	<i>btās'alē</i>	<i>'ās'alē</i>
3 rd sing. m.	<i>sa'al</i>	<i>byās'al</i>	
3 rd sing. f.	<i>sa'let</i>	<i>btās'al</i>	
1 st pl.	<i>sa'alnā</i>	<i>mnās'al</i>	
2 nd pl. m./f.	<i>sa'altū</i>	<i>btās'alū</i>	<i>'ās'alō</i>
3 rd pl. m./f.	<i>sa'alū</i>	<i>byās'alū</i>	
Participles	Active	Passive	
	<i>sā'el</i>	<i>mas'ūl</i>	

4.2.6. Augmented Forms II-X

Augmented, or derived, forms are expansions of the basic stem and they are conventionally numbered from II to X.

Pattern II: *faεεal*, *byfaεεel*.

Pattern III: *fāεal*, *byfāεel*.

Pattern IV: *'afeal*, *byəfeel*.

Pattern V: *tfaεεal*, *byətfāεεal*.

Pattern VI: *tfāεal*, *byətfāεal*.

Pattern VII: *nfaεal*, *byənfaεel*.

Pattern VIII: *ftaεal*, *byəftaεel*.

Pattern IX: *fεall*, *byəfεall*.

Pattern X: *stafeal*, *byəstafeel*.

4.2.6.1. Pattern II: faεεal, byfaεεel

a) Regular verb: conjugation of *daxxan*, *bydaxxen* 'to smoke'

	Perfect	Imperfect	Imperative
1 st sing.	<i>daxxant</i>	<i>bdaxxen</i>	
2 nd sing. m.	<i>daxxant</i>	<i>btədaxxen</i>	<i>daxxen</i>

2 nd sing. f.	<i>daxxantē</i>	<i>btədaxxnē</i>	<i>daxxnē</i>
3 rd sing. m.	<i>daxxan</i>	<i>bydaxxen</i>	
3 rd sing. f.	<i>daxxanet</i>	<i>btədaxxnē</i>	
1 st pl.	<i>daxxannā</i>	<i>məndaxxen</i>	
2 nd pl. m./f.	<i>daxxantō</i>	<i>btədaxxnō</i>	<i>daxxnō</i>
3 rd pl. m./f.	<i>daxx²nō</i>	<i>byədaxxnō</i>	
Participles	Active	Passive	
	<i>mdaxxen</i>	<i>mdaxxan</i>	

b) Geminate verb: conjugation of *sabbab*, *bysabbēb* 'to cause'

	Perfect	Imperfect	Imperative
1 st sing.	<i>sabbabt</i>	<i>bsabbēb</i>	
2 nd sing. m.	<i>sabbabt</i>	<i>bətsabbēb</i>	<i>sabbēb</i>
2 nd sing. f.	<i>sabbabtē</i>	<i>bətsabbəbē</i>	<i>sabbəbē</i>
3 rd sing. m.	<i>sabbab</i>	<i>bysabbēb</i>	
3 rd sing. f.	<i>sabbabet</i>	<i>bətsabbēb</i>	
1 st pl.	<i>sabbabnā</i>	<i>mənsabbēb</i>	
2 nd pl. m./f.	<i>sabbabtō</i>	<i>bətsabbəbō</i>	<i>sabbəbō</i>
3 rd pl. m./f.	<i>sabbabō</i>	<i>bysabbəbō</i>	
Participles	Active	Passive	
	<i>msabbēb</i>	<i>msabbab</i>	

c) Defective verb: conjugation of *xallā*, *byxallē* 'to leave'

	Perfect	Imperfect	Imperative
1 st sing.	<i>xallēt</i>	<i>bxallē</i>	
2 nd sing. m.	<i>xallēt</i>	<i>bətxallē</i>	<i>xallī</i>
2 nd sing. f.	<i>xallētē</i>	<i>bətxallē</i>	<i>xallē</i>
3 rd sing. m.	<i>xallā</i>	<i>byxallē</i>	
3 rd sing. f.	<i>xallet</i>	<i>bətxallē</i>	
1 st pl.	<i>xallēnā</i>	<i>mənxallē</i>	
2 nd pl. m./f.	<i>xallētō</i>	<i>bətxallō</i>	<i>xallō</i>
3 rd pl. m./f.	<i>xallō</i>	<i>byxallō</i>	
Participles	Active	Passive	

mxallē

mxallā

4.2.6.2. Pattern III: *fūeal, byfūeel*

a) Regular verb: conjugation of *šārak, byšārek* 'to participate'

	Perfect	Imperfect	Imperative
1 st sing.	<i>šārakt</i>	<i>bšārek</i>	
2 nd sing. m.	<i>šārakt</i>	<i>bətsārek</i>	<i>šārek</i>
2 nd sing. f.	<i>šāraktē</i>	<i>bətsārkē</i>	<i>šārkē</i>
3 rd sing. m.	<i>šārak</i>	<i>byšārek</i>	
3 rd sing. f.	<i>šārkət</i>	<i>bətsārek</i>	
1 st pl.	<i>šāraknā</i>	<i>mənsārek</i>	
2 nd pl. m./f.	<i>šāraktō</i>	<i>bətsārkō</i>	<i>šārkō</i>
3 rd pl. m./f.	<i>šārakō</i>	<i>byšārkō</i>	
Participles	Active <i>mšārek</i>	Passive <i>mšārak</i>	

b) Defective verb: conjugation of *sāwā, bysāwē* 'to do, to make'

	Perfect	Imperfect	Imperative
1 st sing.	<i>sāwēt</i>	<i>bsāwē</i>	
2 nd sing. m.	<i>sāwēt</i>	<i>bətsāwē</i>	<i>sāwē</i>
2 nd sing. f.	<i>sāwētē</i>	<i>bətsāwē</i>	<i>sāwē</i>
3 rd sing. m.	<i>sāwā</i>	<i>bysāwē</i>	
3 rd sing. f.	<i>sāwet</i>	<i>bətsāwē</i>	
1 st pl.	<i>sāwēnā</i>	<i>mənsāwē</i>	
2 nd pl. m./f.	<i>sāwētō</i>	<i>bətsāwō</i>	<i>sāwō</i>
3 rd pl. m./f.	<i>sāwō</i>	<i>bysāwō</i>	
Participles	Active <i>msāwē</i>	Passive <i>msāwā</i>	

4.2.6.3. Pattern IV: 'afɛal, byafɛel

a) Regular verb: conjugation of 'aʃbaḥ, byaʃbeḥ 'to become, to be in the morning'

	Perfect	Imperfect	Imperative
1 st sing.	'aʃbaḥt	bəʃbaḥ	
2 nd sing. m.	'aʃbaḥt	btəʃbaḥ	'əʃbeḥ
2 nd sing. f.	'aʃbaḥtē	btəʃbaḥē	'əʃbeḥē
3 rd sing. m.	'aʃbaḥ	byəʃbaḥ	
3 rd sing. f.	'aʃbaḥet	btəʃbaḥ	
1 st pl.	'aʃbaḥnā	mnəʃbaḥ	
2 nd pl. m./f.	'aʃbaḥtō	btəʃbaḥō	'əʃbeḥō
3 rd pl. m./f.	'aʃbaḥō	byəʃbaḥō	
Participles	Active	Passive	
	məʃbeḥ	məʃbaḥ	

b) Geminate verb: conjugation of 'aʃarr, byəʃarr 'to insist'

	Perfect	Imperfect	Imperative
1 st sing.	'aʃarrēt	bəʃarr	
2 nd sing. m.	'aʃarrēt	bətəʃarr	ʃarr
2 nd sing. f.	'aʃarrētē	bətəʃarrē	ʃarrē
3 rd sing. m.	'aʃarr	byəʃarr	
3 rd sing. f.	'aʃarret	bətəʃarr	
1 st pl.	'aʃarrēnā	mənəʃarr	
2 nd pl. m./f.	'aʃarrētō	bətəʃarrō	ʃarrō
3 rd pl. m./f.	'aʃarrō	byəʃarrō	
Participles	Active	Passive	
	məʃarr	Not used	

c) Defective verb: conjugation of 'anhā, byənhē 'to bring to an end'

	Perfect	Imperfect	Imperative
1 st sing.	'anhēt	bənhē	
2 nd sing. m.	'anhēt	btənhē	'ənhē
2 nd sing. f.	'anhētē	btənhē	'ənhē

3 rd sing. m.	'anhā	byānhē	
3 rd sing. f.	'anhet	btānhē	
1 st pl.	'anhēnā	mnānhē	
2 nd pl. m./f.	'anhētō	btānhō	'ānhō
3 rd pl. m./f.	'anhō	byānhō	
Participles	Active	Passive	
	māhnē	māhnē	

d) Hamzated verb: conjugation of 'amar, byu'mor 'to believe'

	Perfect	Imperfect	Imperative
1 st sing.	'amart	bu'mor	
2 nd sing. m.	'amart	btu'mor	mur
2 nd sing. f.	'amartē	btu'mrē	murē
3 rd sing. m.	'amar	byu'mor	
3 rd sing. f.	'amaret	btu'mor	
1 st pl.	'amarnā	mnu'mor	
2 nd pl. m./f.	'amartō	btu'mrō	murō
3 rd pl. m./f.	'amarō	byu'mrō	
Participles	Active	Passive	
	mu'mer	mu'mar	

4.2.6.4. Pattern V: tfaεεal, byətfəεεal

a) Regular verb: conjugation of tnaffas, byətnaffas 'to breathe'

	Perfect	Imperfect	Imperative
1 st sing.	tnaffast	bətnaffas	
2 nd sing. m.	tnaffast	bətnaffas	tnaffas
2 nd sing. f.	tnaffastē	bətnaffasē	tnaffasē
3 rd sing. m.	tnaffas	byətnaffas	
3 rd sing. f.	tnaffaset	btətnaffas	
1 st pl.	tnaffasnā	mnətnaffas	
2 nd pl. m./f.	tnaffastō	bətnaffasō	tnaffasō
3 rd pl. m./f.	tnaffasō	byətnaffasō	

Participles	Active	Passive
	<i>mətnaffes</i>	<i>mətnaffas</i>

b) Defective verb: conjugation of *tmaššā*, *byətməššā* 'to walk, to stroll'

	Perfect	Imperfect	Imperative
1 st sing.	<i>tmaššēt</i>	<i>bətməššā</i>	
2 nd sing. m.	<i>tmaššēt</i>	<i>bətməššā</i>	<i>tmaššā</i>
2 nd sing. f.	<i>tmaššētē</i>	<i>bətməššē</i>	<i>tmaššē</i>
3 rd sing. m.	<i>tmaššā</i>	<i>byətməššā</i>	
3 rd sing. f.	<i>tmaššet</i>	<i>btətməššā</i>	
1 st pl.	<i>tmaššēnā</i>	<i>mnətməššā</i>	
2 nd pl. m./f.	<i>tmaššētō</i>	<i>btətməššō</i>	<i>tmaššō</i>
3 rd pl. m./f.	<i>tmaššō</i>	<i>byətməššō</i>	
Participles	Active	Passive	
	<i>mətməššē</i>	<i>Not used</i>	

4.2.6.5. Pattern VI: *tfāeal*, *byətfāeal*

a) Regular verb: conjugation of *t^qātal*, *byə^qtātal* 'to argue'

	Perfect	Imperfect	Imperative
1 st sing.	<i>t^qātalt</i>	<i>bə^qtātal</i>	
2 nd sing. m.	<i>t^qātalt</i>	<i>btə^qtātal</i>	<i>t^qātal</i>
2 nd sing. f.	<i>t^qātaltē</i>	<i>btə^qtātalē</i>	<i>t^qātalē</i>
3 rd sing. m.	<i>t^qātal</i>	<i>byə^qtātal</i>	
3 rd sing. f.	<i>t^qātalet</i>	<i>btə^qtātal</i>	
1 st pl.	<i>t^qātalnā</i>	<i>mnə^qtātal</i>	
2 nd pl. m./f.	<i>t^qātaltō</i>	<i>btə^qtātalō</i>	<i>t^qātalō</i>
3 rd pl. m./f.	<i>t^qātalō</i>	<i>byə^qtātalō</i>	
Participles	Active	Passive	
	<i>mə^qtātel</i>	<i>mə^qtātal</i>	

b) Defective verb: conjugation of *thākā*, *byəthākā* 'to converse'

	Perfect	Imperfect	Imperative
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1 st sing.	<i>tḥākēt</i>	<i>bəṯḥākā</i>	
2 nd sing. m.	<i>tḥākēt</i>	<i>btəṯḥākā</i>	<i>tḥākā</i>
2 nd sing. f.	<i>tḥākētē</i>	<i>btəṯḥākē</i>	<i>tḥākē</i>
3 rd sing. m.	<i>tḥākā</i>	<i>byəṯḥākā</i>	
3 rd sing. f.	<i>tḥāket</i>	<i>btəṯḥākā</i>	
1 st pl.	<i>tḥākēnā</i>	<i>mnəṯḥākā</i>	
2 nd pl. m./f.	<i>tḥākētō</i>	<i>btəṯḥākō</i>	<i>tḥākō</i>
3 rd pl. m./f.	<i>tḥākō</i>	<i>byəṯḥākō</i>	
Participles	Active	Passive	
	<i>məṯḥākē</i>	<i>məṯḥākā</i>	

4.2.6.6. Pattern VII: *nfaʕal, byənfʕeel*

a) Regular verb: conjugation of *nkasar, byənkəser* 'to break'

	Perfect	Imperfect	Imperative
1 st sing.	<i>nkasart</i>	<i>bənkəser</i>	
2 nd sing. m.	<i>nkasart</i>	<i>btənkəser</i>	<i>nkəser</i>
2 nd sing. f.	<i>nkasartē</i>	<i>btənkəsre</i>	<i>nkəsre</i>
3 rd sing. m.	<i>nkasar</i>	<i>byənkəser</i>	
3 rd sing. f.	<i>nkasret</i>	<i>btənkəser</i>	
1 st pl.	<i>nkasarnā</i>	<i>mnənkəser</i>	
2 nd pl. m./f.	<i>nkasartō</i>	<i>btənkəsro</i>	<i>nkəsro</i>
3 rd pl. m./f.	<i>nkasarō</i>	<i>byənkəsro</i>	
Participles	Active	Passive	
	<i>mənkəser</i>	<i>Not used</i>	

b) Geminate verb: conjugation of *nḥaṭṭ, byənhəṭṭ* 'to be put'

	Perfect	Imperfect
1 st sing.	<i>nḥaṭṭēt</i>	<i>bənhəṭṭ</i>
2 nd sing. m.	<i>nḥaṭṭēt</i>	<i>btənhəṭṭ</i>
2 nd sing. f.	<i>nḥaṭṭētē</i>	<i>btənhəṭṭ</i>
3 rd sing. m.	<i>nḥaṭṭ</i>	<i>byənhəṭṭ</i>
3 rd sing. f.	<i>nḥaṭṭet</i>	<i>btənhəṭṭ</i>
1 st pl.	<i>nḥaṭṭēnā</i>	<i>mnənhəṭṭ</i>

2 nd pl. m./f.	<i>nḥaṭṭētō</i>	<i>btənḥaṭṭō</i>
3 rd pl. m./f.	<i>nḥaṭṭō</i>	<i>byənḥaṭṭō</i>
Participles	Active	Passive
	<i>mənḥaṭṭ</i>	<i>Not used</i>

c) Hollow verb: conjugation of *nšāf*, *byənšāf*⁵⁰ 'to be seen'

	Perfect	Imperfect
1 st sing.	<i>nšāft</i>	<i>bənšāf</i>
2 nd sing. m.	<i>nšāft</i>	<i>btənšāf</i>
2 nd sing. f.	<i>nšāfiē</i>	<i>btənšāfiē</i>
3 rd sing. m.	<i>nšāf</i>	<i>byənšāf</i>
3 rd sing. f.	<i>nšāfet</i>	<i>btənšāf</i>
1 st pl.	<i>nšāfnā</i>	<i>mnənšāf</i>
2 nd pl. m./f.	<i>nšāftō</i>	<i>btənšāfō</i>
3 rd pl. m./f.	<i>nšāfō</i>	<i>byənšāfō</i>
Participles	Active	Passive
	<i>mənšāf</i>	<i>Not used</i>

d) Defective verb: conjugation of *nḥakā*, *byənḥakā*⁵¹ 'to be told'

	Perfect	Imperfect
1 st sing.	<i>nḥakēt</i>	<i>bənḥakā</i>
2 nd sing. m.	<i>nḥakēt</i>	<i>btənḥakā</i>
2 nd sing. f.	<i>nḥakētē</i>	<i>btənḥakē</i>
3 rd sing. m.	<i>nḥakā</i>	<i>byənḥakā</i>
3 rd sing. f.	<i>nḥaket</i>	<i>btənḥakā</i>
1 st pl.	<i>nḥakēnā</i>	<i>mnənḥakā</i>
2 nd pl. m./f.	<i>nḥakētō</i>	<i>btənḥakō</i>
3 rd pl. m./f.	<i>nḥakō</i>	<i>byənḥakō</i>
Participles	Active	Passive
	<i>mənḥekē</i>	<i>Not used</i>

⁵⁰ Example of verb extracted from Cowell (1964: 94).

⁵¹ Example of verb extracted from Berlinches (2016: 105).

4.2.6.7. Pattern VIII: *ftaɛal, byəftəɛel*

a) Regular verb: conjugation of *htaram, byəhtərem* 'to respect'

	Perfect	Imperfect	Imperative
1 st sing.	<i>htaramt</i>	<i>bəhtərem</i>	
2 nd sing. m.	<i>htaramt</i>	<i>btəhtərem</i>	<i>htərem</i>
2 nd sing. f.	<i>htaramtē</i>	<i>btəhtərmē</i>	<i>htərmē</i>
3 rd sing. m.	<i>htaram</i>	<i>byəhtərem</i>	
3 rd sing. f.	<i>htaramet</i>	<i>btəhtərem</i>	
1 st pl.	<i>htaramnā</i>	<i>mnəhtərem</i>	
2 nd pl. m./f.	<i>htaramtō</i>	<i>btəhtərmō</i>	<i>htərmō</i>
3 rd pl. m./f.	<i>htaramō</i>	<i>byəhtərmō</i>	
Participles	Active <i>məhtərem</i>	Passive <i>məhtəram</i>	

b) Geminate verb: conjugation of *mtadd, byəmtadd* 'to extend'

	Perfect	Imperfect	Imperative
1 st sing.	<i>mtaddēt</i>	<i>bəmtadd</i>	
2 nd sing. m.	<i>mtaddēt</i>	<i>btəmtadd</i>	<i>mtadd</i>
2 nd sing. f.	<i>mtaddētē</i>	<i>btəmtaddē</i>	<i>mtaddē</i>
3 rd sing. m.	<i>mtadd</i>	<i>byəmtadd</i>	
3 rd sing. f.	<i>mtaddet</i>	<i>bəmtadd</i>	
1 st pl.	<i>mtaddēnā</i>	<i>mnəmtadd</i>	
2 nd pl. m./f.	<i>mtaddētō</i>	<i>btəmtaddō</i>	<i>mtaddō</i>
3 rd pl. m./f.	<i>mtaddō</i>	<i>byəmtaddō</i>	
Participles	Active <i>məmtadd</i>	Passive <i>məmtadd</i>	

c) Assimilated verb: conjugation of *ttəʃal, byəttəʃel* 'to call by phone, be in touch with'

	Perfect	Imperfect	Imperative
1 st sing.	<i>ttəʃalt</i>	<i>bəttəʃel</i>	

2 nd sing. m.	<i>ṭṭaṣalt</i>	<i>btəṭṭaṣel</i>	<i>ṭṭaṣel</i>
2 nd sing. f.	<i>ṭṭaṣaltē</i>	<i>btəṭṭaṣlē</i>	<i>ṭṭaṣlē</i>
3 rd sing. m.	<i>ṭṭaṣal</i>	<i>byəṭṭaṣel</i>	
3 rd sing. f.	<i>ṭṭaṣlet</i>	<i>btəṭṭaṣel</i>	
1 st pl.	<i>ṭṭaṣalnā</i>	<i>mnəṭṭaṣel</i>	
2 nd pl. m./f.	<i>ṭṭaṣaltō</i>	<i>btəṭṭaṣlō</i>	<i>ṭṭaṣlō</i>
3 rd pl. m./f.	<i>ṭṭaṣalō</i>	<i>byəṭṭaṣlō</i>	
Participles	Active	Passive	
	<i>məṭṭaṣel</i>	<i>məṭṭaṣal</i>	

d) Hollow verb: conjugation of *ḥtāž*, *byəḥtāž* 'to need'

	Perfect	Imperfect
1 st sing.	<i>ḥtəžt</i>	<i>bəḥtāž</i>
2 nd sing. m.	<i>ḥtəžt</i>	<i>btəḥtāž</i>
2 nd sing. f.	<i>ḥtəžtē</i>	<i>btəḥtāžē</i>
3 rd sing. m.	<i>ḥtāž</i>	<i>byəḥtāž</i>
3 rd sing. f.	<i>ḥtāžet</i>	<i>btəḥtāž</i>
1 st pl.	<i>ḥtəžnā</i>	<i>mnəḥtāž</i>
2 nd pl. m./f.	<i>ḥtəžtō</i>	<i>btəḥtāžō</i>
3 rd pl. m./f.	<i>ḥtāžō</i>	<i>byəḥtāžō</i>
Participles	Active	Passive
	<i>məḥtāž</i>	<i>Not used</i>

e) Defective verb: conjugation of *štarā*, *byəštārē* 'to buy'

	Perfect	Imperfect	Imperative
1 st sing.	<i>štarēt</i>	<i>bəštārē</i>	
2 nd sing. m.	<i>štarēt</i>	<i>btəštārē</i>	<i>štarē</i>
2 nd sing. f.	<i>štarētē</i>	<i>btəštārē</i>	<i>štarī, štarē</i>
3 rd sing. m.	<i>štarā</i>	<i>byəštārē</i>	
3 rd sing. f.	<i>štaret</i>	<i>btəštārē</i>	
1 st pl.	<i>štarēnā</i>	<i>mnəštārē</i>	
2 nd pl. m./f.	<i>štarētō</i>	<i>btəštārō</i>	<i>štarō</i>
3 rd pl. m./f.	<i>štarō</i>	<i>byəštārō</i>	

Participles	Active	Passive
	<i>māštarē</i>	<i>māštarā</i>

4.2.6.8. Pattern IX: *fəall, byəfəall*

a) Regular verb: conjugation of *sfarr*, *byəsfarr* 'to turn pale, become yellow'

	Perfect	Imperfect	Imperative
1 st sing.	<i>sfarrēt</i>	<i>bəsfarr</i>	
2 nd sing. m.	<i>sfarrēt</i>	<i>btəsfarr</i>	<i>sfarr</i>
2 nd sing. f.	<i>sfarrētē</i>	<i>btəsfarrē</i>	<i>sfarrē</i>
3 rd sing. m.	<i>sfarr</i>	<i>byəsfarr</i>	
3 rd sing. f.	<i>sfarret</i>	<i>btəsfarr</i>	
1 st pl.	<i>sfarrēnā</i>	<i>mnəsfarr</i>	
2 nd pl. m./f.	<i>sfarrētō</i>	<i>btəsfarrō</i>	<i>sfarrō</i>
3 rd pl. m./f.	<i>sfarrō</i>	<i>byəsfarrō</i>	
Participles	Active	Passive	
	<i>məsfarr</i>	<i>Not used</i>	

4.2.6.9. Pattern X: *staʕəal, byəstaʕəel*

a) Regular verb: conjugation of *staʕrab*, *byəstaʕreb* 'to be surprised'

	Perfect	Imperfect	Imperative
1 st sing.	<i>staʕrabt</i>	<i>bəstaʕreb</i>	
2 nd sing. m.	<i>staʕrabt</i>	<i>btəstaʕreb</i>	<i>staʕreb</i>
2 nd sing. f.	<i>staʕrabtē</i>	<i>btəstaʕ^ərbē</i>	<i>staʕ^ərbē</i>
3 rd sing. m.	<i>staʕrab</i>	<i>byəstaʕreb</i>	
3 rd sing. f.	<i>staʕrabet</i>	<i>btəstaʕreb</i>	
1 st pl.	<i>staʕravnā</i>	<i>mnəstaʕreb</i>	
2 nd pl. m./f.	<i>staʕrabtō</i>	<i>btəstaʕ^ərbō</i>	<i>staʕ^ərbō</i>
3 rd pl. m./f.	<i>staʕrabō</i>	<i>byəstaʕ^ərbō</i>	
Participles	Active	Passive	
	<i>məstaʕreb</i>	<i>məstaʕrab</i>	

b) Geminate verb: conjugation of *staʕall*, *byəstaʕəll* 'to take advantage of, to exploit'

	Perfect	Imperfect	Imperative
1 st sing.	<i>staǧallēt</i>	<i>bəstaǧall</i>	
2 nd sing. m.	<i>staǧallēt</i>	<i>btəstaǧall</i>	<i>staǧall</i>
2 nd sing. f.	<i>staǧallētē</i>	<i>btəstaǧallē</i>	<i>staǧallē</i>
3 rd sing. m.	<i>staǧallā</i>	<i>byəstaǧall</i>	
3 rd sing. f.	<i>staǧallet</i>	<i>btəstaǧall</i>	
1 st pl.	<i>staǧallēnā</i>	<i>mnəstaǧall</i>	
2 nd pl. m./f.	<i>staǧallētō</i>	<i>btəstaǧallō</i>	<i>staǧallō</i>
3 rd pl. m./f.	<i>staǧallō</i>	<i>byəstaǧallō</i>	
Participles	Active <i>məstaǧall</i>	Passive <i>məstaǧall</i>	

c) Hamzated verb: conjugation of *stāhal*, *byəstāhel* 'to deserve'

	Perfect	Imperfect
1 st sing.	<i>stāhalt</i>	<i>bəstāhel</i>
2 nd sing. m.	<i>stāhalt</i>	<i>btəstāhel</i>
2 nd sing. f.	<i>stāhaltē</i>	<i>btəstāhlē</i>
3 rd sing. m.	<i>stāhal</i>	<i>byəstāhel</i>
3 rd sing. f.	<i>stāhalet</i>	<i>btəstāhel</i>
1 st pl.	<i>stāhalnā</i>	<i>mnəstāhel</i>
2 nd pl. m./f.	<i>stāhaltō</i>	<i>btəstāhlō</i>
3 rd pl. m./f.	<i>stāhalō</i>	<i>byəstāhlō</i>
Participles	Active <i>məstāhel</i>	Passive <i>məstāhal</i>

d) Hollow verb: conjugation of *stafād*, *byəstafīd*⁵² 'to benefit'

	Perfect	Imperfect	Imperative
1 st sing.	<i>stafadt</i>	<i>bəstafīd</i>	
2 nd sing. m.	<i>stafadt</i>	<i>btəstafīd</i>	<i>stafīd</i>
2 nd sing. f.	<i>stafadtē</i>	<i>btəstafīdē</i>	<i>stafīdē</i>
3 rd sing. m.	<i>stafād</i>	<i>byəstafīd</i>	

⁵² Example of verb extracted from Cowell (1964: 104).

3 rd sing. f.	<i>stafādet</i>	<i>btəstafīd</i>	
1 st pl.	<i>stafadnā</i>	<i>mnəstafīd</i>	
2 nd pl. m./f.	<i>stafadtō</i>	<i>btəstafīdō</i>	<i>stafīdō</i>
3 rd pl. m./f.	<i>stafādo</i>	<i>byəstafīdō</i>	
Participles	Active	Passive	
	<i>məstfīd</i>	<i>Not used</i>	

e) Defective verb: conjugation of *staržā*, *byəstaržē* 'to dare'

	Perfect	Imperfect	Imperative
1 st sing.	<i>staržēt</i>	<i>bəstaržē</i>	
2 nd sing. m.	<i>staržēt</i>	<i>btəstaržē</i>	<i>staržē</i>
2 nd sing. f.	<i>staržētē</i>	<i>btəstaržē</i>	<i>staržē</i>
3 rd sing. m.	<i>staržā</i>	<i>byəstaržē</i>	
3 rd sing. f.	<i>staržet</i>	<i>btəstaržē</i>	
1 st pl.	<i>staržēnā</i>	<i>mnəstaržē</i>	
2 nd pl. m./f.	<i>staržētō</i>	<i>btəstaržō</i>	<i>staržō</i>
3 rd pl. m./f.	<i>staržō</i>	<i>byəstaržō</i>	
Participles	Active	Passive	
	<i>məstaržē</i>	<i>məstaržē</i>	

4.3. Syntax

"Syntax remains one of the least-studied areas of spoken Arabic".

Brustad (2000: 4)

The aim of this section is to present a brief description of the main syntactic features, even though further studies will be necessary to better analyse some aspects since no previous linguistic studies have been conducted on the urban variety of HA.

4.3.1. Agreement

The basic agreement patterns that are applied in other Arabic varieties are common in HA too, as in the following examples:

a) masculine singular nouns take masculine singular adjectives, demonstrative adjectives, possessive adjectives and verbs:

šaff² xāšš

'a private class'

kull² meallem yəstaxdem

'every teacher^m uses'

hādā š-šē kwayyes

'this thing is nice'

wāhed hindē

'an Indian guy'

b) feminine singular nouns take feminine singular adjectives, demonstrative pronouns and adjectives, possessive adjectives and verbs:

hiyyi luğa žamīli w šaebi

'it is a nice and difficult language'

madīni mašhūra ktīr

'a very famous city'

l-muqābali l-laṭīfi

'the nice interview'

tižē l-εarūs maε 'ahl-ā

'the bride comes with her family'

However, adjectives that derive from defective verbs maintain the masculine agreement even with feminine nouns, as follows:

žuhud tānē

'another effort'

šaḡli tānē

'another thing'

mā-n-ā fāḡē təštəḡal-lā

'she hasn't got time (Lit. 'she isn't free') to prepare for her'

c) inanimate plural nouns usually have feminine singular agreement or plural agreement in adjectives, verbs, and pronouns.

Example with feminine singular:

əl-musalsalāt ət-tilfīzyūniyyi

'the tv series'

əl-barāmež əl-eilmiyyi

'documentaries' (Lit. 'the scientific^f programmes')

l- 'aḥruf^əktīr šaebi

'the letters are very difficult^f'

Example with plural:

əmbāreḥ ḥaṭṭēt bi-ṭ-ṭanžara lə-lsānāt w hadōle l-ma^qādem la-waḥd-on, fawwart ealī-^yon, kabbēt-on

'yesterday I put the shin bones and the tongues in separate pots and boiled them. Then I threw them out.'

l-ḥamāmāt allī kānō ean-nā.

'the doves^f we had'

d) plural nouns referring to humans usually have plural agreement in adjectives, verbs, and pronouns, like dual forms:

mae 'ašxāš 'ažāneb

'with foreign people'

š-šabāb allī eumr-on mə-l- 'arbaeīn w taḥt harabō

'The guys who are 40 or under have all fled'

n-niswān əl-^qāedīn byḥuṭṭō ḥižābāt-on

'the women wear their veils'

l-earīs w l-earūs bybaddlō l-xawātem

'the groom and the bride exchange the wedding rings'

4.3.2. The Annexion (*al-'idāfa*)

As is the case in the majority of spoken Arabic varieties, in HA it is possible to express possessive and genitive relationships through a synthetic construct that maintains the SA *'idāfa* and an analytic construct which uses the genitive exponent *tabae* 'of, belonging to'.

Examples of synthetic constructs where the first term never takes the definite article:

bēt əl-əarūs

'the bride's house'

fləflit əl-makdūs

'*makdūs* hot chili'

daržet əl-ħarāra

'the temperature' (Lit. 'the degree of temperature')

žaww maşr

'Egypt's weather'

The following examples are of analytic constructs with the invariable particle *tabae* which is always preceded by a definite noun, which can however be conjugated depending on its subject:

fī muşkel b-əl-maw⁴eε tabae-u

'there is a problem with its position'

ər-rīf tabae əš-šām

'Damascus' suburbs'

'əntē tiŋtaħē bāb əl-bēt tabae-on

'you open their front door'

əl-əarūs bəħadḍer əž-žihāz tabae-ā

'the bride starts preparing her marriage trousseau'

bēt sətt-u w žədd-u

'his grandparents' house'

However the particle *tabae* can be conjugated depending on the subject with whose it agrees:

lə-žnēni tabaeit əl-bēt

'the house's garden'

^qult^p-llā la-rašā mšē la-nšūf hadōl tabaeūt əl-laḥmi

'then I told Rasha: let's go and see those that sell meat!'

l-banāt by^qūlō z-zalāgīd tabaeūt əl-εurs

'the girls sing the wedding folk songs'

4.3.3. Imperfective Markers

4.3.3.1. *b*

The prefix /*b-*/ occurs in many different contexts and according to Brustad (2000: 248-252), its syntactic role can be classified, as follows:

a) for habitual, permanent and durative actions:

bidarres māddet ər-riyāḍiyyāt

'I teach mathematics'

baeref ^ošwayy 'iṭālē

'I know a little bit of Italian'

b) According to Kassab (1987: 121) it is used for actions that are going to happen but it is not specified when they will take place.

bḥubb zūr 'iṭālyā law šār-lē

'I'd love to visit Italy if I could'

mā εand-ē halla^q, bass bižīb-lik yā-h

'I don't have it now but I will bring it for you'

yəllī mā byākol, mā byəsman

'those who don't eat don't get fat'

c) for actions that are supposed to happen in a near future. This imperfective marker is considered one of the older isoglosses since /b-/ is used in sedentary and Bedouin typologies, both in Eastern and Western Arabic varieties (Durand 2009: 376-377).

baed bukra bətsāfer rfi^qt-ē

'my friend is leaving the day after tomorrow'

bukra brūḥ εa-l-maḥall.

'tomorrow I'm going to the shop'

d) in conditional clauses:

'izā bətrūḥē tsāwē ḥawāžb-ek xūdī-nē maε-ik.

'if you go and get your eyebrows done, take me with you'

'izā mā bətrūḥō bakkīr 'aḥsan-lkon.

'if you don't go early, all the better for you'

4.3.3.2. *εam*

εam preceded by an imperfective with or without the indicative *b-*. According to Kassab (1970: 149), *εam* is used before a subjunctive that begins with one consonant while *εammā* is used if preceded by a subjunctive which begins with two consonants. As the examples given show, in HA the tendency is to use *εam* also if preceded by an imperfective that begins with two consonants. *εamma* occurs but not very often.

εam (or *εammā*)⁵³ is used for talking about actions or things that are happening at the moment of speaking, and more specifically in the following cases:

a) for things that usually last for quite a short time and are not finished at the time of speaking about them. Examples:

halla^q εam sāwē ḥāl-ē, εam zabbet waḍaε-ē

'now I'm settling down and I'm sorting things out'

l-ḥayāt εam təglā, kull šē εam yəglā

'life is becoming more expensive, everything's become very expensive'

⁵³ Based on texts, *εammāl* never occurs.

kull ən-nās εam yəštəglō min əş-şubḥ la-l-masā

'everybody works all day'

'əbn-ē bi-ṭarṭūs ^qāeed, εam yəxtaşş εayniyyi

'my son lives in Tartus; he's getting a specialisation in ophthalmology'

b) for new habits or temporary situations, even if the action is not happening at this moment. Examples:

şār fī žaww bāred bi-maş³r min 'usbūε fa-εam twaşşel b-əl-lēl darżet əl-ḥarāra la-tnēn

'it's been a week that it's been cold in Egypt so the temperature's dropped to two degrees'

halla^q 'aktarīt əl-εālam εam tiżī-^yā musāεadāt yaεnē əllī 'il-u ^qarāybīn bi-l-xalīż

'most people get help from their relatives from the Gulf now'

With the verbs of movement and physical perception is generally used the active participle instead of *εam*. For example:

rāyeḥ baed əl-εašā.

'I'm leaving after dinner'

mā-n-ē šāyfi šē min hōn.

'I can't see anything from here'

ḥāses 'ənnu fī šē bēnāt-on.

'I feel that there is something between them'

4.3.3.3. *rāḥ* and *ḥa*

The markers *raḥ*, as well as *ḥa*- or the active participle *rāyeḥ*, are used to express actions that can happen in a near future (Liddicoat 2000: 297) and this particle is followed by the imperfect without *b*- (Cowell 1964: 322). In HA it is also possible to hear *rāḥ*⁵⁴ with a long vowel /ā/ as in Nabk Arabic (Gralla 2006: 126). Examples:

⁵⁴ In the texts only one example was found: *rāḥ 'ərżae* 'I will be back', however, in colloquial HA it is used a great deal.

*kunt kull marra fakkər 'innu xalaş 'anā rāḥ 'əržæ la-sūryā law fī ḥarb 'anā bidd-ē
'əržæ ealā bēt-ē*

'I started thinking, maybe I should go back to Syria, despite the war. I want to get back home'

raḥ nahkē ean kif mənḥadḍer əl-əurs bi-ḥumos

'now I'm going to talk about the preparations for Homs weddings'

bi-n-nihāya 'insān ^qadd mā tğarrab nihā 'iyyan ḥa-yəržæ ealā balad-u

'no matter where you live, you always have to go back to your roots some time'

4.3.4. Pseudo-Verbs

According to Brustad (2000: 153):

" [...] in general, most pseudo-verbs consist of either prepositions that give locative or possessive meaning, or of nominally derived forms that give a modal meaning".

Indeed, pseudo-verbs are usually prepositions which have a suffixed pronoun and they are negated by the particle *mā*. They are preceded by the verb *kān* if it refers to a past event.

4.3.4.1. *bidd-*

The noun stem *bidd-* is very common in Syro-Palestinian varieties and it derives from *bi-widd-ī* means 'in my desire' (Durand 2009: 414) and with a pronoun suffixes means 'to want' (Cowell 1964: 412). It can be followed by a noun, a preposition and, more frequently, by an imperfective verb without *b-* (Berlinches 2016: 151). Examples:

lammā bidd-ē 'ə^qrā l-qur'ān

'when I want to read the Koran'

'awwal šē bidd-ik tətdawwrē ealā šuḡl b-ən-nisbi 'ilā l-^qadri tabæ-ik

'first of all, you^f need to look for a job which is based on your skills'

hinni mā bidd-on ən-nās byənsrō masalan ḡasīl barra

'they don't want people, for example, to hang their clothes out to dry'

ḥasab šū bidd-ik 'əntē

'depending on what you^f want'

mā kān bidd-ē 'ətrok sūryā

'I didn't want to leave Syria'

4.3.4.2. *εand-*, *'il-*, *maε-*

The prepositions *εand-*, *'il-*, and *maε-* take a pronoun suffix in order to express possession and they usually precede the pronominal complement. These kinds of pseudo-verbs occur also in Lebanese and Palestinian varieties.

Examples of *εand* that literally translated 'at the place of' meaning to having something at almost permanently (Liddicoat 2000: 99):

madīnt-ē εand-ā lahzi xāšša fī-^yā w kull ən-nās byḏḥakō ealē-nā

'my city has its unique inflexion, which everyone makes fun of'

kān εand-ē subērmārket w baedēn tarakt-u

'I had a supermarket but then I left it'

εand-ē bənt w šabē: əš-šabē məḡawwez w εand-u bəntēn w l-bənt məḡawwzi w εand-ā šabē.

'I've got a daughter and a son: my son is married and he's got two little girls and my daughter is married too and she's got a child'

Examples of *'il-* meaning 'to have' that expresses the integral relationship between two items (Liddicoat 2000: 109):

kull madīni 'il-ā lahzi xāšša fī-^yā

'each city has its own vernacular'

hdiyyi 'il-ā 'aw la-l-bēt

'a gift for her or for her house'

Examples of *maε* mean 'to physically have with you' (Liddicoat 2000: 104):

mā kull əl-εālam maε-ā mašārī, mā kull əl-εālam εand-ā 'imkāniyyi

'not everybody has the money or the opportunity'

maε-u šaġlāt ʔktīr

'he has a lot of things'

4.3.4.3. *fī-*

fī- followed by pronoun suffixes expresses means 'be able to, can'. Examples:

hādā ʔllī fī-nē ʔišraḥ εann-u w šukran

'this is what I can explain on this topic, thank you'

mā fī-nē ʔfšil-on εan baεḍ-on ʔl-baεḍ bi-ḥayāt-ē

'I can't separate the two of them in my everyday life'

ʔizā bidd-ik fī-kē taεžnī-ʔon b-ʔl-ḥalīb

'if you want, you can mix them with milk'

mā fī-ʔon yrūḥō min makān la-makān

'they can't just move from place to place'

mā fī-ke tašterē ʔs-saeādi

'you^f can't buy happiness'

4.3.5. Auxiliaries, Modals and Temporal Verbs

Examples:

kān 'to be'

It refers to an action that happened or that was happening in the past.

kān ʔl-ʔustāz yaḥkē b-ʔl-fuṣḥā

'the teacher used to speak in Fuṣḥā'

kānet dirāst-ē l-ʔibtidā ʔiyyi ktīr ʔmnīḥa

'at elementary school my studies were great'

kunt εāmel tanzilāt

'I was having a sale'

halla^q min zamān kull-on kānō yaεmlō l-εurs

bi-bēt ʔl-εarīs

'in the past, the wedding would take place at the groom's house'

<i>ṣār</i>	'to become' It expresses the result of a previous action or a change that has happened.	<i>fa-ṣāret l-luġa l-εarabē 'astaxdem-ā 'a^qall</i> 'I stopped using Fuṣḥā' (Lit. the use of Fuṣḥā became less') <i>əš-ṣār^qa halla^q ṣāret ^oktīr 'irtafaεet</i> 'Sharjah has become more expensive' <i>ṣār ustāz mašhūr ^oktīr</i> 'he became a very famous professor'
<i>ḍall</i>	'to stay' It expresses the idea of continuity	<i>ḍallēt sini εāyši bi-sūryā</i> 'I stayed (living) in Syria for one year' <i>təḍallē təštəglē fī-^yā tlit sāεāt</i> 'you generally need at least three hours to clean it' (Lit. 'you stay three hours cleaning...') <i>bylābsō l-εabāy w byḍallō ^qāεdīn</i> 'they remain seated with their Abaya on'
<i>mā εād</i>	'no longer' It refers to an action that is finished or that has been interrupted.	<i>mā εād 'ə^qder ^qεod bidūn šuġl</i> 'I don't like being without a job' <i>mā εād mənšūf baεḍ-nā fa-hāyy wasīle tawāṣol žəyyede</i> 'we don't see each other anymore, so this is a precious means of communication for us'
<i>rəžee</i>	Lit. 'to come back' It expresses the idea of re-doing something.	<i>kamān naḥna bəržae ^qūl-lik bi-n-nisbi 'il-nā kullayāt-nā...</i> 'let me repeat that for all of us...' <i>bəržae ḥākī-k baεdēn, mā εam 'əsmae</i> 'I'll call you ^m back later, I can't hear'
<i>radd</i>	Lit. 'to reply, to react'	<i>trūḥē sintēn tiržaeē ealā ḥumoṣ bəḥessē ḥāl-ik,</i>

It expresses the idea of doing or starting something again.

raddētē, raddēt fī-kē r-rōh min ʿždīd bi-ḥumṣ
'you^f stay away for two years, and when you come back to Homs you feel like you regain the spirit of the country'

ruḥt min əl-'imārāt šahrēn w rzaet raddēt
'I went away from the Emirates for just two months, then I came back'

ballaš 'to start'
It expresses the beginning of an action: it is an inchoative verb.

byball^ošō ta^qrīban halla^q min ^qabl əl-εurs bi-ṭabean 'arbaεa xamsi šhūr bətballeš əl-εarūs
bəthadḍer əž-žihāz tabaε-ā
'the arrangements generally start before the wedding day, let's say around 4 or 5 months in advance: the bride starts preparing her marriage trousseau'

baedēn hāyy əl-εādāt ballašet tətḡayyar šwayy
šwayy

'these traditions have been changing over time'

baedēn byball^ošō ywəzzεō l-εālam bi-š-šāli
tabaεit əl-εur^os

'then they start helping them to take their seats at the wedding location'

lāzem 'must, have to'
It is the active participle of the verb *lāzem*, *byəlzam* 'to be necessary' (Berlinches 2016: 156)

l-murāsalāt b-əl-luḡa l-fuṣḡā lāzem nəktob-ā
kull-ā b-əl-luḡa l-fuṣḡā 'ayyi šē rasmē bēn-nā
bēn əš-šarikāt lāzem nəstaxdem əl-luḡa l-fuṣḡā
'of course dealing with companies should be in Fuṣḡā, as well as the correspondence: everything that's official between our company and other companies has to be in Fuṣḡā'

'ēh bass lāzem əl-wāḡed yšūf əl-bēt

'but we have to check our house'

'anā lāzem balleš ḥayāt ʔzdīdi hōn bi-qatar

'I have to restart my new life here in Qatar'

'ibn-ē lāzem yaṭearraf ealā 'ahl-u ealā balad-u

'my son needs to know his family and his country'

lāzem əl- 'uxt bətzūr axū-^wā

'the sister has to visit her brother'

yumken, 'may, might, maybe'

yəmken It is always used with 3rd person sing.masc. and it expresses something that might happen or that might be possible.

yumken mā maε-u s-sayyāra mišān hēk mā 'ižā

'maybe he doesn't have the car, this is why he didn't come'

yəmken rāḥet la-εand 'umm-ā

'maybe she went to visit her mother'

byžūz 'may, might, maybe'

It is used like *yəmken*.

byžūz 'aw^qāt bi-drūs əl-εarabē kān yaṅṭalab

min-nā hādā š-šē

'maybe sometimes it was required during Arabic classes'

byžūz 'amērkē 'aw kaza

'he might be American or whatever'

4.3.6. Negation

The basic particles of negation are *mā* and *lā* in HA, without adding the final *-š* found in other Levantine varieties such as the Palestinian and Jordanian one.

4.3.6.1. *mā*

The particle *mā* is the most common particle in HA used for negation and it occurs with nouns, adverbs, verbs, active and passive participles, prepositions, adjectives, pseudo-verbs (*bidd-*, *εand-*, *maε-*) and independent pronouns, as follows:

	Examples:
<i>mā</i> + nouns	<i>mā muš^ʔkli hāyy</i> 'this is not a problem'
<i>mā</i> + adverbs	<i>mā hōnē bātlā^qē</i> 'you ^f don't find it here' <i>mā dāyman bātrūḥ ʔa-l-madrasi</i> 'she doesn't always go to school'
<i>mā</i> + adjectives	<i>mā ktīr^q awiyyi</i> 'not very strong ^f ' <i>'əntē mā 'ažnabiyyi</i> 'you ^f aren't foreign' <i>mā sahl^ʔ bnōb</i> 'it's not easy at all'
prepositional phrases	<i>mā fī ġēr ʔl-musaqqafīn</i> 'only scholars' (Lit. 'except for, none other than scholars') <i>'abadan mā fī ḥayāt bi-ḥumoṣ halla^q</i> 'now there is no life in Homs' <i>mā fī mašākel</i> 'there are no problems' <i>mā māt l ʔl-xalīž</i> 'not like the Gulf' <i>mā bi-ḥa^{qq}-lon yfūtō ʔa-l-madāres ʔl-ḥukūmiyyi</i> 'they don't have the right to attend a state school'
<i>mā</i> + independent pronouns	<i>mā hiyye ʔl-ʔarūs</i> 'she isn't the bride'

mā huwwe əl-ğalṭān

'It is not him who got it wrong'

mā + active and passive participles *mā xārež əl-ħurūf εand-on*

'the pronunciation of letters doesn't come easily for them'

mā mumken 'abadan trūhē lā hōnīk

'you^fabsolutely can't go there'

mā mawğūdi bi-ħumş

'there isn't^f in Homs'

mā maktūb šē εa-bāb əd-dār

'there's nothing written on the door of the house'

mā + perfective and imperfective verbs (with or without imperfective markers) *naħni mā mnaħkē b-əl-fuşḥā hōn*

'here we don't speak Fuşḥā'

*bħubb 'aħkē l-luğa l-fuşḥā bass mā bə^dder
lə'annu l-εāmmiyyi mantişra 'aktar bi-ktīr bēn
ən-nās*

'I like speaking in Fuşḥā but I can't always do so because the majority of people communicate in dialect'

mā xallaşt dirāst-ē b-əž-žāmaεa

'I haven't finish university'

'anā li'annu şər-lī tlitⁱ snīn mā ruḥt εalā ħumş

'it's been 3 years since I've been to Homs'

mā + pseudo-verbs

'anā mā εand-ē ħadi 'abadan

'I have nobody with me'

mā εand-kon maεžūn fləfli?

'You don't have chilli paste?'

'anā mā εand-ē ħadi 'abadan

'I have nobody with me'

*'anā bidd-ē l'ğğawwaz, mā bidd-ē 'ətlæ min
ğaddi*

'I want to get married, I don't want to live Jeddah'

l-εāmmiyyi mā 'il-ā qawāeed

'dialect has no grammar'

mā 'il-ē xabar 'innu sāfar

'I didn't know that he left'

For the negative copula in HA occur the stem *mān* + attached pronoun suffixes.

In DA is most common *māl-*, even if *mān-* is also heard. In Nabk Arabic is used *mān* (Gralla 2006: 27), except for the 2nd feminine person: in NA it is *mānke* while in HA it is *mānik* 'you^f are not'. In Lebanon *mann-* is common, while in Palestine it is used *mā* + independent pronoun (apocopated) +*š* (Cowell 1964: 387).

Person	Pronoun	Negation of the nominal phrase	Translation
1 st sing.	<i>'anā</i>	<i>mānē, mānī</i>	'I am not'
2 nd sing. m.	<i>'ənti</i>	<i>mānak</i>	'you ^m are not'
2 nd sing. f.	<i>'əntē</i>	<i>mānik</i>	'you ^f are not'
3 rd sing. m.	<i>huwwi</i>	<i>mānu</i>	'he is not'
3 rd sing. f.	<i>hiyyi</i>	<i>mānā</i>	'she is not'
1 st pl.	<i>naḥni</i>	<i>mānnā</i>	'we are not'
2 nd pl. m./f.	<i>'əntō</i>	<i>mānkōn</i>	'you ^{pl} are not'
3 rd pl. m./f.	<i>hinni</i>	<i>mānon</i>	'they are not'

Examples:

mā-n-u 'ixtišāš luğa

'it's not a major in languages'

əl-εālam 'āedīn mā-n-ā mərtāḥa nəfsiyyan

'people aren't mentally relaxed'

mā-n-u ḥumšē

'he's not Homsī'

'anā mā-n-ē^qadrāni

'I'm not able to'

mā-n-u mazbūt

'it's not good'

4.3.6.2. *lā*

The stem *lā* is usually used for the negation of the imperative, even if in HA the negation is also made by the stem *mā*: in practice, they are interchangeable, as in the following examples:

lā tāklē šē^qabl əs-safar

'don't^f eat anything before the trip'

mā t^qarr^βbē əalī-^yon b-əl-ləl

'don't^f get close to them during the night'

According to Cowell (1964: 390), it is also used in classicisms before nouns, for example: *lā šakk* 'no doubt'.

As Brustad assumed (2000: 309), the particles *wa-lā* 'not a, none, at all' and *lā...w* *lā* 'neither...nor' aim to express a categorical negation.

Examples with *wa-lā* 'not a, none, at all':

mā mumken trūḥē wa-lā maḥall

'you^f can't go anywhere at all'

lā fī 'išārat murūr wa-lā 'ənnu tēaddē

'there aren't any traffic lights and you^f can't even cross the road'

mā btə^qdrē tətlaē la-barra wa-lā tətnaffasē

'you^f can't even go outside and breathe'

Examples with *lā...w lā* 'neither...nor':

yaenē lā mrī^qa w lā smīki

'I mean neither sticky nor liquid'

yaenē lā yət'axxar w lā yrūḥ bakkīr

'you can't be late; you can't leave too early either'

lā bidd-nā n^qəddem ət-ṭalab w lā-šē

'we aren't even going to report that or anything'

4.3.7. Supplemental Clauses introduced by *mā*

<i>baed mā</i>	'after'	<i>baed mā bxalleṣ dirās-ī</i> 'when I've finished studying' <i>baed mā ^otxarraġ^ot min əġ-ġāmaea</i> 'after I graduated (from University) '
<i>mətl mā</i>	'as'	<i>mətl mā btaerfē ḥumṣ ^qabel kānet ^oktīr hādi w ktīr ḥəlwi</i> 'as you ^f know, Homs before was a very quiet and nice city'
<i>bidūn mā</i>	'without'	<i>bidūn mā yaḥkī-lē šē fhəmt šū šār-lu</i> 'without him telling me anything, I understood what was wrong with him'
<i>badal mā</i>	'instead of'	<i>badal mā trūḥō ea-l-maṭeam xallī-kon hōn ea-l-εašā</i> 'instead of going to the restaurant, stay ^{pl} here for dinner'
<i>wa^qt mā</i>	'when'	<i>wa^qt mā təṭlae-ē min əl-maḥkami, xabbrī-nī</i> 'when you ^f walk out of court, call me'
<i>^qadd mā</i>	'as much as'	<i>bi-n-nihāya 'insān ^qadd mā tġarrab nihā'iyyan ḥa-yəržae ealā balad-u</i> 'no matter where you live, you always have to go back to your roots some time'
<i>bēn mā</i>	'in the meanwhile'	<i>bēn mā tlibsō w tətmakyažō b^otkūn šāret əd-dinyā εətm</i> 'in the time that you get dressed and put on your

make-up it'll be dark'

'*awwal mā* 'as soon as' '*awwal mā bətballeš naēfī-k sətt ʔmiyyi*
'as soon as you^m start we'll give you 600 (pounds)'

'*abl mā* 'before' '*abl mā trūḥ la-εand sətt-ak, murr žīb-lā xubz min*
εand əl-farrān
'before going to your^m grandmother's, go by the
bakery'

kull-mā 'every time,
whenever' '*kull-mā b^qūl-lā taεē la-εand-ē bit^qūl-lē mašgūli*
'every time I ask her to come and see me, she tells me
she's busy'

4.3.8. Prepositional Clauses introduced by *la-*, *ḥattā*, *la-ḥattā*, *mišān*

In HA, as well as other Syrian varieties, purpose can be expressed by the prepositions *la-*, *ḥattā*, *la-ḥattā*, *mišān* 'to, in order to' (Cowell 1964: 491), as in the following examples:

tabaε^ʔt əd-dirāsi la-ḥattā txarražt

'I still continued my studies until I graduated'

*baed mā ʔtxarražt min əğ-ğāmaεa 'inta^qal^ʔt la-'əštəgel bi-šarket mu^qāwalāt b-əs-
saēūdiyyi*

'after I graduated, I moved to Saudi Arabia in order to work for a construction
company'

'anā ḥāliyyan li-l-'awlād, bidd-ē 'iyyā-hon yəkbarō šwayy ḥattā bḥuṭṭ-on bi-ḥadāni

'at the moment I am very involved with my kids and I am waiting for them to grow so
I can enroll them in a kindergarten'

'anā bḥubb luğ^ut-ē ktīr w bḥubb 'uṭāleε-ā ḥattā 'əteallam əl-luğa l-fuṣḥā bi-šakl ʔkbīr

'I like my language a lot and I love to nurture it so I can expand my knowledge'

*fa-lāzem ʔarreb ʔktīr min əl-walad mišān εaref kif byfakker w εallim-u kif yfarre^q bēn
əl-kalimāt*

'I need to meet each child where they are in order to understand them then teach them how to recognise words'

xālt-ē εam tistannā-nī la- 'izī mišān ġīb-ā maε-ē

'my aunt is waiting for me to get her and bring her back here with me'

šəḡbet w katbet-lu 'fannān' mišān mā yəzeal əl-walad

'she cancelled it and wrote the word "artist" instead, so that the boy would stop being upset'

4.3.9. Conditional Clauses

In HA, the conditional clauses are introduced by the conjunctions *'izā* and *law* 'if' and their occurrence depends on whether the conditional clause is real or unreal (or hypothetical); they can be followed by perfective or imperfective verbs.

a) real clauses with *'izā* 'if'

Examples:

'izā kuntē təštəġlē ktīr^o kwayyəs bəḥašlē ealā šuġ^o l kwayyəs^o ktīr^o mnīh

'if you're a hard- working person, you'll probably get a very good job'

bass kamān 'izā bidd-u ysāfer bi-sayyārt-u l-wāḥed bysāfer masalan min əs-sāea eašara^o əbl əḍ-ḍuḥ^o r la-s-sāea tentēn tlāti

'if you want to leave by car, you should go, for example, between 10:00 or 12:00 in the morning and 2:00 or 3:00 in the afternoon'

'izā rāḥ əl-bēt wēn mənruḥ?

'if they take the house off us, where are we supposed to go?'

l-εarīs byāxod earūst-u 'aw ealā bēt-ā 'izā εand-on bēt la-ḥāl-on 'aw 'izā kān huwwi εāyeš barra l-balad w žāy bass yətzawwaž mumken ealā 'ōtēl

'the groom takes his bride home, which could be to their own home or a hotel if he lives elsewhere and he only came for the wedding'

'izā mā zabbḡet bi-sūryā bidd-ē rūḥ εa- 'urobbā

'if the situation doesn't get better in Syria, I'll most likely go to Europe'

In Syrian Arabic, the particle *'in* (or *'ən*) is also common, (Cowell 1964: 331) for a hypothetical pattern (Brustad 2000: 256-257), though in HA it is not so frequently used and the tendency is to replace *'in* with *'izā* 'if'. When it is used it is usually followed by *kān*, as in the following example:

'in kān šōb wallā bar³d bidd-ē 'əḷlae əl-yōm
'whether it is hot or cold, I want to go out today'

b) unreal clauses with *law* 'if'

Examples:

law kān ḥadi bidd-u yətdaxxal w yənhē l-mawḏūe, yaenē 'intaha, kān 'intaha bass
'akīd mā ḥadi bidd-u

'it would have ended if someone had really wanted it to, but of course nobody does'

'anā mustaqarra barra 'akīd law waḍaε balad-ē byəṯḥassan kull sini lāzem rūḥ 'a^qdē
'ižāzt-ē bi-balad-ē

'I live abroad, as soon as the situation gets better in my country, I'll spend my holidays there, every year'

'anā rāḥ 'əržae la-sūryā law fī ḥarb 'anā bidd-ē 'əržae ealā bēt-ē

'I will go back to Syria, despite the war I want to get back home'

5. Conclusions

5.1. Final Comments

The spoken varieties have undergone, and will likely continue to undergo, great changes, making it difficult to document them. Furthermore, substantial linguistic differences are evident from region to region, from city to city, and sometimes from district to district, throughout the Arabic-speaking world.

The purpose of Arabic Dialectology and Linguistics is to conduct studies, as far as it is possible, on those thousands of spoken Arabic varieties and classify them so as to broaden scientific knowledge and to have documented proof that they have existed.

This dissertation set out to show the main linguistic features of the Arabic language spoken in the City of Homs, which is considered the third city by importance in Syria. The main purpose was to provide new material on a Syrian variety that, according to research archive, has not previously been studied in depth from a linguistic point of view, either in the West and or in the Near East.

Due to the lack of alternative sources of Homs Arabic, the data collected in this present study has generally been compared to Damascene Arabic or other Syrian varieties (Hama, Nabk, Soukhne, Mharde, etc.) which have been the subject of previous linguistic studies.

Based on the data, it is clear that Homs Arabic is a sedentary typology with a minor rural-Bedouin component. It is closely associated to Damascus Arabic, such as for the interchangeable occurrence of *a*, in the imperfective prefix verbs or in first syllables, instead of *i* or *u*.

The strategic position of Homs, in the center of Syria, has made it an important crossroads between the inland cities and the Mediterranean coast, as well as for neighbouring countries which likely have linguistically conditioned the local language. As a matter of fact, a comparative analysis of the main features shows many points in common between the Arabic of Homs and northern-Syria varieties (e.g. *ǧ* [dʒ] of Aleppo) and even with Lebanese and Palestinian varieties. Moreover an Iraqi influence concerning the unstable assimilation of /*ž*/ (or /*ǧ*/) with the definite article /*ʔ*/ or the occurrence of the apocopate relative stem *ʔl-* 'that', for example: *ʔl-ʔakl ʔl-byħubbū-h hinni* 'the food that they love'.

The urban character of Homs Arabic is evident from the following points:

- realisation of [q] > [ʔ] as urban prestigious form.

- loss of interdentalals \underline{t} , \underline{d} , \underline{d}^{\prime} :

$\underline{t} > t/s$

$\underline{d} > d/z$

$\underline{d} > d/z$

The rural Bedouin element has been found: HA has two realisations of the phoneme $\check{g}\bar{m}$. It is mostly pronounced \check{z} [ʒ], but it is also pronounced \check{g} [dʒ], as pronounced by rural Bedouin varieties, especially by those who left Homs many years ago. This suggests that the realisation [dʒ] is more common in a more authentic form of HA.

HA also preserves some features of Standard Arabic: \bar{a} is maintained and there is no conditioned 'imāla, e.g. *nās* 'people'. It also tends to maintain *u* in an open short syllable, as in SA: *dukkān* 'shop' and 'ustāz 'teacher', whereas $u > \emptyset$ in DA.

It is worth noting that HA is another variety which maintains all short vowels *a, i, u* just as in the varieties of Jerusalem, Cairo, Dayr az-Zawr and Tunis. The preverbs *b-*, *εam-*, *raḥ-*, *ḥa-* are widely used in HA as is common in sedentary varieties, e.g.: *buktob* 'I write'; *εam tətfarraḥ* 'you^m watch, you^m are watching'; *raḥ zūr* 'I will visit'; *ḥa žīb-lik* 'I will bring you^f'.

Since 2011, along with the majority of the Syrian population, the Homsis people have been displaced, migrating all over the world because of the War. How will this migration influence the future of Homs Arabic? On a linguistic level, it is too early to establish if something has changed and how it has changed, since significant linguistic changes usually require years to take root. Nevertheless, two principal hypotheses regarding the future of HA may be put forward, bearing in mind that this future depends on the unpredictable course of events and on the hoped-for end of the conflict.

The first hypothesis refers to a fragmentation of HA, due to the extensive migration, as Homsis are forced to adapt their local language to their new country of residence, whether or not that country is Arab. How much, for instance, might a European language or another Arabic variety influence *al-lahža al-ḥumsiyya*? It is likely that their influence will be significant. For example, Homsis who moved to Cairo would probably use the Egyptian variety to interact with local people; Homsis

who moved to Morocco would adapt their variety to Damascene, since it is the most easily understood variety by all Arabs, besides Egyptian Arabic, due to television series.

Young Homsis in the Gulf region could be influenced by English, since almost all the schools and universities there adopt a British or American education system that naturally encourages them to mix Arabic and a European language, leading to the likelihood of them being distanced from their established form of Arabic. New generations will be born outside Syria from a Syrian population and their mother tongue may not be an Arabic variety.

The second scenario, probably the more realistic one, refers to the preservation of this variety by those Homsis who did not leave the city and to a subsequent re-growing of this language in its 'original habitat' by those who return home when the war has ended.

In my optimistic opinion, however, these last hard years for Homsis are not sufficient to distance themselves from their language because it is deeply rooted in their linguistic traditions and they are very proud of it.

Although the study largely presents the main phonological and morphosyntactical features of HA, further research is required in this area to confirm these findings, especially more investigation through other fieldworks in the territory. It would be also interesting, in the future, to evaluate the data of this study from a sociolinguistic point of view.

In the meanwhile, I will continue to collect linguistic proof of the Arabic spoken in the City of Homs with the hope that the war will come to an end as soon as possible for the sake of all Homsis and all Syrian people, *'in šā' Aļļāh*.

5.2. Texts

5.2.1. Text 1

Speaker 1: M. Ġ., male, 51 years old, degree, Homs, Syria

'anā 'ism-ī M., eumr-ē wāhed w xamsīn sini, darast b-əl-ġāmaea tabīb bēṭarē w txarraġ⁵⁵t eām 'əlf w tisea miyyi w tmānīn. eāyeš bi-madīnt-ē w bištəġel fī-^yā w εand-ē kamān mazraea bitrabb⁵⁶fī-^yā xuyūl earabiyyi 'ašīli. madīnt-ē ḥumš⁵⁷ 'adīmi ġiddan fī-t-tārīx w yūġad fī-^yā⁵⁸ 'aleat əl-ḥuṣ⁵⁹n w hiyyi mašhūra ktīr w kamān yūġad b-əl-muhāfaza madīni rūmāniyyi⁵⁵ 'adīmi ġiddan⁵⁵ bi-nuṣṣ əṣ-ṣaḥrā 'ism-ā tudmor⁵⁶. ḥumš fī waṣat sūryā w tuetabar min 'aġmal əl-mudon li-wuġūd əl-xadār fī-^yā w yuebor fī-^yā nah⁵⁹r mašhūr⁵⁹ ktīr 'ism-u l-eāšē⁵⁷. ət-ta⁵⁹s fī-^yā ġamīl xāṣṣatan b-əṣ-ṣēf dāyman bārdi w hawā-hā ḥəlwi ktīr w bi-faṣl əš-šiti bārdi ktīr w yənzal fī-^yā tal⁵⁹ġ kull sini ta⁵⁹rīban. madīnt-ē mašhūra bi-ḫībit 'ahl-ā w kull ən-nukat by⁵⁹ūlō ealā 'ahl ḥum⁵⁹š w by⁵⁹ūlō l-ḥamāšni εand-on eīd kull yōm əl-'arbaea. l-lahġi l-ḥumšiyi⁵⁹ mumayyazi w ġamīli w kull ən-nās byeall⁵⁹ō ealē-nā. kull dirāst-ē min əl-'ibtidā'ē 'ilā⁵⁸ l-ġāmaea kull-ā b-əl-luġa l-fuṣḥā⁵⁹ w hiyyi luġa ġamīli w ṣaebi w saḥli la-mīn yaerif-ā w hiyyi mə⁵⁹l kull⁵⁹ luġāt əl-eālam muhaddadi min əl-luġa l-eāmiyyi l-məntišra ktīr. w l-far⁵⁹ bēn əl-luġtēn 'innu l-fuṣḥā l-maktūbi tudarras ḥattā fī-l-ġāmaea li-l-ḥifāz ealē-hā, l-luġa l-eāmiyyi ġēr maktūbi lāken məntišra ktīr w yūġad la-kull balad earabē luġ⁵⁹t-u l-eāmiyyi w kamān kull madīni la-hā lahġit-ā l-xāṣṣa. l-fuṣḥā hiyyi l-luġa r-rasmiyyi li-kull əl-bilād l-earabiyyi w t-taelīm w d-dirāsi bytamm fī-^yā w kull əl-kutob w ṣ-ṣuḥof w wasā'el əl-'ielām. yūġad baed əl-musalsalāt ət-tilfzyūniyyi b-əl-luġa l-eāmiyyi w xāṣṣatan yallī taḥkē ean əl-eādāt əl-⁵⁹adīmi. bi-εamal-ē kull šē maktūb yətemm b-əl-luġa l-fuṣḥā w l-kalām yətemm b-əl-luġa l-eāmiyyi w ktīr 'aḥyān bistaemel əl-luġa l-fuṣḥā li-šarah əl-fikra bi-šək⁵⁹l wādeḥ. l-luġa l-eāmiyyi saḥli w lāken bass təftə⁵⁹er b-əl-kalimāt əl-mueabbira. 'əntē ġāy min 'iṭālyā?'anā⁵⁹ 'arēt εann-ā ktīr w hiyyi balad⁵⁹ 'adīmi w εand-ā tārīx⁵⁹ kbīr, biḥubb zūr 'iṭālyā law ṣār-lē, 'anā baeref⁵⁹ 'šwayy 'iṭālē 'tšāw', 'subāketti'.

šukran ealā l-muqābali l-laṭīfi w salmī-lē ealā 'iṭālyā.

⁵⁵ This adverb is taken from Classical Arabic.

⁵⁶ i.e. Palmyra.

⁵⁷ The Orontes River, also known as Assi River, which flows north from Lebanon to Syria and Turkey and drains west into the Mediterranean Sea.

⁵⁸ A borrowing from CA since in HA it should say for 'until': 'li-l-ġāmaea', or 'hattā-l-ġāmaea'.

⁵⁹ i.e. Classical Arabic, while *εāmiyyi* means 'dialect'.

My name is M., I'm 51 years old, I studied Veterinary Science and graduated in 1980. I live and work in my city and I also have a plot of land where I breed Arabian thoroughbred horses. My city, Homs, is historically very old and the al-Hosn castle is located there and it's very popular. In the region there's also an ancient Roman city called Palmyra, which is in the middle of the desert. Homs is in the centre of Syria and it's considered one of the most beautiful cities, thanks to its greenery and the River al-Asi that flows through the city. The weather's great, especially during the summer; it's always cool and the breeze is very pleasant, while during the winter it's very cold and it snows almost every year. My city is very well-known for the locals' kindness and all the jokes are about the Homsis (the people of Homs). It has been said that the Homsis have a special celebration on Wednesdays. The Homs dialect sounds peculiar and quite comical -indeed, everybody makes fun of us (of our accent).

All of my studies, from elementary school to university, have been in Fuṣḥā, which is a very nice and articulate language and easy for those who know it, and, like all the languages in the world, Fuṣḥā is contaminated by dialect. The difference between the two varieties lies in the fact that Fuṣḥā is taught up to and including university to preserve it while dialect isn't written but it's commonly used. Each Arab country has its own dialect as well as each city having its own vernacular. Fuṣḥā is the official language of all Arab countries and the whole education is in Fuṣḥā - like all the books, newspapers and media. There are a lot of soap operas in dialect, especially the ones that are about old traditions. In my job, the written language is Fuṣḥā, while the spoken one is dialect; very often I use Fuṣḥā to express a concept clearly. Dialect is easy but conveys meanings differently.

Do you come from Italy? I read a lot about it and it's an ancient country with a rich history, I'd love to visit it if I could, I know a little bit of Italian: 'ciao', 'spaghetti'. Thank you for the nice interview and say hi to Italy!

5.2.2. Text 2

Speaker 2: D.Š., female, 39 years old, degree, Homs, Syria

ʔs-salām ealē-kom, bearrif-kon bi-ḥāl-ē, 'anā D., dārsi ṣaff ʔxāṣṣ w kaffēt b-əl-žāmaea w txarražʔt. bidarres maddet ər-riyāḍiyyāt li-ṣ-ṣaff əl-xāmes w s-sādes. bistaxdem əl-luḡa l-fuṣḥā waʔət wužūdē b-əṣ-ṣaff ləʔannu maṭlūb min-nā min kull meallem yəstaxdem əl-luḡa l-fuṣḥā bi-məhʔnt-u w'istiemāl əl-luḡa l-fuṣḥā 'amʔr ṭabēē

wa^qat tadrīs aṭ-tullāb w 'anā bə^qder ^oktīr εabber ean 'afkār-ē b-əl-luġa l-fuṣṣhā. wa^qat bikūn b-əl-madrasi baḥkē bass earabē fuṣṣhā, bi-ḥayāt-ē l-yōmiyyi wa^qat bəteāmal mae 'aṣḥāb-ē w 'ahl-ē w ž-žīrān bistaxdem əl-luġa l-εāmmiyyi w 'aw^qāt bəxloṭ bēn əl-fuṣṣhā w l-εāmmiyyi. wa^qat baḥkē 'anā biḥubb ^oktīr əl-xalṭ bayna-hum⁶⁰ w b-ən-nisbit 'il-ē hādā š-šē kwayyəs ^oktīr. 'aw^qāt bəḏtarr 'aḥkē l-fuṣṣhā l-kāmlī li-šaraḥ fikra lə'annu l-luġa l-fuṣṣhā žamīli w l-kalimāt 'il-ā maeāni ktīr.

Hello, let me introduce myself: I am D., I was homeschooled, then I went to university and got my degree. I teach mathematics to fifth and sixth grade kids. I always use Fuṣṣhā during classes because every teacher is required to use Fuṣṣhā at work. The use of Fuṣṣhā is natural when it comes to teaching and I'm able to express my thoughts fluently in Fuṣṣhā. When I'm at school I only speak Fuṣṣhā but during my daily routine when I deal with my friends, family and neighbours, I use dialect and sometimes I combine the two. When I speak, I like using a mix of Fuṣṣhā and dialect and for me it's a very nice thing to do. Sometimes I'm forced to use Fuṣṣhā exclusively to express a concept because its words are richer and deeper.

5.2.3. Text 3

Speaker 3: L. As., female, 32 years old, degree, Homs, Syria

masā l-xēr 'anā muhandesi maemāriyyi, bəštəgel bi-madīnit ḥum^oš, εamal-ē mušrəfa ealā bināy l-madāres bi-rīf madīnit ḥumš.

biḥubb luġt-ē l-earabiyyi ktīr ^oktīr w biḥəss-ā 'innu 'il-ā taem xāšš məxtəlef ^oktīr ean 'ayyi luġa tānī ṭabean. 'izā bidd-ē 'iteāmal b-əl-luġa, biteāmal b-əl-luġa l-fuṣṣhā 'aw b-əl-luġa əl-εāmmiyyi w l-fuṣṣhā w l-εāmmiyyi mutakāmlīn, mā fi-nē 'əfšil-on ean baed-on əl-baed bi-ḥayāt-ē w lāken bi-šək^ll dāyman 'aktar taemul-ē⁶¹ mae 'ahl-ē w 'aṣḥāb-ē b-əl-luġa l-εāmmiyyi, ṭabean li-tawḏīḥ əl-fikra w li-suhūlit əl-wuṣūl li-l-āxarīn. bass əl-luġa l-earabiyyi l-fuṣṣhā mumken ^oktīr marrāt baḥtāž 'iteāmal fi-^yā mažāl εamal-ē 'aw mae 'ašxāš 'aġāneb w 'aḥyānan baḥtāž əl-luġa l-earabiyyi l-fuṣṣhā li-tawḏīḥ fikra 'anā mā-n-ē ^qadrāni ealā tawḏīḥ-ā b-əl-luġa l-εāmmiyyi.

⁶⁰ A borrowing from Classical Arabic.

⁶¹ A borrowing from Classical Arabic.

ṭabean ṭab^qā 'ažmal bi-ktīr 'izā mnə^qder naḥni nuxloṭ bēn əl-ḥāltēn bi-ḥadīs-nā, lə'annu dāyman əl-luḡa l-əarabiyyi l-fuṣḥā bitaēṭē ṭaēmi 'aktar w žamāl 'aktar min əl-əāmmiyyi.

w lamma naḥtāž niteāmal maē 'ašxāš 'ažāneb mnəṭṭarr əl-luḡa l-fuṣḥā w lamma mnəteāmal maē 'ašxāš mumken ykūnō min ġēr əl-madīni, mnəṭṭarr biteāmal b-əl-luḡa l-fuṣḥā lə'annu kull madīni 'il-ā lahzi xāšša fī-^yā.

biškur-kon^oktīr w šarfū-nā bi-madrasit-nā.

Good evening, I'm an architect, I work in Homs as a construction coordinator of the schools in the suburbs of Homs. I love my language (Arabic): I think it has a unique flavour compared to other languages. As far as which variety I use, I tend to use Fuṣḥā and dialect; however, Fuṣḥā and dialect are complementary: I can't separate the two of them in my everyday life but I mostly use dialect with my family and friends in order to communicate in a simpler and more direct way. As far as Fuṣḥā is concerned, I often need to use it, especially in my field of work or with foreigners and sometimes I need it to explain an idea I can't express in dialect. Obviously, it would be much better if we could mix the two in our speech since Fuṣḥā adds an extra flavour compared with dialect. When we need to deal with foreigners we have to speak Fuṣḥā as well, since we need to communicate with someone who comes from another city because each city has its own vernacular.

Thank you very much. I hope you will come and visit our school.

5.2.4. Text 4

Speaker 4: N. Ğ., female, 28 years old, degree, Homs, Syria

'ism-ī N., eumr-ē tmāna w eašrīn sini, dārsi riyāḍiyyāt. kun^ot muwazzafi^o ab^ol mā 'itğğawwaz bi-madrasī l-əl-banāt əs-sānawiyyi, kun^ot mudīra w meallmi bi-nəfs əl-wa^oət, baedēn tarakt wa^oət xaṭab^ot, halla^o nədemt lə'annu tarakt, mā ēād 'ə^oder^o 'εod bidūn šuğ^ol.

ḥayāt-ē b-əl-bēt, li-l-'awlād w mas'ūliyyāt... bass 'aktar min hēk mā fī. 'izmālan naḥni mā mnaḥkē b-əl-fuṣḥā hōn, bass yumken byžūz 'aw^oāt bi-drūs əl-əarabē kān yənṭalab min-nā hādā š-šē, kān əl-'ustāz yaḥkē b-əl-fuṣḥā w naḥni mənžāwb-u bi-nəfs əṭ-ṭarī^oa, bass 'aktar min hēk lā'.

w wa^qat naḥlae barra mā mnaḥkē fī-^yā la 'annu mā-n-ā maḥdāwli ktīr w kamān t^qili šwayy. 'izmālan əl-masā mumken 'itfarraḥ ealā t-tilfīzyūn musalsalāt w biḥubb əl-barāmeḥ əl-eilmīyyi šwayy w l-'axbār bi-ṭ-ṭabae lamma bykūn fī šē muḥamm^o ktīr.

'anā ḥāliyyan li-l-'awlād, bidd-ē 'iyyā-hon yəkbarō šwayy ḥattā biḥuṭṭ-on bi-ḥadāni w baṭfarraḥ la-šugl-ē maḥāl dirāst-ē 'anā.

My name is N., I'm 28 years old and I studied mathematics. Before getting married, I worked as an employee in a high school for girls; I was a teacher and Head Teacher at the same time, then I quit when I got engaged, but now I regret doing it because I don't like being without a job. Now my life is all about the house, kids and responsibilities... nothing more than this. In general here we don't speak Fuṣḥā; maybe sometimes it was required at school during Arabic classes: the teacher used to speak in Fuṣḥā and we answered the same way, but no more than this. When we go out we don't speak Fuṣḥā because it's not used very much and it sounds a little formal. What's more, in the evening I might watch some soap operas and I like documentaries and of course I watch the news when it comes to something important that's happening. At the moment I am very involved with my kids and I am waiting for them to grow so I can enroll them in a kindergarten and I can look for a job in my field of studies.

5.2.5. Text 5

Speaker 5: B. T., female, 35 years old, high school, living in UAE since 2008

eumr-ē xamsa w tlatīn sini, xallaṣ^ot sānawē eāmlī bakalōryā w tzawwaz^ot kān eumr-ē eašrīn sini w 'anā halla^q eāyši b-əl-'imārāt w baštəḡel mudarresit luḡa earabiyyi rawḍa 'ulā w tānī, 'aemār aṭ-ṭullāb min 'arbaea li-səttⁱ snīn.

mabsūṭa ktīr b-əš-šug^l w biḥubb əl-'awlād^o ktīr w hinnī mabsūṭīn maē-ē ktīr: l-'awlād ṣəabi ktīr yaḥḥamō l-luḡa l-earabiyyi l-fuṣḥā li'ann-on 'ažāneb, yaenē lāzem balleš maē-on^o šwayy li'annu l-'aḥruf^o ktīr ṣəabi ealī-^yon, maṭ^l ḥarf əl-xā' w ṭ-ṭā' w d-dāl li'annu mā xāreḥ əl-ḥurūf eand-on, ṣəabi, fa-lāzem^o arreb^o ktīr min əl-walad mišān earef kif byfakker w eallim-u kif yfarre^q bēn əl-kalimāt w l-maeni masalan 'asmā l-ḥayawānāt ḥattā šwayy šwayy 'ə^qder yitaeallam əl-luḡa.

yaenē 'anā masalan kull ḥarf beaml-u ḡani, baedēn biballeš eallim-on əl-arqām kull-ā b-əl-earabē w^o l-ḥurūf w l-'aškāl w l-'alwān w ḥādā ṭabeen kull-u b-əl-earabē

li'annu nahni l-madrasi allī bidarres fī-ʔā kull-ā 'ažāneb yaenē beallim-on kull šē b-əl- 'inklīzē w 'anā beallim-on 'iyyā-h b-əl-εarabē.

I'm 36 years old, I attended secondary school and I got my high school diploma. I was 20 when I got married. I currently live in the UAE and I work as an Arabic teacher in a kindergarten; the kids' ages vary between four and six years old. I'm very happy in my job - I love children and they seem to like me: it's very difficult for them to understand Fuṣḥā because they are non-native speakers; I need to proceed at a slow pace since learning the alphabet is very difficult for them, like the letters *əl-xā'*, *ət-ṭā'*, *əd-dāl*, because the pronunciation doesn't come easily, so I need to meet each child where they are in order to teach them how to recognize words and meanings such as the names of animals. In this way each child can learn the language step by step. For example, I make up a song for each letter of the alphabet, then I move on and teach them numbers, letters, shapes and colours. I do everything in Arabic because our school is for non-native speakers. This means they're taught in English and then I teach them the same topics in Arabic.

5.2.6. Text 6

Speaker 6: K. A., female, 15 years old, high school student, Homs, Syria

marḥaba, εumr-ē xam^oṣṭaešar sini, b-əṣ-šaff ət-tāsee, 'ab-ī byəštəgel muhandes w 'umm-ē muwazzafi b-əl-bank; εand-ē 'ux^t b-əṣ-šaff əs-sādes w 'ax b-əṣ-šaff əl-'awwal. bi-ḥayāt-ē l-εādiyyi baḥkē b-əl-luğa l-εāmmiyyi lə'annu hāyy əl-luğa mətdāwli bēn kull ən-nās, 'amma b-əl-madrasi 'aktar ət-taeāmōl bykūn b-əl-luğa l-εarabiyyi l-fuṣḥā w xāṣṣatan maε əl-mudarrisīn. 'anā bḥubb luğ^ut-ē ktīr w bḥubb 'uṭālee-ā ḥattā 'əteallam əl-luğa l-fuṣḥā bi-šak^l kbīr, bḥubb 'aḥkē l-luğa l-fuṣḥā bass mā bə^qder lə'annu l-εāmmiyyi məntišra 'aktar bi-ktīr bēn ən-nās. madīnt-ē εand-ā lahzi xāṣṣa fī-ʔā w kull ən-nās byəḍḥakō ealē-nā. bitfarraž ealā t-tilfīzyūn baed mā bxalleš dirās-ī w bḥubb 'aflām kartūn w l-musalsalāt b-əl-luğa l-fuṣḥā.

Hello, I'm 15 years old and I'm in middle school (ninth grade in the Syrian education system). My father is an engineer and my mother is a bank employee. I've got a sister in middle school that is in sixth grade and a brother, who's in first grade. In my everyday life I speak dialect since this is the national language that's used

mostly by everyone, but at school I use Fuṣḥā more, especially when dealing with teachers. I like my language a lot and I love to nurture it so I can expand my knowledge. I like speaking in Fuṣḥā but I can't always do so because the majority of people communicate in dialect. My city has its unique inflexion, which everyone makes fun of. When I've finished studying, I usually watch TV: I like cartoons and soap operas in Fuṣḥā.

5.2.7. Text 7

Speaker 7: E. T., male, 70 years old, graduated school, Homs, Syria

'anā ε., eumr-ē sabeīn sini, mutaqāeed b-əl-bēt, bḥubb °ktīr əl-luġa l-earabiyyi w ktīr bitfarraġ ealā barāmeġ ət-tilfiziyyūn miṭl barāmeġ ər-riyāda, kurat əl-qadam w bitfarraġ °ktīr lə-leāb əl-uwwi w xāššatan əl-mulākami w bḥubb 'itfarraġ °ktir ealā barāmeġ əl-luġa l-earabiyyi, lāzem ykūn əl-'ustāz mu^qaddem əl-barnāmeġ 'ustāz b-əl-luġa mas'ul ean kalām-u w hādā bysāeed bi-fahm əl-luġa w xāššatan 'izā kān əl-'ustāz yətbəe ṭarī^qet šaraḥ ḥattā yə^qarrib-nā 'ilā l-luġa l-earabiyyi w bi-l-bidāyyi ṣaebi ktīr 'innu l-wāḥed yəteallam, bass baedēn šwayy šwayy bə^qder yəteallam-ā ktīr w hiyyi luġa ḥəlwi. w 'ahamm šē 'innu l-wāḥed yəteallam əl-muzakkar w l-mu'annas w l-wāḥed byəteallam bi-bēt-u l-luġa l-earabiyyi l-ēmmiyyi lə'annu 'ashal ealē-nā min əl-fuṣḥā, lāken luġat əd-dawli, əṣ-ṣaḥāfa w d-dirāsi w wasā'el əl-'ielām bitbəe-ā b-əl-luġa l-earabiyyi l-fuṣḥā w mumken 'afham kalām barāmeġ kull əl-bilād əl-earabiyyi lə'annu luġa waḥdi.

I am E., I'm 70 years old, I'm retired; I really like the Arabic language and I watch a lot of TV programmes such as the sport channels; I especially like football and boxing. I like watching programmes on the Arabic language meaning, the ones where a professor has the appropriate knowledge and experience; so he uses the right method to help us fully embrace the language. The learning process is hard but step by step it becomes possible. It's a very beautiful language.

What matters the most is learning to tell the difference between masculine and feminine, to learn dialect at home since for us it comes more easily than Fuṣḥā. On the other hand, the official language of the Press, textbooks and the Media are in Fuṣḥā; in this way, I can understand news from every Arab country because it is a single language.

5.2.8. Text 8

Speaker 8: R.Ṭ, female, 32 years old, degree, living in Saudi Arabia since 2000

'anā eumr-ē tnēn w tlātīn, darast riyāḍiyyāt w fīzyā, darast žāmaea, kānet dirāst-ē l-'ibtidā'iyyi ktīr ḥmnīḥa li'annu l-'asātizi ḥawāyyā b-əl-luḡa, eallamū-nā ktīr əl-luḡa l-earabiyyi w kun²t šātra ktīr b-əl-'ibtidā'ē li'annu kān fī ktīr tarkīz ealā l-luḡa w baedēn bi-marḥel əl-'iedādi li'annu kbərt ḥšwayy ḥərt 'a³all ḥšwayy ət-tarkīz, bass nəfs əš-šē l-'asātizi kānū ktīr ḥmnīḥīn w kuwayysīn. w baed mā xallaḥnā d-dirāsi 'iedādi w sānawē w žāmaea fa-ḥāret l-luḡa l-earabē 'əstaxdem-ā 'a³all, kull ət-taeāmol b-əl-eāmmē li'annu kamān 'ixtiḥāḥ-ē mā-n-u 'ixtiḥāḥ luḡa, 'ixtiḥāḥ riyāḍiyyāt w fīzyā.

w ḥab³l mā xallaḥ²t dirāst-ē b-əž-žāmaea, tazawwaz²t w žəb²t bəntēn w tabae²t əd-dirāsi la-ḥattā 'ətxarraž²t.

halla³ bi-ḥayāt-ē l-əādī⁶² ḥalīl li-'əstaxdem əl-luḡa l-fuḥḥā ḥattā ḥalīl li-'əsmāe əl-'axbār 'aw mumken musalsalāt tārīxiyyi 'aw l-barāmež əllī biḥaddasō⁶³ ean ət-tārīx əl-ḥadīm w b-əl-qur'ān 'amma bi-bā³ē l-ḥayāt ean-nā t-taeāmol b-əl-luḡa l-eāmmiyyi.

I'm 32 years old, I studied mathematics and physics and I've got a degree. From elementary school onwards, my studies were great because my teachers were really good and they made us focus really well on the Arabic language and I was very good at it. Then at middle school, I was growing up and a little distracted, but the teachers were still really competent and nice. After I finished middle and high school and then university, I stopped studying Fuḥḥā because I didn't major in languages, but mathematics and physics. Before finishing university I got married and I had two little girls, but I still continued my studies until I graduated.

At the moment, I rarely use Fuḥḥā in my daily routine and barely watch the news, but I might watch historical programmes or read the Koran but otherwise I only use dialect.

⁶² No distinction of gender between feminine and masculine form for adjectives that have a *yā'* as 3rd radical.

⁶³ A borrowing from Classical Arabic, she would say '*byaḥkō*'.

5.2.9. Text 9

Speaker 9: H.al.A., male, 53 years old, graduated school, Homs, Syria

'anā eāyeš bi-ḥumš w hiyyi madīni zǧīri w šāyira bi-nuṣṣ sūryā w hiyyi zarīfi w bārđi. 'anā bištāǧel, kān eand-ē subērmārket w baedēn tarakt-u w halla^q eand-ē maḥall ḥəlwiyyāt w 'anā šarlı xamsa w eašrīn sini bi-nəfs əl-maḥall.

minšān əl-luǧa l-fuṣḥā mā ḥada byaḥkē b-əl-fuṣḥā w l-ḥamāšni hōn byaḥkō b-əl-eāmmē w naḥni hōn taεallamnā hēk: əš-šām 'il-ā lahǧit-ā xāšša w l-ḥalabiyyīn 'il-on lahǧit-on xāšša, naḥni hōn mən^qūl 'hāyy', 'taε', w 'ahl əš-šām by^qūlō 'mā bəddī'⁶⁴ w l-lāzī^qiyyīn by^qūlō 'ean ean' w bi-ḥumoš mā ḥadi byaḥkē fuṣḥā, bass b-ət-tilfīzyūn w r-rādyō, halla^q wa^qət mən^qerā mnaεref 'innu hāyy fuṣḥā w bass hēk.

I live in Homs and it's a small city situated in the centre of Syria. It's very nice and cool. I work - I had a supermarket but then I left it and at the moment I have a candy (sweets) shop. I have been working in the same store for 25 years.

As for Fuṣḥā, no one speaks it here and the Homsis here speak dialect: we learned this way. In Damascus people have their own dialect and it's the same thing for Aleppo; here we say 'hāyy', 'taε', and the Damascenes say 'mā bəddī', and people from Latakia say 'ean ean', but in Homs nobody speaks in Fuṣḥā; it's only on the TV and radio, only when we read something we know that is written in Fuṣḥā - nothing more than this.

5.2.10. Text 10

Speaker 10: K.Ṭ., male, 26 years old, degree, living in Saudi Arabia since 2009

marḥaba 'anā 'ismī x., eumr-ē sətta w eašrīn sini w dāres bakalōryā 'idāret 'aemāl w darast bi-bayrūt w kunt eāyeš bi-sūryā ṭūl ḥayāt-ē w baed mā txarraǧ²t min əǧ-ǧāmaea 'inta^qal²t la- 'əštāǧel bi-šarket mu^qāwalāt b-əs-saεūdiyyi, bi-ǧeddi. b-ən-nisbi li-l-luǧa l-eāmmē w l-fuṣḥā t-taεāmol maε əš-šarikāt 'akīd lāzem ykūn b-əl-luǧa l-fuṣḥā, l-murāsalāt b-əl-luǧa l-fuṣḥā lāzem nəktob-ā kull-ā b-əl-luǧa l-fuṣḥā 'ayyi šē rasmē bēn-nā w bēn əš-šarikāt lāzem nəstaxdem əl-luǧa l-fuṣḥā, 'amma t-taεāmol

⁶⁴ The speaker marked the sound [ʒ] since Homsis usually to joke about the copious use of /i/ in Damascene Arabic, as well as Damascus people do with the use of /u/ in Homs Arabic.

mae ruf^qāt-ē b-əl-maktab w 'ahl-ē kull-u b-əl-luğa l-ēāmmē li'annu hiyyi 'ashal w 'istiēāb-ā 'ashal w mnəstaemēl-ā min wa^qət tawīl.

l-luğa l-fuṣḥā mnəstaxdim-ā li-t-taeāmōl bēn əš-šarikāt w hiyyi bətkūn eibāra mulzmi 'aw btəlzem əš-šaxš ət-tānī min xilāl kitābit-nā ealā l-wara^q.

l-luğa l-ēāmmiyyi mā 'il-ā qawāēed, hiyyi luğa šaebī bass li-t-tawāšōl bēn ən-nās w hādā əllī fī-nē 'išrah εann-u w šukran.

Hello my name is Kh., I'm 26 years old, I got my high school degree in management and I studied in Beirut. I lived all my life in Syria, but after I graduated, I moved to Saudi Arabia, to Jeddah, in order to work for a construction company. As for Fuṣḥā and dialect, of course dealing with companies should be in Fuṣḥā, as well as the correspondence: everything that's official between our company and other companies has to be in Fuṣḥā. However all my interactions with my friends at the office and my family are in dialect because it's easier to understand; what's more, we've been speaking it for a long time. We use Fuṣḥā for communicating between companies and it's like a code, or it's useful when it comes to written production.

Dialect has no grammar: it's the language of people just for communicating between themselves - this is what I can explain on this topic, thank you.

5.2.11. Text 11

Speaker 11: A. K., female, 58 years old, middle school, Homs, Syria

'anā A., εumr-ē tmāna w xamsīn sini, rabbet bēt, εand-ē tlit banāt w ṣabi, kull-on mətawwzīn barrat ḥumoṣ w 'anā bišeur 'innu εand-ē farāğ^o kbīr li'annu 'anā mā εand-ē ḥadi 'abadan. w ba^qdē wa^qt-ē bə^qrā w brūḥ εa-s-sū^q w brūḥ la-εand 'uxt-ē w l-^qarāybīn li'annu εand-ē farāğ^o kbīr. dārsi la-ḥadd ət-tāsee w bitfarrağ ealā barāmež ət-tilfīzyūn min-nā taēlīmī w min-nā musalsalāt w hinni b-ət-tilfīzyūn byaḥkō b-əl-luğa l-fuṣḥā w 'anā biḥam ealī-^yon kull-on w bə^qrā žarāyed w kull-on bykūnō maktūbīn b-əl-luğa l-fuṣḥā w bass ṭabean ət-taeāmōl maε ən-nās b-əl-luğa l-ēāmmē.

I'm A., I'm 58 years old, I'm a housewife and I've got three daughters and a son; all of them are married and they live outside Homs and I feel lonely because I have nobody with me.

I spend my time reading and going to the suk; I go and visit my sister and other relatives because I have a lot of spare time. I studied until the ninth grade (middle school) and I usually watch TV programmes which could be educational programmes or soap operas. On TV people speak Fuṣḥā and I can understand them completely. I read newspapers which are written in Fuṣḥā, but the communication between people is in dialect.

5.2.12. Text 12

Speaker 12: Q.B., female, 29 years old, degree, living in Saudi Arabia since 2006

'anā Q., mətğawwzi w εand-ē walad. εāyši b-əs-saeūdiyyi w bədroş b-əl-žāmaea, ləssā bā^qē māddi w bətxarrağ, bədroş riyādiyyāt.

bəstaxdem əl-luğa l-fuṣḥā lammā b^qaddem 'imtiḥān⁶⁵ w lammā bidd-ē 'ə^qrā l-qur'an w wa^qət bə^qrā kutob dīniyyi, bə^qrā kull-ā b-əl-fuṣḥā.

w 'anā mā ktīr^qawiyyi b-əl-luğa l-εarabiyyi li 'ann-ā ṣaēbi w məmārest-ā ktīr ṣaēbi w nəsteamel əl-luğa l-εāmmiyyi.

w lammā bətfarrağ ealā t-tilfizyūn w bətfarrağ ealā l-'axbār mənsmae b-əl-fuṣḥā w nəfham-ā w bətfarrağ ealā barāmeğ əl-wasāi^qiyyi w mnəstafid minn-ā. kamān fi baed əl-musalsalāt ət-tārīxiyyi b-əl-luğa l-fuṣḥā mumken mnəstafid minn-ā.

I'm Q., I'm married and I've got one child. I live in Saudi Arabia and I study at university; I've only got one exam left and I'll graduate soon. I study mathematics.

I use Fuṣḥā when I take an exam or when I read the Koran or religious books.

I'm not very good at Fuṣḥā because it's difficult and practising it is hard since we normally speak dialect. When we watch TV programmes such as the news channels I can understand them completely, but I also watch documentaries and we benefit from that. There are also historical soap operas that can be useful for refreshing our Fuṣḥā.

5.2.13. Text 13

Speaker 13: M.Ĝ., male, 21 years old, high school, Homs, Syria

'anā 'ismī M., eumr-ē wāḥed w eašrīn sini w bištəgel εand maḥall ḥātem w mabsūt^qktīr b-əs-šug^ql: ṣər-lī bištəgel hōn bi-ḥudūd əs-sintēn w nuṣṣ.

⁶⁵ A borrowing from Classical Arabic, it would said *faḥṣ* in Homs for 'exam'.

darast bakalōryā w baedēn wa^qaf^ʔt əd-dirāsi li'annu mā la^qēt fī musta^qbal la-^quddām, minšān hēk bištāḡel εand əl-ḥāḡḡ ḥātem. halla^q εam sāwē ḥāl-ē, εam εammer w zabbet waḡae-ē w baedēn bitḡawwaz.

b-ən-nisbi l-əl-fuṣḡā hōn ^qalīl ^ʔktīr, yeanē mā fī ḡēr əl-musaqqafīn byaḡkō w b-əl-kutob w hēk šaḡlāt.

My name is M., I'm 21 years old and I work at Hatem's store and I really like my job. I've been working here for about two and a half years. I studied at high school and then I stopped studying because I felt I hadn't found my ideal path for the future; this is why I work at hajj ḥātem's store. Now I want to settle down and then I would like to get married.

Regarding Fuṣḡā here is not spoken a lot, only scholars speak Fuṣḡā or you can find it in books and things like that.

5.2.14. Text 14

Speaker 14: D.Š., female, 32 years old, high school, Homs, Syria

'anā D., εumr-ē tnēn w tlātīn sini, mətḡawwzi w εand-ē bəntēn mawalīd ḡum^ʔš. b-ən-nisbi l-əl-εāmmē kullayāt-nā⁶⁶ naḡkē εāmmē maε 'axwāt-ē w l-εālam kamān b-əl-εāmmē.

mā fī ḡayāt-ē sətt bēt w bə^qrā žarīdi w bənzəl εa-s-sū^q bətfarraž εalā musalsalāt kull-ā b-əl-εāmmē w mā mnaḡkē b-əl-fuṣḡā 'illā b-əl-madrasi w lahžit-nā ḡumṣē w ṣaeb naḡkē b-əl-fuṣḡā w mā bə^qder 'aḡkē b-əl-fuṣḡā kull wa^qt-ē. kullayāt-nā b-əl-εāmmē mnaḡkē w ṣaeb tlā^qē ḡada byaḡkē b-əl-fuṣḡā w ṣaebi l-qawāēed b-əl-fuṣḡā 'innu l-fuṣḡā luḡa εarabiyyi, li'annu kalimāt-ā bidd-on ykūnō mutaḡābi^qīn maε beaḡ-on.

My name is D., I'm 32 years old, I'm married and I've got two daughters and I was born in Homs. All of us speak dialect here; I speak it with my sisters and everyone else.

I don't live a very exciting life: I usually read the newspapers, I go to the market, I watch soap operas which are entirely in dialect. We never speak Fuṣḡā except for

⁶⁶ According to me this construction is composed by *kull* 'each'+the particle *'iyyāh*+suffixed pronoun – *nā*, where the –*h* of *'iyyāh* became –*t* and its meaning is 'all of us'.

school; our dialect is *ḥumṣī* and we rarely speak *Fuṣḥā* and I can't maintain a conversation totally in *Fuṣḥā*. All of us speak in dialect: it's odd to find someone who only speaks in *Fuṣḥā* because its grammar is very complicated as it's the noble Arabic language so words need to be matched to each other.

5.2.15. Text 15

Speaker 15: F. K., female, 49 years old, high school, Homs, Syria

'ismī F., eumr-ē tisea w 'arbaēn sini, mātḡawwzi w εand-ē bən^ot w ṣabē: əṣ-ṣabē mātḡawwez w εand-u bəntēn w l-bən^ot mātḡawwzi w εand-ā ṣabē.

mā bištəḡel šē, ^oāedi b-əl-bēt, bišūf ət-tilfizyūn, bišūf 'axbār w musalsalāt minn-ā b-əl-fuṣḥā w minn-ā b-əl-εāmmiyyi.

w bišūf 'aw^oāt barāmeḡ tānī kamān, bə^orā ḡarīdi, bə^orā fī-^yā l-'axbār masalan šū ṣāyer b-əl-balad əs-siyāsi w l-'iqtiṣād, kamān bə^orā žarāyed fī-^yā ean 'aḥwāl ḥum^oṣ.

'anā mā baḥkē l-fuṣḥā bnōb lə'annu mā bḥubb əl-fuṣḥā lə'annu baḥkē ṭabīεē. l-fuṣḥā mā bḥubb-ā 'abadan.

My name is F., I'm 49 years old, I'm married and I don't have a job - I stay at home, I watch TV, such as the news or soap operas, some in *Fuṣḥā* and some in dialect. Sometimes I also watch other shows, I read the newspaper and follow some political and economic news involving my country. Also, I read the local news (about Homs). I never speak *Fuṣḥā*; I don't like it because I speak in a straight and direct way. I don't like *Fuṣḥā* at all.

5.2.16. Text 16

Speaker 16: Kh.T., male, 35 years old, degree, living in Saudi Arabia since 2009

l-waḡaε bi-sūryā ktīr taebān waḷḷah lə'ennu εam 'əsmāε 'axbār mən-əl-εālam, mašākel εam ^otṣīr kull yōm bi-ḥum^oṣ mətl mā btearfē ^oab^ol kānet ^oktīr ḥādi w ktīr ḥəlwi w ṣāret əš-šawāree ^oktīr kuwayysi, halla^o šū bidd-nā nsāwē baed əl-ḥarb əllī ṣāret εam 'əsmāε ^oktīr mašākel, 'anā li'annu ṣər-lī tlit ⁱsnīn mā ruḥ^ot ealā ḥum^oṣ. markaz əl-madīni halla^o āxar šē dammar kull-u mā fī 'innu 'ayy ḥādi yrūḥ la-hōnīk w mamnūε 'ayy šax^oṣ yrūḥ εa-s-sū^o, kull-u sakkar. l-'aswā^o kull-ā sakkaret bi-markaz əl-madīni yaenē l-'aswā^o əl-'asāsiyyi əllī bi-ḥum^oṣ kull-ā sakkaret, halla^o lə'annu n-nās ṣāret,

masalan, ət-ʔaεām w hāyy əš-šaglat šāret bi-^qalb əl-hāra nafs-ā, yaenē kull hāra masalan ^qāeed fī-^yā εālam šār fī-^yā šwayy xuḍra...bass fī hārāt dammaret kull-ā, kull-ā mədammra tamām, mā fī wa-lā šē fī-^yā. ḥumş əl-^qadīmi...dammaret, hiyyi dammaret w kamān šagli tānē 'ənnu 'əntē mā mumken tʔūtē la-hōnīk lə'ennu fī ḥawāžez la-l-şurṭa fa-mā mumken 'abadan trūḥē la-hōnīk, mā ḥada byεaref, la-ḥattā 'anā bēt-ē huwwi bi-manṭe^qa kuwayysi bass huwwi fī muşkel b-əl-maw^qeε tabaε-u lə'ennu fī ^quddām-u l-hāra yallī fī-^yā maşākel ^oktīr, fa-kamān ṭaleεō kull 'ahl-ē mə-l-bēt w mā εam yxallū-^won yrūḥō 'abadan la-hōnīk, wa-lā yžībō tyāb min ^qalb əl-bēt, 'abadan, mamnūε, kull šē mamnūε, bass əl-'ak^ql w š-şur^ob mə^ql mā ^qult-ⁱllik bi-kull nafs əl-hārāt əllī šwayy mā fī-^yā maşākel w l-εālam ^qāedi, εam yənzlō, byəşterō xuḍra b-əl-εarabāy bətlā^qē bybīεō šwayy xub^oz, hēk šaglat bass. l-waḍaε ^oktīr taebān şāyer bi-ḥumoş, fō^q mā tətxayyalē. mā fī ḥayāt, 'abadan mā fī tadaxxol, şārl-ā š-şagli halla^q tlit ⁱsnīn lə'ennu law kān ḥadi bidd-u yətdaxxal w yənhē l-mawḍūε, yaenē 'intaha, kān 'intaha bass 'akīd mā ḥadi bidd-u. w şū kamān bidd-ē 'aḥkī-lik εan šagli masalan halla^q mə^ql ^qab^ql kuntē, şuftē, nəṭlea mənruḥ εa-l-kafeh, mən^qεud b-əl-lēl mnərzaε əs-sāea waḥdi b-əl-lēl, tentēn b-əl-lēl, halla^q mā fī hādā l-ḥakī. halla^q lāzem əs-sāea 'arbaea l-εaş^r tərzaεē εa-l-bēt, t^qεudē b-əl-bēt, 'arbaea, baed hēk mā mumken trūḥē wa-lā maḥall lə'ennu mumken 'əntē māşī b-əş-şāree tižē qazīfi, qazīfi masalan 'aḥyānan bysammū-^wā qazīfet hāwen, 'aḥyānan şārūx ^ozğīr, bižē fō^q əl-bēt, biže b-əş-şāree, biže bi-'ayy^q maḥall fa-mišān hēk mə^ql mā şār šwayy əl-ğurūb, xalaş, mā fī ḥadi byəṭlaε la-barra 'abadan, ēh...şū bidd-nā naemel w mā kull əl-εālam εāyşi lə'ennu mā kull əl-εālam fī-^yā təṭlaε la-barra, mā kull əl-εālam maε-ā maşārī, mā kull əl-εālam εand-ā 'imkāniyyi. halla^q bi-ṭarṭūş, ḥasab mā bəsmāε, mā fī maşākel bass fī, şū by^qülō... fī taḥakkum ^qawē mən əş-şurṭa w ğ-ğēş... murāqabi, mişān mā ḥadi yižē yaemel maşākel mā ḥadi yaemel šaglat...bass halla^q žamb⁶⁷ ṭarṭūş, b-əḍ-dēea əllī žamb ṭarṭūş ^oktīr fī maşākel, yaenē mumken byəbeadō bass xamsi kīlōmāter, bass εan-nā bi-ḥumş ^oktīr şaeb, bi-ş-şām lā', bi-ş-şām fī manāṭe^q mā fī 'abadan šē, bi-nuşş əş-şām, bass ər-rīf tabaε əş-şām, şār fī mōt b-əl-kīmāwē, b-əl-'asleḥa l-kīmāwē w hādā š-şē 'akkadū-h miyyi b-əl-miyyi yaenē, bass huwwi şār hādā š-şē, fa-şū bidd-nā nsāwē l-'umūr şāyra şaebi ktīr.

⁶⁷ Assimilation nb>mb, so žanb > žamb 'next to'. (Berlinches 2016:43).

The situation in Syria is very critical because I am hearing bad news from other people, new problems that are happening every day in Homs. As you know, before, it was a very quiet and nice city; the roads had been recently improved, but now there is the war and I'm receiving bad news. What should we do? It's been 3 years since I've been to Homs. Recently, the city centre was completely destroyed, nobody is allowed to go there anymore and going to the sūq is forbidden: all the entrances are closed. All the stores in the town center in the sūq are closed, I mean every main store in Homs is closed. For example, now people have started to...food and stuff like that are all available in the same neighborhood, I mean, in the districts where people are still living you can still find some vegetables... no, there are areas that are completely destroyed, nothing is left. The old part of the city has been totally destroyed. Another thing is that there's no way to access it because there are police check-points, so nobody can go there. Nobody knows, even my house, which is in a safe place, has a problem with its position because right opposite it there's a very troubled neighbourhood. Even my family was forced to leave the house and there's no way they can get inside, not even to grab some clothes - no way - everything is forbidden. Food and drink can only be found in the less troubled areas; people don't go out that much, and if they do, they take a cart with them to buy some vegetables, or they might go out to sell some bread or basic stuff like that. The situation in Homs is even worse than you can imagine. It's not life anymore and there's no kind of intervention; the situation has been going on for three years and it would have ended if someone had really wanted it to, but of course nobody does. And do you know what else? Do you remember? We used to go to the café, we used to stay out until one or two o'clock at night, but now none of that is left. Nowadays you have to be home before 4pm and stay there, at four and no later, because later you might be walking down the street and be hit by a missile; for example, sometimes it can be called mortar, or small missile: it might get you at home, down the road, anywhere. Nobody leaves home as soon as it gets a little dark, no way. There's nothing we can do, yet not everybody manages to escape the country, not everybody has the money or the opportunity. Now, from what I've heard, there aren't as many issues in Tartus, but there is – what do you call it? - strong surveillance by the police and the army aimed at preventing anybody from creating any problems. However, in the villages near Tartus there's lots of trouble, it's only five km away, but in Homs it's very hard. On the other hand, in many areas of Damascus there are no problems at all, in the city center, while in the

suburbs people were killed by chemical weapons and it is 100% certain this thing happened, but what should we do? The circumstances have been really hard lately.

5.2.17. Text 17

Speaker 17: A. K., male, 38 years old, high school, living in Egypt since 2012

šūfē masalan 'antē tiftahē bāb əl-bēt tabae-on 'uddām-ik wāhed mīn man kān byžūz 'amērkē 'aw kaza 'aw...masalan 'good morning, good morning' 'aw yaḅtāsem 'okkēh w bass, mā fī məṯl ean-nā masalan twa^{qq}fē tātšallam, mā fī yaenē mā məṯl əž-žaww əllī kān əyšīn-u l-əālam bass, hāyy əl-fikra. 'ēh, w l-žaww bišee əa-ṯūl ruṯūbi w šōb, b-əš-šēf^{kt} šōb, māmā əa-ṯūl əam yužaeū^wā izrī^yā w ḍahr-ā w rukb-ā w hēk, w hādā l-iltihāb əl-əašabi ...ēh ž-žaww mā-n-u mnīh əalā ṯūl fī^yā ruṯūbi, fī^yā ruṯūbi ktīr məṯl əl-'imārāt w 'əssā 'aktar kamān. yaenē 'anā twaqqae^t 'ənnu maš^r ykūn fī^yā šōb^{kt}, lā'! maš^r mā-n-ā šōb^{kt}, fī^yā šōb bass mā məṯl əl-xalīž, mā fī ruṯūbi 'aqalla šē. b-əl-lēl bar^d, w n-nhār byšīr šōb 'ēh, bass b-əl-lēl bar^d, ḥəlu. əand-ē maḥall wēn mā 'āeed məṯl ḥum^oš b-əl-lēl bard^{kt}, ḥattā b-əš-šēf tiftahē š-šubbāk fī hawa bitfūt. bi-maš^r mā thesnē tlibsē hāyy⁶⁸, māyy bitšīrē, ḥattā law b-əš-šiti mā bəthəsnē, šūf mā bəlbes šūf 'abadan, mā štarēt šūf la-halla^q, əand-ē kənzi waḥdi bass, mā bəlbes. 'anā wa^{qt} ṯlæet halla^q min maš^r, halla^q əl-muškal 'əнно šāyer fī^yā žaww bāred min 'usbūe, fī tal^ž bidd-u yšīr fī sūryā w ləbnān...fa-žaww maš^r əl-yōm kull-u ḡabra w rəm^l w trāb w hawa w əam twaššəl b-əl-lēl daržet əl-ḥarāra la-tnēn, yaenē tnēn b-əl-lēl w ṯnaeš əš-šubaḥ, fa əand-kon⁶⁹ 'arbaetaeš əam y^qūl-lē wāhed b-əṯ-ṯayyāra.

Look - for example - you open your front door and you might bump into someone, who could be American or whatever...for example, you know, 'good morning, good morning' or they could smile, but that's all. It's not like back home where we used to stop to have a chat with someone; there isn't that good vibe, that's the thing. The climate is very annoying: it's always hot and humid, even more during the summer. Because of that, my mum constantly feels pain in her legs, back and knees - you know, the inflammation...the weather isn't good, there's as much humidity as in the UAE, even more, and I thought it was hot in Egypt - that's nothing! In Egypt it's not

⁶⁸ The speaker pointed on his jumper, he used *hāyy* 'this^f' since he referred to the feminine word *kənzi* 't-shirt'.

⁶⁹ The speaker was referring to Italy.

hot, I mean you get some heat but it's not as intense as in the Gulf, at least it's not humid. At night it's cool and pleasant, while during the day it's hot, but at night it's cool and pleasant. Where I live, it's like Homs: at night it's very cool; during the night you even get a very nice breeze when you open the window. In Egypt, you can't wear this (*pointing at his jumper*), you sweat a lot, you can't wear this, not even in winter, I never wear wool; until now I haven't bought wool clothes, I've only got one sweater: I don't wear wool. When I left Egypt a few days ago it was all fine dust, sand and wind. It's been a week, because a blizzard is coming to Syria and Lebanon, so the temperature dropped to 2 degrees, I mean 2 degrees at night and 12 degrees during the day. A guy from the plains told me it gets to 14 degrees here.

5.2.18. Text 18

Speaker 18: N.Ṭ., female, 41 years old, high school, living in UAE since 2006

halla^q 'ismī N., εand-ē tlitt wlād, mətzawwzi, naḥni naēiš b-əl-'imārāt min tisae^osnīn, 'anā halla^q bidarres la-'aḫfāl min əl-εum^or tlitⁱsnīn la-'arbaea snīn, bidarres bi-ḥadān. waḷlah hōn əš-šug^ol ḥəlu, b-əl-'imārāt zarīf əš-šug^ol, ḥasab 'əntē w šaṭārt-ik 'izā kuntē təštəglē ktīr^o kwayyəs bəḥšaḷē šug^ol kwayyəs^o ktīr^omnīḥ, 'izā kuntē min nōe əllī bəḥḥubbē ktīr masalan ṭawwrē nəfs-ik, taemlē dawwrāt, əl-ḥayāt maftūḥa^ouddām-ik, fī mažalāt^o ktīr ḥəlwi. 'awwal šē bidd-ik tətdawwrē ealā šug^ol b-ən-nisbi 'ilā l-^oadri tabae-ik masalan mawqee šug^ol 'əntē šū ḥābbi təštəglē b-ən-nisbi 'ilā 'ixtišās-ik, fī ean ṭarī^o əl-internet w fī agencies, hinni makāteb bywazzfō, bydawwrū-lik hinni ealā šug^ol, təbaetī-lon əs-sīvīyyāt w bydawwrū-lik ealā šug^ol, b-ən-nisbi 'ilā xəbert-ik yaenē, byšūfū šū xəbert-ik, masalan šū l-mažāl 'əntē təbraeē fī-h...byənṣaḥū-ke kamān, byeaṭū-ke našā'eh ḥəlwi w mumken tlā^oē šug^ol ktīr^o kwayyəs. l-εāyši hōn b-əl-'imārāt rā'iea min 'ayyi naḥi: 'awwal šē εand-ik min naḥiyet əl-'amān w l-ḥurriyyi š-šaxsiyyi, 'əntē hōn ḥurra mumken təḫlaēē 'ēmat mā bidd-ik w 'ēmat mā bidd-ik tuduxlē, yaenē mā bəṭxāfē wa-lā bəṭ^oūlē baed əs-sāea ṭnaeš b-əl-lēl mumken mā... 'ēh fī baed əl-manāteq masalan bi-dubayy masalan ziddan no class, fa-'əntē la-ḥāl-ik 'ašlan mā raḥ trūḥē la-hadīk əl-manāte^o, fa-hadōl mā t^oarrbē ealī^oon b-əl-lēl. manāte^o tānī masalan bidd-ik trūḥē, bidd-ik təḫbsē dahab, bidd-ik təḫlaēē b-ət-taksi la-ḥāl-ik 'izā 'əntē mā bəṭsū^oē, fī takāse la-l-sayyidāt faqat, yaenē taksi tabaeit əs-sayyidi, lōn-ā zahrē, bəṭkūn lābsi zahrē hiyyi, 'ēh təṭṭəḷē w bəṭzībī^oā, t^oūlī-lā 'anā bidd-ē kūn... 'anā bidd-ē taksi bass plīz la-sayyidi, 'ēh, fa-tižē waḷlah hiyyi la-εand-ik εa-l-bāb w bəṭāxd-ik w

bətrühē, əl- 'izra bətkūn 'aealā šwayy bass... 'ēh fī. baedēn šaġli tānī həlwi fī b-əl- 'imārāt 'innu n-nās hōnē bəḥessī-'on sawāsi, mā bəḥessē 'ixtilāf, lā' 'əntē sūriyyi, lā' 'əntē maşriyyi, lā', 'alīl la-tlā^qē tafri^qa yaenē, ṭabean əl-'afḍaliyyi li-l-muwāṭen 'innu hāyy min ḥa^q əš-šaraēē, hādā balad-u w εand-on w εand-on qudurāt hā'ili ea- fikra, hinni šātrīn ^oktīr ^oktīr ^oktīr. šū byeamel əl-muwāṭen? halla^q ḥayāt əl-nisā hiyyi yaenē māšī həl-on, fī minn-on mužtahidāt ^oktīr ^oktīr w fī minn-on lā', fī nās bass yḥubbō yəşurfō flūs ḥattā əl-byəštəġlō byəşurfō flūs ^oktīr, ḥayāt-on hōn ḥayāt taraf, mā 'innu ḥayāt eādīyyi mumken šaxş masalan 'anā bidd-ē žammaea l-flūs li'annu bidd-ē εamel villa, 'anā bidd-ē εamel... lā' lā' lā' lēš? lə'ennu l-ḥayāt māšāllāh tbārek Aļlah, Aļlah baeat-lon əš-şuyūx 'aḥsan mīn hēk mā fī yaenē, l-ḥayāt εand-on ^oktīr həlwi, ġiddan həlwi, 'aḥsan sayyārāt byərkabō, 'aḥsan 'ak²l byāklō, bi-'aḥsan byūt sāknīn, 'aḥlā tyāb byəlibsō, 'aḥlā mużawharāt byəlibsō, ktīr həlwi l-ḥayāt easy, muqāranatan b-ən-nisbi 'ilā d-duwal ət-tānī, mā fī maşākel lā', 'alīl maşākel, mā fī εand-ik maşākel. bass maşākel li-šaġlāt eadīdi masalan εand-ik əs-sakan, εand-ik masalan ən-nās əllī tištəġel bi-dubayy yəllī mā tə^qder tədfae maşārī ktīr ^oktīr, bidd-ā tižē ea-š-šār^qa, bass əš-šār^qa halla^q šāret ^oktīr 'irtafaeet, ġiddan 'irtafaeet 'aseār-ā, naḥni masalan bēt-nā kān halla^q 'awwal mā 'inta^qalnā tnēn w səttīn 'aw səttīn 'alf, halla^q tmāna w səttīn 'alf w halla^q eaqd ^ozdīd ḥawālē xamsa w tmānīn, fa-yaenē hāyy əl-ḥayāt b-əl-'imārāt, l-'imārāt həlwi yaenē bi-şifa eāmmi ḥayāt žamīla ġiddan⁷⁰. halla^q b-ən-nisbi li-l-bī'a, byəatinō b-əl-bī'a, byəatinō b-əl-maḥzar əl-xāriž ^oktīr, hinni mā bidd-on ən-nās masalan byənşrō masalan ġasīl barra, mā barra l-balkōn, fī nās byənşrō...masalan byşīrō byḥuṭṭō ġasīlāt ea-l-ḥarf tabae əl-balkōn, sażżādāt, hādā l-manzar mā byeażeb-on, židdan şārimīn, xalaş byşūfō hāyy əs-sāżżādi mdandali, muxālafī xam²s mīt dirham. εand-on əl-qānūn li-l-žamīe, mā 'innu 'anā muwāṭen əl-qānūn mā 'il-ē, mā muwāṭen əl-qānūn byəmsē ealī-^yē lā', l-qānūn fō^q əž-žamīe, hādā šieār-on hōnē, kull əl-εālam təmsē ealī-^yā l-qānūn mīn man kān.

My name is N., I've got three sons, I am married, we've lived in the UAE for nine years, I currently teach in a kindergarten where the age of children is between four and five. Here, work is very good; it's amazing here in the UAE: it's based on your individuality and your own skills. If you're a hard- working person, you'll probably get a very good job, if you're a career person and you like attending job training and

⁷⁰ This sentence is in Classical Arabic since it was supposed to be 'həlwi ktīr' in HA.

keeping up-to-date, life will hold a lot of opportunities for you; there are many interesting fields of work. First of all, you need to look for a job which is based on your skills: for example, on a website to search for what you are keener on and reflects your qualification. You can search either through the internet or through agencies, which are companies that help you to find a job. You send them your CV, they find you a job based on your experience, they check your background, they see which fields you are best suited to..., they give you some advice, good suggestions, and you can find a very good job. Life in the UAE is wonderful in any direction: first of all, as far as safety and personal freedom are concerned, you are free here, you can go out and come back whenever you want, you never get scared you don't even get to think 'maybe I shouldn't stay out after midnight'... of course, in Dubai there are dodgy areas, but you don't even get to think about going there, so stay away from those places. On the other hand, in some other areas, you can, for example, come and go, you can wear gold jewellery, you can also go out on your own if you don't drive, by taking a taxi, which could also be just for women. I mean a pink taxi, driven by a woman who is dressed in pink as well: you call and you get her to pick you up, you tell her 'I want to go... I want a taxi, but please only for women' and so she'll come and take you wherever you want to go; the fare is a bit higher but at least you're sure to have a service. Another good thing in the Emirates is that people here are all the same; you don't feel any differences. You can't tell if a person is Syrian or Egyptian. You can hardly perceive the difference. Obviously there are privileges for the local citizens, because they benefit from their legal rights. It's their own country, they have huge potential, and they are very, very good. What does a citizen do? Let's say a woman's life is fairly good. There are some women who are more active and some who are less. There are people who only like spending money, and people who don't. Even though you work hard, you can still go out and spend all your money. You lead a life of luxury. It's not a normal life, in which you say, 'I want to put some money aside because I want to build a house. I want to do it.' No. No, because life is good there, thank God. God sent them the best sheikhs; there's nothing better than that. They have a really good life. They drive the best cars, eat the best food, live in the nicest houses, and wear the most expensive clothes and jewels. Life is easier than in other countries. They don't have any problems; they hardly ever have any. The only problems they might have are connected with the house. For example, there are people working in Dubai but they don't earn enough money to live there, so they

come to live in Sharjah. Today, Sharjah has become more expensive, though. Prices have risen a lot. For example, we paid 62,000 or maybe 60,000 Dirham for our house when we moved here. Now it costs 68,000 and a new contract is around 85,000 Dirham. So this is life in the Emirates. The Emirates are nice, in general. Life is good. They really care about the environment. They care about the outside. They don't want people to hang their clothes out to dry; some people hang their carpets out of their balconies, but they dislike what it does to the view. They are very strict. If they see any hung carpet, they will give you a 500 Dirham fine. There is no resident to whom the law is not applied. Even though you're not a citizen, you are subject to fines. Everyone is equal before the law; that's kind of a motto here. Laws applies to everyone, no matter what position you hold in society.

5.2.19. Text 19

ṭayyeb ʕamalnā kilyēn ʔsmīd... ʔāh sorry, kāstēn ʔsmīd w kās ʔit sukkar w kās ʔit žōz ʔl-hind w baedēn ṭuttē kās ʔit ḥalīb ʔaw laban w bīkān powder malea^qtēn ʔzḡār w ḥattēt bašrit ʔl-lēmūn w bēdētē. baṭḥuttē n-nawāšef kull-ā maē baed-ā yaenē ṭuttē s-smīd maē žōz ʔl-hind maē ʔs-sukkar maē ʔl-bīkān powder tuxulṭi^yon kull-on kull-on sawā baedēn tḍifē laban ʕalī^yon w ʔizā bidd-ik fī-kē taēžnī^yon b-ʔl-ḥalīb ḥasab šū bidd-ik ʔantē: ʔizā ḥassētī^yā l-ʕažīni mā ktīr mri^qa yaenē lā mri^qa w lā smīki lāzem bytkūn bi-ḥāl ʔizā nazzeltī^yā ...tinzel bi-suhūli, ləziži yaenē, lā ktīr hēkē ...ʕažīni ʕažīni wa-lā ʔannu masalan ʔktīr sāʔili, lāzem bətkūn nuṣṣ nuṣṣ. ṭuttē^yon b-ʔṣ-šanīyyi, ʔizā ʕand-ik ʔayy nuē min ʔl-mukassarāt biṭḥuttē^yon ʕalā žāneb. ʕuṣ^r biṭḥuttē kās ʔit ṣayy w nuṣṣ kās ʔit sukkar ʔaw kāstēn sukkar w kās ʔit ṣayy, yaenē dāyman ʔs-sukkar dub^l ʔl-ṣayy w biṭḥuttē ʕašīr lēmūni w tuturkī^yon ʕa-n-nār, ṭhubbē fī^yon ʕūdet ^qirfī, ṭhubbē ṭḥuttē ḥabbi l-hāl, ʔēh... trūkī^yon ʕa-n-nār šē sāʕa, ʔantē bəṭšūfī^yā kif, ʔanā masalan bxallī^yā ta^qrīban šē nuṣṣ sāʕa, hēk šē, ʔantē bəṭšūfī^yā kif ṣabbṭet maē-ik. šū? l-mlūxiyyi⁷¹ mā fī bharāt bass kuzbara, ʔanā bḥutt kuzbara yābsi ʔizā bidd-ik fī-kē ṭuttē l-kuzbara w t-tūm maē baed-on bitdu^{qq}ī^q-on sawā, ʔanā mā bidu^{qq} ʔt-tūm, ʔanā bḥutt hēk ^quṭea ^quṭea t-tūm. baedēn bḥutt ʔs-samni⁷², yaenē bḥutt ʔs-samni bḥutt ʔt-tūm w l-mlūxiyyi n-nāšfi baed mā bkūn ḡāsəlt-ā w farəkt-ā ʔaw mšaffit-ā xālša bḥutt-ā maē ʔz-zēt byšīr b^qallib-ā b^qallib-ā maē ʔl-kuzbara, bḥutt ʕalī^yā

⁷¹ A type of green leafy vegetable used in Syrian cooking with rice and spices.

⁷² A vegetable fat used in the preparation of many Syrian dishes.

babrīka 'okkēh? w byšīr b^qallib-ā b^qallib-ā lāzem tən^qāl-ā ^oktīr ^omnīh b-əz-zēt 'aw b-əs-samni, baedēn tkūnē šār əl-laḥmi 'aw ž-žāž w bəḥuṭṭī-^yon ealī-^yā buṭbox-on ealā mar^qat əl-laḥmi w ž-žāž, halla^q mar^qat əl-laḥmi w ž-žāž already fī-^yā bhārāt : fī-^yā māl^ph w fī-^yā fulful w fī-^yā eudet ^qirfi w fī-^yā wara^q ḡār w fī-^yā kull šē, mix, bass 'anā mā bḥuṭṭ šē bass māl^ph w fulful hiyyi 'atyab šē 'il-ā māl^ph w fulful. mā eand-kon maēzūn fləfli?hādā l-maēzūn fīn-ik taēmlē fī-^yā ṭa^qet mātet⁷³, byḥuṭṭō kaek⁷⁴ maḥūn byḥuṭṭō žūz w bašli w byḥuṭṭō deb^os ər-rummān w bḥuṭṭ ṭḥīni bi-šwayy ^ozḡīri w byḥuṭṭō hāyy fləflit əl-makdūs⁷⁵ tēznī-^yon kull-on sawā baedēn tāmaddī-^yā b-əṣ-ṣēnīyyi 'aw b-əṣ-ṣahⁿ ṭḥuṭṭē ealī-^yā zēt zētūn w tāklī-^yā. ṭa^qet mātet, kubbi nayyi hadōl ^oktīr ṭayybīn!

Well, so we've got two kilogrammes of semolina. No, sorry. Two cups of semolina, a cup of sugar, and a cup of coconut flour. Then you add a glass of milk or yoghurt, two teaspoons of baking powder, some zest, and two raw eggs. Combine all the dry ingredients, mix them all, and then add the yoghurt; if you want, you can mix them with milk, as much as you want. Be careful that the dough doesn't become either too hard or too soft, and then add the milk as needed. You should find the right balance between sticky and liquid. Then you put it on a tray, and if you have any dried fruit, you can put it on the side. If you want to make the syrup, use one cup of sugar and half a cup of water, or otherwise two glasses of sugar and one glass of water. Then add the lemon juice and leave it all on the stove. If you like cinnamon or cardamom, you can add them. Leave it on the stove for an hour, or however long it takes. For example, I leave it for about half an hour and then check on how it's doing.

What? In the *mlūxiyyi* there are no spices, only coriander. I usually use dry coriander, but if you want, you can chop (fresh) coriander together with garlic. I usually use the whole clove of garlic and then add the butter. So you add the butter, the garlic, and the dry *mlūxiyyi* after washing, chopping and draining it. I add some oil, and I start mixing it with the coriander. Then I add some paprika, alright? I put everything in a pan, and fry it with either oil or butter. When the meat or the chicken is ready, you put it on top and continue to cook them with the broth of the meat or chicken, which already contains the spices (salt, pepper, cinnamon, bay leaves). But I don't add anything other than salt and pepper. It's perfect that way. You don't have

⁷³ Syrian food, a cold appetizer made with peppers which means 'it exploded and it died' because it is also spicy.

⁷⁴ A kind of salty pretzels or breadsticks.

⁷⁵ Oil cured eggplants stuffed with walnuts, garlic, red pepper and olive oil.

chili paste? You can prepare *ta^qet mātet* as well. You mix minced *kaek*, walnuts, an onion, pomegranate juice and a hint of tahini. Then you add some *makdūs* hot chili and mix them all together. Put it all on a tray or on a flat plate with some olive oil on top, and eat it like that. *ta^qet mātet* and raw *kubbi* are delicious.

5.2.20. Text 20

Speaker 19: Y.T., male, 56 years old, high school, living in Lebanon since 2012.

^qaedīn eam nāštāgel w mawzūd 'anā w madāmt-ē w 'abn-ē w bānt-ē 'ēh w fāṭḥīn šuḡ^l, fataḥnā maḥall w dawām-nā kull ^onhār 'abn-ē byrūḥ ydāwem min tisea bakkīr la-sāea satti l-masā 'ēh ...w 'anā brūḥ la-εand-u sāeatēn tlāti bitsallā w brūḥ la-εand ruḡ^lāt-ē baeref^oktīr nās hōnīki yaenē māši l-'umūr...l-ḥayāt bi-libnān mlīha⁷⁶ kull šē mātwaḡfer bass əl-ḥayāt ḡālī, yaenē ta^qrīban bəṭ^lulē məṭ^l dubayy 'aw hēk 'aw yaenē nuṣṣ dubayy w ^qarībīn kamān min sūryā mišān lāzmīl-nā šē šaḡli hēk kaza...w 'abn-ē bi-ṭartūs ^qaēed, eam yəxtaṣṣ eayniyyi...eayūn, yaenē ḡirāḥa w l-banāt...bānt-ē Y. bi-dubayy hiyyi w zōza, bānt-ē N. w R. bi-ḥum^oš, bānt-ē R. maε-nā w A. 'abn-ē maε-nā. bi-ḥumoṣ min əl-bēt la-š-šūḡ^ol w baed əs-sāea xamsi satti l-masā mā ḥadi byəṭṭlae, šāyfi? w šāyer fī 'arbaea xamsi 'aḥyā' byəṭḡawwlō fī^yon byəburmō fī^yon bass: 'ēh w l-εālam eāyši masalan tākol tišrab ea-l-ḥayāt basīṭa yaenē, mā fī šuḡ^l ^oktīr. bi-š-šēf masalan byḡallō ḡumn əl-ḥay la-s-sāea tisea eašara ḡumn əl-ḥay, mā fī^yon yrūḥō min makān la-makān, fī ḥawāḡez w hēke, šāyfi? fawran hawīt-ak mā hawīt-ak, mašākel... ḡumn əl-ḥay maḥall bēt-nā ḡumn əl-ḥay byə^qdrō, šāyfi?bass! 'ēh 'amma waḷḷah yrūḥ min makān la-makān bi-s-sayyāra w hādā, xaṭar, mā bəswā, mā byearef əl-wāḡed b-əš-šabāb kullayāt-on li'annu š-šabāb əllī eumr-on mə-l-'arbaēīn w taḡ^t harabō li'annu yā byrūḥ ḡēš, yā byrūḥ 'iḡtiyāt, l-εālam kull-ā šāret ^otxāf ean wlād-ā 'aktar šē. l-'umūr, eāyšīn 'ēh šū bidd-nā neamel? l-maḥall msakkar, əl-maεmal mā mnəstarzē rūḥ ealē-h, kull-u xaṭ^f. bi-š-šām kamān kull əl-εālam ḡumn əl-hādā...l-'aḥyā' bi-l-lēl, b-ən-nhār 'aktarīt əl-εālam, fī ktīr ṭur^qāt m^qeaṭṭa, yaenē l-εālam kullayāt-ā timšē ealē 'izrī^yā, yaenē mā fī sayyārāt ^oktīr, fī baed əl-'amāken fī sayyārāt, baed əl-'amāken yəmsī l-wāḡed li'annu lēh? ḡāṭṭīn ka-ršīfīt bāṭōn w byətna^{qq}alū-h mutanaqqil, 'anā ḡadīki s-sini ruḡ^t, ^qaed^t šahrēn bi-š-šām, rūḥ eayyəṭ la-'ib^on 'uxt-ē, bi-ramadān hā', 'ibn 'uxt-ē daktōr b-əž-žāmaea bi-š-šām, brūḥ 'anā wiyyā-h nəḡṭar bi-maṭeam 'əl-kamāl', nəḡṭar makān tānī, kull ^onhār maḥall, bass kull hōnīki ṭ-ṭur^qāt msakkra, wēn?

⁷⁶ *mlīh* is an isoglossa with urban Moroccan Arabic.

la-εand əl-baħša⁷⁷, εand əl-mərzi⁷⁸, hōn kull-u msakkar, kull-u bāṭōn bidd-ak trūh māšī. 'ahyānan brūh ealā ħum^oš, brūh b-əl-bāš mā brūh bi-sayyārt-ē li'annu mumken bi-sayyārt-ē l-wāhed...bass kamān 'izā bidd-u ysāfer bi-sayyārt-u l-wāhed bysāfer masalan min əs-sāea eašara ^qabl əḍ-ḍuh²r la-s-sāea tentēn tlāti mā yət'axxar, yaenē lā yət'axxar w lā yrūh bakkīr, bakkīr ³ktīr xaṭar w b-əl-lēl la-εand əl-muġreb xaṭar kamān, yaenē bidd-u ykūn bi-z-zerwī, fī ḥaraki ktīr ealā ṭ-ṭarī^q, yaenē brūh min libnān la-ṭarṭūs šē sāea w nušš, sāeatēn, bass fī ktīr ḥawāġez twa^{aq}ef ktīr. masalan fī nās byrūhō y byižō min əš-šām la-ṭarṭūs 'aw əl-lādi^qiyyi, kamān byḍallō šē xam²s sāeāt sitt sāeāt, la-ḥalab byḍallō šē tmint... 'idaešar sāeāt ṭnaešar sāeāt, byrūhō min əl-bādī, min manāte^q tānī, min ṭur^qāt tānī, byṭawwlō ktīr. fī nās εam yižō min ḥalab εam yrūhō la-wēn? ealā bayrūt. byižō ealā š-šām byrūhō εa-bayrūt, byḍallō eašrīn sāea, hiyyi lāzem taerfē 'ēš-^qadd? lāzem sətt sāeāt, yaenē b-əš-šē l-εādi sətt sāeāt, min ḥalab byižē sāeatēn la-ħum^oš w sāeatēn tlāti la-bayrūt mā 'aktar, halla^q εam yḍall eašrīn sāeāt...šāyfi 'ēš-^qadd əl-εālam εam yieānō? ³ktīr, šueūbi ktīr, waḷḷah šaeb ³ktīr. baedēn kull šē ġālī šār...l-wāhed kān yāxod...bənt-ē kān btāxod šū sm-u? xam²štaešar 'alf, tlāt mīt dūlār rāteb, halla^q btāxod sabeīn dūlār, yaenē hinnī byəṭlaeō tlātīn 'alf byəṭlaeō tiseīn dūlār w l-ḥayāt εam təġlā, kull šē εam yəġlā, baedēn 'a^qall^a bēt, masalan 'izā 'arbaea 'ašxāš, bidd-on sətt mīt, sab²ε mīt dūlār w hādā l-bēt 'il-on yaenē bidūn 'əžret bēt bidūn hādā, bidd-u mašrūf 'il-u w la-wlād-u l-wāhed bidd-u sətt mīt, sab²ε mīt dūlār w huwwi byāxod tmānīn dūlār. 'aktarīt əl-εālam εam tižī-^yā musāeadāt yaenē əllī 'il-u ^qarāybīn bi-l-xalīž, byəbeāt la-'ahl-u byəbeāt la-wlād-u...mā fī ġēr hēk, yaenē 'izā mā εand-u ḥadi yəbeāt-u ḥālt-u muškli, fī yaenē mumken žamaeiyyāt mumken hādā... 'anā 'ib^on 'ax-ē byəštəġel bi-l-'umam əl-muttaḥīdi kamān bysāedō ktīr, ḥattā εam yəftahū-lon madāres, taelīm w lā taelīm, taelīm byeallmō l-wlād...kull wāhed εam yxāf yəbeāt wlād-u, yaenē šū bidd-ē ^qūl-lik? min hōn la-mīt məṭ^r mā yəbeāt wlād-u...wēn əl-εālam ^qāedīn mā-n-ā mərtāḥa nəfsiyyan, l-wāhed dāyman byfakker mā byə^qder mā yfakker kamān lə'ennu šār maε-u šaġlāt ³ktīr w byfakker l-wāhed 'izbārē.

We are working, and it's my wife, my son, my daughter and I, and we run a business. We started a shop, and our shift is in the morning. My son's there all day. He works from 9:00 am to 6:00 pm. I work with him for two or three hours. I pass the

⁷⁷ It is the name of a Damascus area.

⁷⁸ It is the name of a Damascus area.

time there, and go to my friends; I know many people there, so let's say things are going well. Life in Lebanon is good; you can find anything you need, but it's expensive - let's say more or less like Dubai, or, better, like half-Dubai. We also live close to Syria, in case of need. My son lives in Tartus; he's getting a specialization in ophthalmology - I mean to be an eye surgeon - while as for the girls: my daughter Y. lives in Dubai with her husband; my daughters N. and R. live in Homs; my daughter R. and my son A. live with us. In Homs all you can do is go from home to work and vice-versa, that's it. After 5:00 or 6:00 pm no one goes out, you know? Now there are four or five city areas where you can have a walk – you're only allowed to walk by and that's it. People live, eat, drink... they lead a very simple life; there's not much work. In the summer, for example, they stay within their own city area until 9:00 or 10:00; they can't just move from place to place, because of the checkpoints, you know? They ask to see an ID card all the time. Within your city area, for example where we live, you can. But that's it.

For example, moving from place to place by car is dangerous; it's not okay. You never know about all those kids either, you know? Those who are 40 or under have all fled, because they're forced to join either the army or the reserves. So everybody started fearing for their children most of all. The way things are, this is what we have to do. What are we supposed to do? We have the shop, of course, but it's closed. We don't even dare to go near the factory; people get kidnapped around there. In Damascus people remain in their own city areas at night too; most people go around on foot during the day, because of the many blocked-off roads. You don't see many cars driving around; I mean you actually do in some areas, but other people go around on foot. Why? Because many reinforced concrete barriers have been put there and removed and put in other places. Last year I was in Damascus. I stayed there for two months. I contacted my nephew during Ramadan; he works at Damascus University as a professor. We were having lunch in restaurants and other places. Every day we would go to a different place, but all the roads are blocked off there. Where? Where you have *Al-bahşa* or *Al-marġi*. Everything is blocked off there; all you see is reinforced concrete. You have to walk.

Sometimes I go to Homs. I go by bus; I don't go by car because driving there alone by car is not recommended. If you want to leave by car, you should go, for example, between 10:00 or 12:00 in the morning and 2:00 or 3:00 in the afternoon. You can't be late; you can't leave either too early or too late. Early in the morning it's very

dangerous, just like late in the evening, after sunset. You have to leave at a time when everybody's out, when people are in the streets. When I go from Lebanon to Tartus, it takes one-and-a-half to two hours, but I have to stop at so many checkpoints. For example, some people go back and forth from Damascus to Tartus or Latakia, and they take five or six hours. From Aleppo they take from eight to twelve hours, because they start off from the desert and they use alternative roads which take a lot of time. That's why it takes so long. Others go from Aleppo to Beirut or from Damascus to Beirut. It takes them 20 hours, but do you know how long it should take? Let's say normally six hours: two hours from Aleppo to Homs and then two or three hours from Homs to Beirut, no more. Now they travel for 20 hours. Do you have any idea how much these people have to suffer? A lot. There are lots of complications; it's really difficult. Plus, everything's become very expensive. My daughter used to earn 15,000 Liras, say about 300 dollars. Now she only gets 70 dollars, and 30,000 Liras are now 90 dollars, so life is becoming more and more expensive. Everything is becoming more and more expensive. The cheapest rent, for example, for four people, is 600 or 700 dollars, just for the house. But then you have to add all the general expenses. But she only earns 80 dollars. Most people get help from their relatives from the Gulf. For example, they receive money from their sons and daughters abroad. There's no other way. If you don't have any help from abroad, it's extremely hard. There are some organisations which can help. For example, my nephew works for the United Nations, and they help a lot. They're also opening some schools to teach to children because everyone's afraid to send their children to school. You know, they don't even let their children go to school alone, 100 metres from home. Everywhere you go, people aren't mentally relaxed. They think, and think again; they can't not think, because there are too many things to think about. So they're forced to.

5.2.21. Text 21

Speaker 20: A.M., male, 64 years old, degree, living in UAE since 2013.

xālt-ē eam tistannā-nī la- 'izī mišān ġīb-ā mae-ē, hiyyi 'azġar 'umm-ē min sintēn, xamsa w tmānīn, lēkan 'ēš-^qadd eumr-ā? yaenē xamsa w tmānīn eumr-ā, 'umm-ē eumr-ā šē tiseīn. halla^q bēn-ī w bēn 'ax-ē fī tli^t snīn... 'ēh tli^t snīn, 'anā halla^q ^qaddēš eumr-ē? 'arbaea w sātīn...w tlāti? sabea w sātīn. w bēn 'ax-ē w 'uxt-ē tlāti kamān, mišān tšūfē 'ēš-^qadd eumr-ā 'umm-ē. tlāti... 'ēš-^qadd šār? sabeīn, šlōn yaenē sabeīn?

'ēh, 'uxt-ē eumr-ā sabeīn, huṭṭ-ē fo^q 'arbaeṭaeš ... 'arbaea w tmānīn, fī 'awwal walad 'umm-ē yaenē bi-s-satta w 'arbaeīn li'annu tğawwazet bənt 'arbaeṭaešar, xam^oṣṭaešar sini kān eand-ā walad, ġābet 'arbaeṭaešar walad, sabea šabyān w sabea banāt.

hāyy 'uxt-ē kānet mudīra bi-ğūrt əl-earāyes⁷⁹, hōnīki 'ahl əl-maṭī^qa 'ağlabīt-on min 'ahl ən-nawar, nawar, hadōlē mawğūdīn kull duwal 'anḥā' l-ēālam, hadōlē b-il-xiyam w lā xiyam by^qēūdō hēk šağlāt, 'ēh...fa-hiyyi bi-fatra, kif bidd-ē ^qūl-lik, yaenē...furša b-il-madrasi, fī furša, waḷḷah əl-muhəmm... ġāy wāhed eam yibkē, ṭāleb ^ozğīr hēk əl-^qadd-u eam yibkē, ġāy la eand-ā : yā eamt-ī, yā hāyye! xūdī-lē kaza, yaenē ballaš b-il-hāyy...tiğē 'uxt-ē eayəṭet-lu: šū-b-ak ḥabīb-ē šlōn-ak? yaenē hāyy 'uxt-ē bəthubb-on ^oktīr: šū-b-ak ḥabīb-ē mīn zaəl-ak? ^qāl-lā: lə-meallmi! ^qāl-lu: lēš? ^qāl-lā: lə-meallmi sa'let-u 'innu'abū-k šū byəštəgel? šū ^qāl-lā? ^qāl-lā fannān! ^qālet-lu:'abū-k mā-n-u fannān, 'abū-k da^qā^q tabel! šū bidd-ak ṭhūttī-llo fannān?! waḷḷah əl-muhəmm hammet... 'iğet eayəṭet-lā la-lə-meallmi, 'ism-ā mumken maysā', ^qālet-lā : yā maysā' šlōn zaēealtē l-walad? madām 'abū-h fannān, šlōn eam t^qūlī-lu da^qā^q tabel? hāt-ē l-hāyy⁸⁰! šəṭbet w katbet-lu 'fannān' mišān mā yəzeal əl-walad. 'uxt-ē šār tiğē min ġamb əl-ğāmee lə-kbīr, hōnē fī bayyāeīn duxxān, kull-on hēk wlād ^ozğār w hadōlē kullayāt-on la-eand 'uxt-ē, 'uxt-ē šāret tiğē mā təmru^q min hōn, bətgayyar əl-hāyy...byur^okdō warā-hā, 'ahyānan šē 'arbaeīn walad ḥawālī-^yā. mā 'ahlā hadīki l-'ayyām xarabū-^wā xrībi, halla^q mā fī šē, bass bukra l-'umūr kull-ā tərğae mā fī šē yō⁸¹, mā fī šē eād. burğ-nā min šē šahar w nuşş yaenē ^qāl kull-u ea-l-'ard, bass mā šāyer šē, l-barandāt hāyy šwayy maḍrūbi, lā bidd-nā n^qaddem əṭ-ṭalab w lā-šē, laḥāl-nā mnaemil-on, 'ēh xalaş yō' šağli kull šē šāret 'amān, ləssāt-kon bēt w mā bēt, xayfānīn ealā bēt-on w mā bēt-ē, 'ēh bass lāzem əl-wāhed yşūf əl-bēt, 'izā rāḥ əl-bēt wēn mənruḥ?btamm hōn? lək šū l-ḥakī hādā!

My aunt is waiting for me to get her and bring her back here with me. She's 2 years younger than my mother, she's 85 – so... how old is she again? 85. My mother is nearly 90. There is a three-year age gap between me and my brother. How old am I now? 64...or maybe more? 67. Between my brother and my sister there is a three-year age gap. So, just figure out how old my mother is. So, what's her age? 70. No, my sister's 70. 70 plus 14 makes 84. My mother had her first baby in 1946. When she got

⁷⁹ A district in the City of Homs.

⁸⁰ The speaker indicated a piece of paper.

⁸¹ Untranslatable expression of exhortation or exclamation.

married she was 14, maybe 15 and she already had a baby. She gave birth to 14 children: 7 girls and 7 boys. My sister is in charge of one of Homs's (school) districts *žurt əl-ərarāyes*, where most of the inhabitants are gypsies. You can find gypsies all round the world, you know - those who live in tents or caravans. She'd been off school for a while, so one day a student came to her, crying: 'Oh teacher, teacher!' My sister asked him what was wrong - you know, she loves kids. She asked: 'What's making you so upset, darling?' He said his new teacher had asked him what his father did for a living and he had replied 'an artist'. His teacher told him that his father wasn't actually an artist and that he only played the drum. 'How can you say your father is an artist?' she'd asked him. So my sister went over to that teacher, whose name was Maysā', if I remember well. She asked her why she'd want to make a young boy mad. 'His father IS an artist, that's it. Why are you saying he ONLY plays the drum? Give me that!' and she cancelled the word DRUMMER and wrote the word ARTIST instead, so that the boy would stop being upset. My sister was walking back from the Great Mosque. That's where the cigarette sellers are, and all the children used to gather around her, so she started not to walk along that street anymore, because 40 or more children would turn up every time. Those were good times, then. They spoiled everything. We don't have any such things anymore. One day, maybe things will be good again, you'll see. There's nothing left, for example our apartment building, they said, got destroyed a month ago, but that's a lie. Only the balconies are a bit damaged, but that's all. We aren't even going to report that or anything; we want to fix them on our own. We're safe by now, but people are still afraid to live in their houses. So we have to check our houses first, because if they take them off from us, where are we supposed to go? Should we stay here? I don't think so⁸².

5.2.22. Text 22

Speaker 21: Nadā T., female, 49 years old, graduated in Engineering, living in UAE since 2013.

mā ḥada by^qūl 'abē' hadōlē əllī ktīr ^qudamā, bi-ḥumoş mā ḥada by^qūl hēk, lā', bass hadōlē əllī əyşīn b-il-ḥārāt əl-^qadīmi 'əssā by^qūlo, masalan wlād Rumūz by^qūlō 'abē', hadōlē min əl-ḥārāt žuwwa by^qūlō hādā l-ḥadīs, bi-l-ḥamidiyyi⁸³ honīki

⁸² Lit. 'what are you talking about?'

⁸³ The Christian district in Homs.

*māsīhiyyi w 'islām ləssā byaḥkō hādā l-ḥakī t-t^qīl, halla^q naḥni 'aḥyānan ḥattā bi-
ḥumoṣ by^qūlū-lnā 'ənnu masalan naḥni ḥakī-kon mā-n-u ḥumṣē, mā-n-u ḥakī ḥumṣē
hādā l-ḥumṣē l-ḡamī^q, hadōlē 'alfāz-on ḡēr šē.
'ēh...halla^q ḥāyy bənt 'uxt-ē bidd-ā taemel eīd mīlād-ā daxīl-ik, bidd-ā tuezum rəf^qāt-
ā, daxīl-ik, bidd-ā tuezum-on b-il-bēt wēn bidd-ā taemel-lā yā-h, mā btaeref šū bidd-ā
taemel, ^qaddēš bidd-ā šuḡ^ql? mumken tẓīb-lā zāhez, mā-n-ā fādē təštəḡel-lā. lūlū ^qab^ql
mā sakkaret əl-madrasi ^qālet kull wāḥdi bidd-ā tẓīb šē, 'ēh, zīb-nā tabbūli, bass šū l-
kubbi əllī baet-lē?! 'ilāh-ī ykassər-lu 'idē-h! əs-saxtura ražaet^q-llu yāh-ā, ržaet ea-l-
bēt ṭallaet fī-^yā lōn-ā mā-n-u maẓbūt, ržaet^q, ^qult-ⁱ-llu la-Fāyez, baed mā tḡaddē-nā,
šū ra'y-ak t^qūm tražžae-lu yāh-ā, ^qāl-lī: lēš? riḥet-ā mā-n-ā mnīḥa w lōn-ā mā-n-u
mnīḥ, ^qāl 'ēh, ^qult-ⁱ-llu zīb laḥmi yaenē badāl-ā, rāḥ, ^qāl-lu: ḥāyy mart-ak? ^qāl-lu: 'ēh
mart-ē w bənt-ē, huwwe šū fakkar? Fāyez fakkar rāyḥa 'anā w lūlū! ^qāl-lu: mā
byaerfō yəštəḡlō fī-^yā! ḥaṭṭ əl-ḥa^qq ealē-nā! baedēn ^qult^q-llā lā Rašā taerfē šū? xūdī-nī
la-εand hādā sū^q əl-xudra, ^qālet-lī hnīk fī bayyāeīn laḥmi, ^qumt 'axdet-nī la-εand 'əl-
xalīl', ^qālet-lī taē-ē la-εand hādā xalīl, ruḥ^qt la-εand-u w l-laḥḥām hādā, maḥall wēn
bybīe, maṣrē, 'awwal wāḥed hindē, ^qult^q-llu: εand-ak...? mā fəhem ealī-^yē, 'izā hādā
l-maṣrē, ^qāl-lē: šū bidd-ik? ^qultⁱ-llu bidd-ē lə-lsānāt, εand-ak? ^qāl: mā εand-ē, biẓīb-
lik. ^qult^q-llu: ma^qādem w maṣārīn? ^qāl: εand-ē, kull šē fī, bass biẓīb-lik yā-h, mā εand-
ē yā-h halla^q, fa-šaweš la-hādā l-hindē w ḡāb šē eašra da^qāye^q w rəžee, zāyib-lē lə-
lsānāt, ^qāl kam wāḥed bidd-ik, ^qult^q-llu bidd-ē xamsi, zīb-lē yā-hon 'axad kull wāḥed
bi-sətti, ^qāl: mā bidd-ik əl-maṣārīn? l-masā taēē xudī-^yon, ^qult^q-llu: 'ēh la-l-masā,
^qult^q-llā la-rašā mšē la-nšūf hadōl tabaeūt əl-laḥmi, sa'al-nā wāḥed ^qāl mā hōnē
bətlā^qē, 'əmsē ṭūl ṭūl w bətluffē ea-l-yamīn, fī 'arbaea maḥallāt, ruḥnā y zīnā w
la^qēnā, šū εand-on? kull-ā tāza, šē byšahhē, 'abyaḍ 'abyāḍ w mnaḍḍaf! šū mnaḍḍaf,
waḷḷahi l-εazīm, ləkān! bass 'innu nḍīfī, ^qalb-ā mā-n-u wusəx, hadīki ḡasəlt-ā taḥt əl-
ḥanafiyyi ḍallēt šē 'arbae sāeāt w 'anā wā^qfī, ^qulti-llik ḍahr-ē ḍahr-ē bidd-ē fūt
'ithammam mā ^qəḍ^qrt. tətḍall təštəḡlē fī-^yā tlit sāeāt, mā zīb^qt 'anā, zīb^qt hēk tažrubi,
li'annu walā marra məštəḡli fī-^yā, ktīr bidd-ā šuḡ^ql. ^qmbāreḥ ḥuṭṭēt bi-ṭ-ṭanžara lə-
lsānāt w hadōle l-ma^qādem la-waḥd-on, fawwart ealī-^yon, kabbēt-on, ržaet žalēt əṭ-
ṭanžara ržaet ḥaṭṭēt maḡy ^qnḍīfī w ḥaṭṭēt-on. bi-'iṭālyā byaemlū-^wā? 'ēh bravo ealē-
kon! ^qāl-lī Ġassān hōn fī l-'afāriqa, hōn, li'annu wa^qət ruḥnā w zīb-nā mən εand-u
hādā l-laḥḥām kānō wā^qfīn tnēn hēk sūd, kull wāḥed ^qadd ṭūl ṭūl-u ^qadd mā-n-on ṭwāl,*

^qaṭṭea-lon mādrā šū⁸⁴ hād 'anā mā šu^ʕt, baedēn ^qāl-lu bidd-ē min hāyy kərsit əžəl, ^qaṭṭea-lu yā-hā w mā bearef šū kān eam yeafī-h, l-'afāriqa fu^qarā fa-yāklō kull šē, byəstağallō kull šē...bass əs-saxṭūra hōn mā-n-ā rxīša, tlātīn, bidd-ik tēarfē bi-l-laḥmi, halla^q əl-'irānē šū byəfra^q ean əl-'ustrālē? ^qultⁱ-llu la-Ġassān ^qāl-lē 'akīd əl-'irānē 'aḥsan li'annu mətl əs-sūrē w mā-n-u beīd. hādā ḥarāmē ean žadd ḥarāmē, 'il-u laḥmi eam yāxod minn^ʔ-nā xamsīn w 'anā mā-n-ē earfāni.

Nobody says 'abē', only the elderly do. In Homs, nobody says that. No, only those who live in the old districts still say it. For example, Rumūz's sons say 'abē' those who come from the inland districts speak that way; in the Hamidiyyi, Christians and Muslims still speak in that heavy way. Sometimes people in Homs tell us we don't even speak Homsī, that we don't speak the ultimate Homsī language. People who have another kind of pronunciation. So... these days my niece wants to celebrate her birthday; she wants to invite her girlfriends to the house, where else? She doesn't really know what she wants to do; what does it take to arrange a birthday party? Maybe she can get some pre-cooked food, as she hasn't got time to prepare some. Before the end of school, Lulu and her classmates agreed to each bring some food and she brought some Tabbuleh. But what about the Kubbi she sent over? For heaven's sake, may God let her hands fall off! I had to take back the intestines. When I saw them at home they didn't look good, so I told Fāyez after the meal: 'What do you think about taking them back to the butcher?'. He asked why. I answered: 'Because it doesn't smell good or look good.' He said okay. I asked him to get some meat instead. The butcher asked: 'Why are you returning this? Is it your wife?' and he answered, 'Yes, my wife and daughter.' And what did he think? Fāyez thought Lūlū and I both went over. The butcher said, 'It's because they don't know how to cook the intestines,' so he even blamed us. Then I told Rasha, 'You know what? Take me to the vegetable market.' I was told there were meat sellers there as well, so I was taken to *al-xalīl*. We went to al-Khalil, and there was an Egyptian butcher. There used to be an Indian one before. I asked him, 'Do you have any...?' but he didn't understand me so the Egyptian guy turned up. The Egyptian asked me what I wanted, so I replied, 'I want tongue; do you have any?' He said, 'No, I don't. But I can get you some.', 'what about

⁸⁴ *mādra šū* is an expression means 'I don't know what', it is supposed to derive from *mā 'adrī šū* 'I don't know what', where *mā* + '*adrī*' have been assimilated together.

the shin bone and the entrails?' I asked. He answered: 'I have everything, I just need some time to go and get it, I don't have it here.'

So he whispered something to the Indian guy, who came back 10 minutes later with the tongues. He asked me, 'How many tongues do you want?' I said five. He gave them to me and he charged six Dirham each, and said: 'Don't you want the intestines too? Come back this evening to get them.' I said, 'Yes, okay. This evening.' Then I told Rasha: 'Let's go and see the others that sell meat!' So we asked a guy, but he said we wouldn't find any there. 'You need to go straight on, then turn right and you'll find four shops', he told us. We followed his directions and we finally got to the right place. It's amazing what they have! Their meat is so fresh, it really whets your appetite! So white and clean. So clean, I swear! The intestines weren't only white, but inside they weren't even dirty. I had to run the other one under the tap for four hours. I had to stand that long, and when I was finished, I couldn't even take a shower because my back was hurting so bad. You generally need at least three hours to clean the intestines. This was my first time trying it, so I realized it takes loads of work. Yesterday I put the shin bones and the tongues in separate pots and boiled them. Then I threw out the dirty water, washed the pots, and put in some fresh clean water to let them boil again. Excellent. Ġassān told me that Africans here are poor, so they don't let any parts go to waste. I'm telling you this because when we went to a butcher, we met two black men, very, very tall, and he cut them something that I didn't recognize. They asked for some veal stomach, and he cut something, but I really couldn't tell what. The intestines there aren't cheap at all - 30 Dirham - plus you have to know the meat. For example, Ġassān told me that Iranian meat is definitely better than Australian because it doesn't come from too far away, just like the Syrian meat. Look, that butcher is a real criminal, a thief. He's always charged me 50 Dirham for his meat and I didn't know it (was too expensive).

5.2.23. Text 23

Speaker 22: K. K., female, 37 years old, degree, living in Qatar since 2011.

marḥaba 'anā 'asm-ī K., mən sūryā, eumr-ē sabea w tlātīn, bištəgel muḥāmiyyi, 'anā ṣār-lī xamsi snīn, mən xamsi snīn tleət min sūryā, ḡallēt sini eāyši bi-sūryā bēn...taḥt əl-māšākel w s-sawra, kān əl-waḡaε... 'anā mā kān bidd-ē 'ətrok sūryā balad-ē li'annu 'anā bḥubb balad-ē w bḥubb šuḡl-ē ktīr w tεəb²t ²ktīr ḥattā eamə²t

šugl^o mnīh hōnīk bass bi-l- 'āxer kān waḍaε^o ktīr səyyē' 'anā lāzem 'ətrok əl-balad la'anno yā bmūt yā beīš, hādā huwwe l-qarār. fa-qarrart 'anno rūh ea-qaṭar, mā kān εand-ē xayār tānē ġēr qaṭar lə'ennu kān fī ḥada yə^oder yaεmil-lē vīza bi-qaṭar, lə'ennu 'ax-ē byəštəġel bi-qaṭar fa-huwwi baεat-lē vīza, li'annu maḥall tānī kull-u mā-fī vīza la-l-sūrē, fa-ruḥ^ot ealā qaṭar, qaṭar balad ḥəlu, fī kull šē, kull šē ždīd ḥəlu w fī šē^o adīm ḥəlu, ḥayāt mumken tlā^oē kull šē bidd-ik yā-h, bass mā fī ḥayāt 'ižtimāeiyyi hōnīk, kull wāḥed eāyeš la-ḥāl-u, li'annu kull ən-nās bətrūh la-hōnīk mišān təštəġel, mā fī žīrān w^o ahwe w ziyārāt w rəf^oāt w eazīmi, kān šaεb^o ktīr: 'awwal šē 'anā kunt eāyši tlātīn sini bi-balad-ē w εand-ē kull šē, rəf^oāt-ē w bēt-ē w šugl-ē w ḥayāt-ē w hēkē lā^otī fəž'e 'anā bi-maḥall^o ždīd mā baεref ḥada, mā baεref ən-nās, mā baεref wa-lā ḥada hōnīk w lāzem 'anā balləš kull^o šē ždīd, 'awwal šē kān ktīr šaεb la-ḥattā 'anā lāzem lā^oē šug^ol, ḍallēt sitti šhūr mən dūn šug^ol w 'anā εam dawwer ealā šug^ol w mā ḥada εam yaεfīn-ē š-šug^ol w kunt kull marra fakkər 'innu xalaš 'anā rāḥ 'əržae la-sūryā law fī ḥarb 'anā bidd-ē 'əržae ealā bēt-ē, 'anā bidd-ē 'əržae ea-ḥayāt-ē, bidd-ē 'əržae ea-l-bēt əllī eaš^ot fī-h, bidd-ē rūh ea-maktab-ē, bidd-ē 'əšrab^o ahwi ea-šubbāk, šūf rəf^oāt-ē naḥkē, nəεab, nəḍḥak, rəf^oāt-ē kull-on ta^orīban ṭəleeō mumken fī šē tnēn 'aw tlāti bi-ḥumoš li'annu mā εand-on ḥada yə^oder yṭallae-on barrat əl-balad 'aw mā fī εand-on mašārī yidfae ḥa^oq ət-ṭayyāra ḥattā, li'annu mā-fī šug^ol hōnīk, fa-'anā ḍallēt 'awwal fatra fakkər ḍall wallā 'aržae baedēn qarrar^ot 'annu xalaš 'anā lāzem balleš ḥayāt^o ždīdi hōn bi-qaṭar. min sūryā məštā^oa 'aktar šē kull šē byəzakkirn-ē wa^oət kunt^o zġīri...bēt-ē, lə-žnēni tabaεit əl-bēt wēn kunnā nəεab w l-ḥamāmāt əllī kānō εan-nā, məštā^oa 'arkab ea-l-bisklēt bi-š-šāree, məštā^oa 'ākol falāfel žamb əl-bēt, məštā^oa rūh 'əmsē riyāḍa kull yōm əs-sāea xamsi, məštā^oa ealā rəf^oāt-ē li'annu kull wāḥed šār bi-balad mā bə^oder šūf-on halla^o ġēr marra kull xamsi sətti snīn. səlbiyāt ḥayāt bi-qaṭar 'awwal šē mā fī εand-ik ḥayāt 'ižtimāeiyyi, kull ən-nās εam yəštəġlō min əš-šub^oḥ la-l-masā w xalaš mā fī šē li'annu kull wāḥed bidd-u yəštəġel mišān yžammae mašārī li'annu kull šē ġālī kamān w kull wāḥed εam ysāeed 'izā min sūryā w εand-u ḥada bi-sūryā εam ysāeed 'ahl-u, εam ysāeed eēlt-u, fa-mā ḥadi εand-u mašārī la-yrūh yəmbəsef^o...bass əš-šugl^o mnīh hōnīk li'annu fī ktīr šərkāt εand-on xəbra kbīri w εam yəštəġel εand-on min kull əl-eālam...min əs-səlbiyāt 'inn-ik mā fī εand-ik zikrayyāt.

⁸⁵ There is the assimilation of *nb>mb*.

Hi, my name is K., and I'm from Syria. I'm 37 years old and I'm a lawyer. I left Syria five years ago after dealing with the revolution and its problems for a year. I didn't want to leave Syria because I love my country, I love my job so much, not to mention all the sacrifices I made to settle down and get a proper position... but in the end the situation became unbearable. Enough. I had to leave that place because I could either live or die, this was the choice. I chose to move to Qatar as it was my only option. I had someone there to get a visa for me - my brother was working there, so he sent me a visa. They don't issue visas to Syrians for other countries, so I went to Qatar. Qatar is a wonderful country. You've got everything there, and everything's new. What's new is beautiful and also what's old is beautiful. It's a place where you can find everything you need, except for social relationships. Everyone lives on their own, because they all move there to work. There are no neighbour's visits, no coffee, no courtesy visits, friends or guests... In the beginning, it was extremely difficult. Where I'd lived for 30 years, I had everything: friends, a house, a job, my life... and then, all of a sudden you realize you're alone in a new place where you don't know anybody. I knew nobody there, and I had to start from scratch. As I said, it was very difficult in the beginning. I also had to get myself a job. I didn't find a job for six months. I mean, I was looking for one, but nobody seemed to give me a chance. I started thinking, 'Maybe I should go back to Syria, despite the war. I want to get back home, to the house where I've always lived, to my old life, my old office; I want to have a coffee at the window, MY coffee, meet my friends, chat, joke, have a laugh.' All my friends moved away. There might be two or three of them still in Homs, but that's only because they don't have enough money for the airplane ticket as there's not much work there. So during the first period I thought about going back to Syria. But then I thought to myself, 'No, I have to restart my new life here in Qatar.' As for Syria, I miss all the stuff that reminds me of my childhood: my own house, the garden where we used to play, the doves we had; I miss riding my bike in the street, I miss eating falafel in the neighborhood, I miss doing sport every day at five, I miss my friends, because now everyone is in a different country and I can't see them, except maybe once every five or six years. The negative aspects of life in Qatar are first of all that you don't have any social life at all. Everybody works all day, and that's it. There's nothing else here because people work hard to get some money together... everything's expensive there (Homs), and they send their help. If you have any relatives in Syria, you need to help them. You need to help your parents too. Almost

all the people here work to help their families; people don't just spend money on entertainment, but having a job here is very good because there are many highly experienced companies, where people from all around the world work. The negative thing is that you don't have any memories here (Qatar).

5.2.24. Text 24

rah nahkē ean kif mənħadḍer əl-εur²s bi-ħumoş, byballšō ta^qrīban halla^q min ^qabl əl-εur²s bi-ṭabean 'arbaea xamsi šhūr bətballeš əl-εarūs bəṭħadḍer əž-žihāz tabae-ā yəllī huwwi kull šē tyāb ²zdīdi w fasaṭīn, fuṣṭān əl-εur²s w lə-ğrād lə-l-bēt w šū bidd-ā tāšterē w la-t-tax²t w la-ṭ-tāwli w kull hāyy lə-'əšyā' tabaeit əl-bēt yəllī hiyyi 'ism-u hād žihāz əl-εarūs...halla^q bəṭħadḍer əl-εarūs kull šē ^qabl əl-εur²s ta^qrīban bi-'ašrat 'iyyām 'aw 'usbūe əl-εarūs btəḍubb kull lə-ğrād žābet-ā w tāxod-on ea-l-bēt yəllī hiyyi bidd-ā tuskon fī-h w 'umm əl-εarīs tuezum kull ^qarāybīn-ā w l-εēli w ž-žīrān mišān yrūhō yəṭfarražō ealā žihāz əl-εarūs, fa-bətrūh əl-εarūs w 'ahl-ā w biṭalleō kull lə-ğrād w 'umm əl-εarīs bəṭfarržē ž-žīrān w l-^qarāybīn ealā 'ağrād tabaeūt əl-εarūs, min ^qadīm kull-on kānō yaemlū-h, halla^q fī nās ləssā bteamel hēk w fī nās mā bteamel bass min zamān kull-on kānō yaemlō hēk, mā byšīr bi-lā žihāz əl-εarūs, bass halla^q bi-l-wa^qt əl-ħālē mā kull ən-nās bteamel hēk, halla^q hāyy taḥḍīrāt ^qabl əl-εur²s, baed lə-žhāz bykūn, ṭabean bi-hāyy əl-fatra kamān eam yħadḍrō ž-žihāz w eam yħadḍrō l-εur²s, l-εur²s šū? šū hiyyi t-taḥḍīrāt la-l-εur²s? hiyyi ḥaṭlet əl-εur²s. halla^q min zamān kull-on kānō yaemlō l-εur²s bi-bēt əl-εarīs, eand 'umm əl-εarīs, bi-l-bēt w bətkūn hēke...byḍayyḥō hāyy r-rāḥa t-ta^qlīdiyyi l-ħumšiyyi yəllī hiyyi r-rāḥa l-maemūli s-sukkar, ^quṭae ər-rāḥa min sukkar w našā' w mae fusto^q, yaenē ṣaḥ²n ḥəlwiyyāt, ^quṭae r-rāḥa mae šwayy mlabbas mae mumken ḥabbet šōkōlāh, 'ēh kānet hiyyi lə-ḍyāfi tabaeit əl-εur²s, min zamān...w l-εur²s bi-bēt əl-εarūs, byižē l-εarīs, tižē l-εarūs mae 'ahl-ā w byuezmō ^qarāybīn-on w žīrān-on w 'umm əl-εarīs tuezum ^qarāybīn-ā w žīrān-ā w btižē l-εarūs ea-bēt əl-εarīs byeamlō ḥaṭli bi-bēt 'aḥmā-hā, baedēn hāyy əl-εādāt ballašet tətḡayyar šwayy ²šwayy, šār əl-εur²s byšīr bi-maṭeam 'aw bi-šāli, baedēn šār bi-'otēl halla^q...w t-taḥḍīrāt šū bətkūn? ət-taḥḍīrāt dayman byballašō yħadḍrō šū bidd-on yaemlō bi-l-εur²s, halla^q šār bi-šāli šār fī eašā mumken, mumken šār fī wāžbi 'aw eašā 'aw būfēh, l-wāžbi ṣaḥ²n wāhed mae sfīḥa maṭfūra⁸⁶, mae šwayy ²tabbūli, šwayy ²kubbi, hēk...hāyy 'ism-u ṣaḥ²n fransē. baedēn šār fī nās, lā', bəteamel 'awwal

⁸⁶ It is a pizza-like dish originating from the Levant region.

šē mumken eašā ea-ṭ-ṭāwli, baṭḥuṭṭ 'awwal šē tabbuli, ḥummoṣ w muqabbilāt w fī lā',
šār teamel būfēh maftūh, hēke l-eādāt tḡayyaret mən rāḥa la-ṣaḥ⁹n fransē la-eašā la-
būfēh. baedēn taḥḍīrāt əl-eur⁹s byfakkrō šū lə-dyāfi tabaeit əl-eur⁹s 'innu huwwi būfēh
wəllā ṣaḥ⁹n fransē 'aw hēk, baedēn byballšō ywəzzēō l-eālam bi-ṣ-ṣāli tabaeit əl-eur⁹s,
⁹as⁹m la-bēt əl-earūs w ⁹as⁹m la-bēt əl-earīs w bywa⁹fō 'ahl əl-earūs w 'ahl əl-earīs
ea-l-bāb tabae aṣ-ṣāli 'aw l-maṭeam 'aw l-'ōtēl, kull wāḥed byəsta⁹bal ⁹dyūf-u w
by⁹eūdō l-eālam ea-ṭ-ṭāwlāt w byḥuttū-lon must⁹ā w 'izā kān əl-eur⁹s... 'aḡlab əl-eurs
bykūnō bass niswān, mumken yṣīr niswān w ržāl, bass mā kull əl-'aerās yaenē, l-
'aḡlab bass niswān, byḥuttū-lon must⁹ā w b⁹ūmō yru⁹šō n-niswān, baedēn tižē l-earūs,
bətkūn əl-earūs bi-bēt-ā eand-ā rəf⁹āt-ā w l-banāt w 'ahl-ā tabaeūt əl-ēli w 'əxwāt-ā
w rəf⁹āt-ā w 'umm-ā bətkūn bi-ṣ-ṣāli eam təsta⁹bal əl-eālam, hiyyi bətkūn eand-ā bi-l-
bēt 'izā eand-ā 'əxwāt-ā w rəf⁹āt-ā kull-on eam yəṭṣawwarō maε-ā, yru⁹šō hēk...w l-
earīs bykūn bi-bēt-u kamān eand-u rəf⁹āt-u eam ysāedū-h yəlbəs ṭa⁹am əl-eur⁹s w
yaemlū-lu l-earāḍa tabaeit əl-eur⁹s, baedēn byəṭlaε əl-earīs min bēt-u bi-earāḍa w bižē
bi-s-sayyārāt yəllī hiyyi bətkūn ḥasab ⁹add mā bidd-ik eašra, xamuṣṭaeš, eašrīn, tlātīn,
'ēš-⁹add mā eand-ik eālam bi-l-bēt, byižē maε əs-sayyāra lə-mzəyyini tabaeit əl-earūs
maε əš-šarāyeṭ w hēk, byižē l-earīs w ru⁹fāt-u ealā bēt əl-earūs, hēk byəṭlaε əl-earīs
la-eand əl-earūs ea-l-bēt kamān byəṭṣawwarō w l-banāt by⁹ūlō z-zalāḡīd tabaeūt əl-
eur⁹s, baedēn byənzlō l-earūs w l-earīs maε rəf⁹āt-ā kull-on min əl-bēt tabae əl-earūs
w byəṭlaεō bi-s-sayyārāt kull-on: byəṭlaε əl-earīs w earūst-u bi-s-sayyāra w rəf⁹āt-ā
byəṭlaεō maε əl-eālam əllī žāyīn bi-s-sayyārāt w byeamlō l-fatli tabaeit əl-eur⁹s
bydūrō bi-l-madīni w byzammrō hēk bi-s-sayyārāt pi-pi-pii w bymurrō min ⁹uddām
bēt əl-earīs w min ⁹uddām bēt židd-ā l-əl-earūs w kull əl-manāte⁹ yəllī hiyyi fī-^yā šē
mumken ḥada byxuṣṣ ḥada ⁹arīb mən əl-earūs 'aw l-earīs, baedēn byrūḥō ea-l-maḥall
tabae əl-eur⁹s, bi-ṣ-ṣāli 'aw l-'ōtēl 'aw l-maṭeam w bykūnō hōnīki kull-on byaerfō 'izet
əl-earūs, byəṭlaεō 'ahl əl-earūs w 'ahl əl-earīs əl-mōwūdūn⁸⁷ hōnīk ea-l-madxəl tabae
aṣ-ṣāli 'aw l-'ōtēl w byṣīr by⁹ūlō hāyy əz-zalāḡīd tabaeūt əl-eur⁹s, 'ahl əl-earūs by⁹ūlō
w 'ahl əl-earīs byruddō ealē-hon w byfūtō l-earīs w l-earūs ea-ṣ-ṣāli, 'awwal šē
byru⁹šō w 'awwal ra⁹ša mumken earabē 'aw mumken fī nās byru⁹šō šē 'ažnabē,
mumken nās bass earabē w baedēn byrūḥō by⁹eūdō maḥall əl-earūs w l-earīs w byṣīr
by⁹ūmō n-nās byru⁹šō, tər⁹uṣ əl-earūs maε-on, byər⁹uṣ əl-earīs maε-on w 'ahl-ā w
'ahl-u 'izā mā bass la-l-niswān, 'izā bass la-l-niswān mumken byfūt əl-earīs maε əl-

⁸⁷ Usually the diphthong –aw is maintained in the word *mawzūd*, but in this case the speaker changed it from *aw* to *ū*, and added the suffix –*ūn* for the plural as in CA, while in HA is always –*īn*.

earūs, byru^qšō huwwi w 'iyyā-hā w bybaddlō l-xawātem w byeaṭī-^yā d-dahab yallī...bylabbās-ā d-dahab əllī huwwi žāyeb-lā hdiyyi tabaeit əl-^{eur}s w mumken 'ahl-ā kamān bylabbsū-^wā lə-hdiyyi l-žāybīn-lā 'iyyā-hā dahab w 'ahl-u nəfs əš-šē w byrūḥ əl-^{earīs} w mumken 'ahyānan byḍall əl-^{earīs} maē əl-^{earūs} w n-niswān əl-^qāedīn byḥuṭṭō ḥižābāt-on byləbsō l-mānṭo 'aw l-^εabāy w byḍallō ^qāedīn, yaenē, bass mumken ət-tnēn w baedēn byḥuṭṭō l-'ak^l 'aw l-būfēh 'aw l-^εašā w l-hēk w byāklō l-^εālam w byru^qšō w baedēn byrūḥō ^εa-l-bēt w l-^{earīs} byāxod ^εarūst-u 'aw ^εalā bēt-ā 'izā ^εand-on bēt la-ḥāl-on 'aw 'izā kān huwwi ^εāyēš barra l-balad w žāy bass yətzawwāž mumken ^εalā 'ōtēl 'aw mumken ^εand 'ahl-u kamān. halla^q əl-hadāyyā... l-^εēli l-mu^qarrabi ktīr ^εa-l-'aktar byžībō dahab, l-^{earīs} 'akīd lāzem yžīb dahab w 'umm-u 'akīd lāzem tžīb-lā dahab w hiyyi 'umm-ā w 'abū-^wā lāzem yžībū-lā dahab w mumken fī nās byeaṭō mašārī, byḥuṭṭō hēk mašārī bi-^{zar}f w byeaṭū-hā yā-hon 'aw mumken fī nās 'izā rəf^lāt-ā hēk byrūḥō la-^εand-ā ^εa-l-bēt baed əl-^{eur}s w byžībū-lā hdiyyi, hdiyyi 'il-ā 'aw la-l-bēt mumken šaḡli la-l-bēt 'aw hēk yaenē w halla^q min ^əždīd šār fī nās byḥuṭṭō, halla^q min 'āxər ^εašra xamsi snīn, byḥuṭṭō mi^l qā'imi ^εand əl-maḥall 'əntē bətrūhē thuttē mašārē w fī nās byḥuṭṭū-lik ra^qam ḥsāb əl-bank, šār halla^q min 'āxər xamsi snīn mumken hāyy qā'imet əz-zawāž byḥuṭṭū-^wā bi-l-maḥall, fī nās masalan, halla^q bi-ḥalab ^əktīr mōžūdi byḥuṭṭū-lik mišān əd-dīkōr tabae əl-^{eur}s, mišān əl-ward w l-hēk...btəšīrē 'əntē mā tədfaē ḥa^q əd-dīkōr tabae əl-maṭeam 'aw š-šāli, l-ward hdiyyi min əḍ-ḍyūf, 'aḥsan mā kull wāḥed yəbaet-lik šē 'aw yžīb war^d, mumken hēk kamān, hāyy 'āxər kam sini šāret mōžūdi, hādā huwwi l-^{eur}s.

Well, now I'm going to talk about the preparations for Homs weddings. The arrangements generally start before the wedding day, let's say around 4 or 5 months in advance: the bride starts preparing her marriage trousseau, that's to say her new clothes, dresses, wedding dress, some house items too - everything she needs to make the bed, set the table and so on. All of this is called the marriage trousseau. The bride starts preparing it about 7 to 10 days ahead of the wedding day. She puts together what she has bought and takes it to the house where she'll be living. The groom's mother will invite all the relatives, family and neighbours to the house to admire the bride's trousseau. So the bride and her family will start showing the trousseau around and the groom's mother will show it to her neighbours, relatives and so on. In the past, they used to do this a lot, but now only a small percentage of the population still keeps this tradition, it had to show the bride's trousseau in the past, but nowadays not

everyone does it. Along with the trousseau preparations, there are the actual wedding day preparations too. It is a real feast, a celebration. In the past, the wedding would take place at the groom's house: they used to offer the typical Homs wedding favours, containing sugar treats, pistachio sweets and so on. They would also contain some Jordan almonds or chocolates. That is the traditional wedding treat they used to offer a long time ago.

The wedding takes place at the bride's house: the groom comes, the bride and her family come, they invite relatives and neighbours, and the groom's mother invites her family and neighbours too, and then the bride gets to her mother-in-law's place and starts celebrating there too. These traditions have been changing over time, so now the weddings can take place in restaurants, banquet halls or hotels as well. The preparations are all about food: they need to choose what to offer during the wedding banquet. In a banquet, they might offer a real dinner, or a one-dish dinner, or a buffet. If they choose a main course dinner there might be Sfiha Matfura, or some Tabbuleh or Kubbeh, and this would be called the 'French Dish'. Or they might choose a sit-down dinner, sitting at the table and being served some Tabbuleh, some Hommos or some appetizers. Another option might be an open buffet. As you can see, the habits have changed, both in regard to the wedding favours and the dinner. Then they start settling the guests in, waiting for them at the front door of the hall, restaurant or hotel, welcoming their own and putting on some music for them. The wedding banquets are hardly ever for men and women; they're mainly just for women: the girls start dancing in the hall and the bride joins them. The bride was probably at home earlier, with her friends and sisters, while her mother was already in the hall welcoming the guests. All her brothers and friends were at her place, taking pictures and dancing with her. The groom would be at his place too, with his friends, who would help him get dressed, put on his wedding outfit, and sing wedding folk songs to him, which would accompany him as he leaves his house in the bride's decorated car. They then all leave by car, which could be 10, 15, 20 or 30 cars, depending on the number of people there, and they all reach the bride's place. He goes into her house, takes some pictures with the bride, and, accompanied by the wedding folk songs, they start driving around: the bride and groom in their own car, their friends in their cars. They drive past the groom's house, past other important places, which could be the bride's grandparents' place as well and other relatives' places, honking their horns.

They finally get to the wedding banquet, at the restaurant, hall or hotel. Here everyone knows the bride's coming, and the two families stand at the front door to welcome the bride and the groom by singing the typical wedding folk songs. The groom's family sings and the bride's family sings back. Then the bride and the groom enter the hall and start dancing: there might be an Arabian dance, or some other foreign dances, or even just an Arabian song. Then they take their seats and the guests start dancing. The bride would join them, as would the groom and the two families too. If it's an all-female wedding, the groom could dance with the bride and they could exchange the wedding rings. He would obviously give her gold and let her wear it; her parents would make her wear their gold presents too, and so would the groom's family. The groom then takes his leave. Sometimes he stays in, the women wear their veils, and they remain seated with their *mantō* or Abaya on. It's really a matter of personal choice. What happens next is that the food is served. People eat and dance and then bid farewell. At this point, the groom takes his bride home, which could be to their own home or a hotel or to his parents' house, if he lives elsewhere. Now, talking about the presents, the closest relatives would normally give the bride gold: the groom would give gold as well; his mother and her parents would also do that. Anyway, there are people who choose to give money - for example, they put some money in an envelope and give it to the bride, or some friends could also come over after the party and give her presents at home. During the last 5-10 years other options have emerged: paying for some items chosen by the couple directly in a shop (aka. the wedding list) or giving one's bank account details. In Aleppo, for example, the tradition of paying for the decorations has become a very common practice: some guests may pay for the flowers or for the hall decorations, which would later be taken for presents. This is the wedding.

5.2.25. Text 25

Speaker 23: M.K., female, 35 years old, degree, living in Qatar since 2012 but before Qatar lived in Saudi Arabia for 2008.

*'anā M. umur-ē xamsa w tlātīn min mawalīd madīnat ḥumoṣ, darast bakalōryūs bi-
'inglīzē w baedēn diplome taržami, 'aštağal^lt baed bi-mažāl tadrīs əl-luğa l-'inglīziyyi
English as second language w dawrāt bi-mažāl TOEFL w IELTS, şər-lī tārki madīnt-ē
ḥumṣ min 'alfēn w tmāni wa^qət tzawwaž^zt w eašt sətti snīn bi-s-saeūdiyyi w ḥāliyyan*

muqīmi bi-qatar. 'akīd 'ašta^qēt la-balad-ē bi-hadōl ət-tminⁱ snīn, 'ašta^qēt 'ktīr 'ašyā' mā la^qēt-ā bi-d-duwal əl-əarabiyyi t-tānī, mumken lə'ennu bi-duwal əl-xalīz mā fī l-ḥayāt əl-'ižtimāeiyyi naḥna məteawudīn ealē-hā bi-balad-nā w bi-madīn²t-nā fa-masalan bi-ġāleb əl-mudon əs-sūrī w bi-madīnt-ē ḥumoş fī yōm dayman təžtamee fī-h kull 'afrād əl-ēli min 'awlād, banāt, şəbyān w 'awlād-on w l-'aḥfād, lāzem kull yōm əž-žumea kull 'afrād əl-ēli byzūrō l-ēli li-huwwi bēt əs-sətt w l-žədd la-yşūfō 'umm-on w yəžtameō məe baed-on w yəşrabō l-^qahwi l-əarabiyyi w yaḥkō şū şār məe-on xilāl 'ayyām əl-'usbūe w 'aḥyānan mū⁸⁸ dayman mumken ykūn yōm əž-žumea fī ġadā, bətkūn əl-'umm bətxabber la-wlād-ā w taemel əl-'akli l-mufaqqdale, ṭabean ean-nā naḥna maşhūra bi-ḥumoş bi-l-'aklāt əl-mufaqqdale l-kubbi l-ḥumşiyi w l-maḥāşi, l-ma^qlūbi, fa-mumken təžtamee kull əl-ēli w minn-on byşūfō baed-on byāklō 'ak²l əl-'umm əl-byḥubbū-h hinnī, bi-nəfs əl-wa^qət əl-wlād byşūfō židd-on w sətt-on, byteawwadō ealā 'iḥtirām əs-sətt w l-žədd w ḥabb əl-ēli w l-'usra, bykūnō žamb baed-on, byəteallamō 'innu lāzem yəḥtərmō eamt-on w eamm-on w xālt-on w xāl-on li'annu ḥattā məe əl-'iyyām law xuwāl-on w eamām-on şārō kbār bi-l-eumr ykūn fī ḥadi mumken ysāed-on w yistandō ealē-h, ykūn sanad la 'il-on. 'akīd məşthiyyi 'əməš bi-şawāree madīnt-ē, şumm hawā balad-ē, şūf əş-şazar əl-'axdar, l-'aḥzār əl-'aswad əllī byġaṭṭē š-şawāree, ət-ṭa^qs əl-ḥəlu, l-matar w l-hawā l-ealīl, şūf əl-baḥar w l-žabal, l-wādē, l-ġabāt, hādā š-šē law la^qēnā-hā bi-d-duwal əl-əarabiyyi t-tānī bass mumken ġalibūt-on šē şināeē, mā-n-u ṭabīeē, bkūn fī fuşul 'arbaea xarīf w rabīe w šiti w şēf, mū dayman 'immā šiti 'aw şēf, l-waḥed byḥəss bi-taġayyurāt əl-žaww w l-fuşul əl-'arbaea. məštā^qa ealā kull šē, şumm 'arḍ blād-ē, l-hawā w l-'ak²l w š-şur²b w rəf^qāt-ē, ḥattā law 'anā mustaqarra barra 'akīd law waḍae balad-ē byəḥassan kull sini lāzem rūḥ 'a^qdē 'ižāzt-ē bi-balad-ē li'annu ḥattā 'ibn-ē lāzem yətearraḥ ealā 'ahl-u ealā balad-u w eādāt-u li'annu bi-n-nihāya 'insān^qadd mā tġarrab nihā'iyyan ḥa-yərżae ealā balad-u. bi-l-xalīz mā fī ḥayāt 'ižtimāeiyyi la-l-ṭəfl nihā'iyyan, bass mən naḥiyet əl-madāres, l-madāres mutaqqaddimi, fī tadrīs əl-luġāt əl-english w l-french, bass bi-nəfs əl-wa^qət byḥəssē 'innu 'əbn-ik mā-n-u eam yəteallam l-luġa l-əarabiyyi, eam yākod xilāl əş-şah²r kull-u mumken eaşra sēeāt bydrusō l-əarabiyyi bass, bi-l-madrasi byaḥkō kull šē bi-l-english, mā bykūn fī taelīm dyān əl-'islāmiyyi ktīr^qawī bykūn šē mumanhaż huwwi eibāra ean taqāfi⁸⁹ l-'islāmiyyi w laysa⁹⁰ taelīm əl-qur'an w ş-şalāh

⁸⁸ A borrowing from Damascus Arabic since in Homs the particle for the negation is mā.

⁸⁹ The speaker maintained the interdental phoneme *ʔ* as in CA.

⁹⁰ Laysa is never used in HA, as per all Arabic varieties, so it is a borrowing from CA.

w ş-şiyām bykūn eibāra ean aṭ-taqāfi l-’islāmiyyi, ean tārīx ’islāmī, hiżret ar-rasūl, l-gazawāt, mā bykūn taelīm dīnē, baḥ^ṡt ...eam baḥkē ean al-madāres al-xāşşa li’annu naḥna ’awlād-nā ’ažāneb mā bi-ḥa^ṡlon yfūtō ea-l-madāres al-ḥukūmiyyi, fa-l-madāres al-xāşşa tattābee ealā niżām al-eālamī mit^ṡl tattābee ea-l-manhaż al-’inglīziyyi, mā bykūn fī-^ṡā taważżuh dīnē, fa-baḥḥassē ’innu l-walad ’okkēh eam yaṭraffah w eam yaḥşal ealā kull šē bidd-u ’iyyā-h min ’aleāb, min ’amāken, masābeh, ḥadāye^ṡ, bass bi-nāfs al-wa^ṡt mā-n-u eam yşūf eēlt-u, mā-n-u eam yaeref şū l-eādāt al-earabiyyi tabae balad-nā naḥna, yaenē ’aktar šē biḥassē l-luġa, bi-sūryā byeallmū-^wa bi-ṭarī^ṡa ’awḍaḥ min ^ṡzġār, mā biḥassē ’awlād byakbarō w fī eand-on ’as’ili bi-ea^ṡl-on lēş hēk, min al-madrasi eam yaşraḥū-lu şū maenā hādā š-šē, hōn mā biḥassē eam yiftaḥō hādā l-mažāl, yaenē ’antē bidd-ik tşīrē tsażżel ’abn-ik bi-maēhad ’aw ’antē baṭżībī-lu ’ustāz earabē ’aw ’antē bidd-ik tātarsī-h earabē, ’ēh, yaenē ykūn ealē-ke żuhud tānē, biḥassē l-walad eam yaḥkē l-earabē eam yaḥkī-h ka’ennu şax^ṡş ’ažnabē wa laysa earabē, l-luġa l-earabiyyi mā bykūn an-nuṭuq wādeḥ w hādā eand ġalībit al-lād.

My name is M. and I'm 35; I was born in Homs. I got my high school diploma in English and a degree in translation. I have worked as an English teacher teaching 'English as a second language', TOEFL and IELTS courses. I left my city, Homs, in 2008, when I got married and moved to Saudi Arabia. I lived there for 6 years, but now I live in Qatar. Of course, I've missed my country during these 8 years; I've missed a lot of things that I simply couldn't find in other Arabian countries. In the countries around the Gulf, you won't find the social life you're used to in your own country or in your city. For example, in most Syrian countries, we have a special day when we all gather together: we meet our families at our grandparents' place. We drink Arabic coffee, we talk about what happened to us during the past week, and sometimes, but not always, we might also have lunch together on Fridays. The mother calls her kids and prepares their favourite food. We're famous here for our food: Homs Kubbi, Maḥşi, and Kubbi. So the whole family gathers around a table, and they all eat their favourite food prepared by their mother. The kids see their grand parents, learn to respect them and to love their family, to be close to each other, and to respect their aunt and uncle. Because when time goes by, when they get older, it's extremely important to have somebody to help them, someone that they can rely on, count on. Without a doubt, I miss walking the streets of my city, breathing its air, seeing its

green trees and the black stones that cover the roads, the good weather, the rain, the air, the sea, the mountains, the valley, the forests. We actually find all those things in other Arab countries, but they are mostly artificial; they're not natural. I miss the four seasons: autumn, spring, winter and summer. Not always winter or summer, I wish you could feel the climate changes - the four seasons themselves. I miss everything: breathing in my country, its air, its food, its drink, and my friends. Despite the fact that I live abroad, as soon as the situation gets better in my country, I'll spend my holidays there, every year, because my son needs to know his family, his country and its customs. No matter where you live, you always have to go back to your roots some time.

In the Gulf, there's no social life for children at all. The school system is the only innovative thing they have. They teach English and French, but at the same time, you feel that your son isn't learning about Arab life. He only has 10 Arabic classes per month. In school they all speak English; there isn't much of the Islamic religion. They might have a programme about Islamic culture, but not a lesson on the Koran about fasting prayer. It's only about historical Islamic culture, the prophet's Hijra, the conquests. There's nothing about religion. I'm talking about the private schools, of course, because our kids are considered foreigners here, and they don't have the right to attend a state school. The private schools follow the international system. They're based on the English school system, where you don't study religion. You're aware that your child is living a wealthy life; he can have anything he wants - games, places, pools, gardens - but he can't meet his family. He doesn't know his country's customs, or its language. In Syria, they teach Arabic very clearly and at a very early age, so children don't have any more questions about it when they grow up. Here it looks like they don't want to bring up the subject. It's you, as a mother, who has to enroll your son in an institute, or hire a private Arabic teacher, or maybe teach him Arabic yourself. It's like a double stress: you hear your son speaking Arabic like a foreigner and not an Arab. His pronunciation is not clear, and this is something that happens to most kids.

5.2.26. Text 26

Speaker 24: M.A., male, 58 years old, degree, living in Qatar since 2012 but before Qatar lived in other European and Saudi Arabia for 1983.

'anā duktūr M. min ħumoṣ, t̄læet min ħumoṣ sint tlāta w tmānīn, darast t̄abb bi-rūmānyā, t̄abb 'ixtiṣāš'atfāl w r̄zaet ealā ħumoṣ, 'iṣtaḡalet ka-t̄abīb w eašt fī-hā w 'anā min ən-nās əllī mā ħabbēt 'itḡarrab ^oktīr, mā ħabbēt li 'annu ... 'inearaḡ ealī-^{yy}ē žinsīyyāt ^oktīr 'iṭālīyyi, rūmāniyyi, 'almāniyyi, kull šē, bass 'anā ktīr kunt ħābeb 'ər̄zæ li-l-ēli, 'umm-ī w 'axwāt-ē w kunt ^oktīr m̄ṣammem 'itzawwež min εand-ī m̄-l-ḡay, m̄-l-ḡāra w hēk šī, yaenē ktīr naḡni l-εādāt kān bi-n-nisbi 'il-nā w...ət-tarbiye l-manzīliyyi la-halla^q m̄t'asser fī-nā, m̄nḡubb əl-εādāt m̄n^qūl ealē-^yā šaraēiyye: 'iḡtirām əl-'abb, l-ēli, l-'ixwe, l-'axawāt w t-tawāṣol 'ižtimāēē bēn baēd-nā, 'anā ktīr bḡubb kull fatra fatra zūr 'axwāt-ē w yzūrū-nī, li-zalik hādā min əš-šāḡlāt əl-'assaret ealī-^{yy}ē eašt 'aktar min eašrīn sini xārež min ħumoṣ taḡdīdan, 'ašarrēt w la-l-yōm 'izā šār-lē 'ayy fur̄ṣa b̄t̄ṣər-lī 'innī 'ər̄zæ la-ħumoṣ b̄r̄zæ, lamma naḡna yaenē mn̄tḡarrab trūhē sini, trūhē sintēn tir̄zæē b̄t̄ḡessē ḡāl-ik, raddētē, raddēt fī-kē r-rūḡ min ^oždīd, yaenē naḡni taḡdīdan m̄n^qūl ħumoṣ hēk, yaenē l-waḡed byḡubb əl-'intimā' la-balad-u, εan-nā εādāt ^oktīr ḡəlwe...yōm əl-'arbaēa by^qūlō εann-u, mā ēīd əl-mazānīn taḡdīdan, byənḡakā εan ħumoṣ 'innu nḡār əl-'arbaēa 'ahl əl-ḡamāšni hinnī šaeb šāḡeb n̄kti, dayman byaḡkō nukat w byəmzahō w byəḡḡakō ktīr byḡubbō l-farfaši yaenē, εa-sabīl əl-misāl, 'anā l-yōm ēāyēš bi-qatar masalan w εand-ē šulli min ḡamāšni kull yōm əl-'arbaēa n̄žt̄ameē 'arbaēīn xamsīn wāḡed, 'aṭibbā', mḡandesīn, fī muwazzafīn εādīyyīn byižū byəžt̄ameō, byaḡkō, byəmbustō, bass li-hadaf ykūn fī žamaēa, social yaenē, bass ḡamāšni taḡdīdan, b̄t̄æaššō, byaḡkō, byəmbustō, l-ḡumšē 'awwal šē maerūf bi-basāṭṭ-u, basīt, mā εand-u ḡəšš, mā εand-u xidāē, muqaranatan bi-bēt əl-muḡāfazāt əš-šamī w l-ḡalabi w hādā, fī far^q bēn əs-sūrīyyīn, yaenē fī far^q bi-š-šax^oš, byḡall əš-šabb əl-ḡumšē m̄ḡyāf, 'absat min ḡēr-u w taṭalluē-u šwayy maḡdūd, mā εand-u...yaenē n-nazar əl-musta^qbaliyye, mā byfakker ^oktīr la-^quddām, mā fī εand-u nazar musta^qbaliyye, bass byḡall šabb kwayyəs, byḡubb əḡ-dēf w l-εazāyem, byḡubb yrūḡ byḡubb yəžī, masalan, naḡna sabēa 'əxwa šabāb w b̄ntēn 'axawāt, tisea, sətti minn-on mḡandesīn, seven engeneers⁹¹, bass yaenē kull-on dārsīn w musaqqafīn əl-ḡamdəllāḡ w kull-on waḡaē-on kwayyəs w wlād-on kamān t̄læēō mḡandesīn w 'aṭibbā' l-ḡamdəllāḡ, l-yōm b̄t̄wazzeō bi-duwal ^oktīr bi-l-εālam, 'ibtidā'an min rūmānyā, fī bi-'almānyā, fī-l-žazā'er, fī εan-nā bi-libnān, fī εand-ē nās bi-d-dōḡa, mawžūd bi-s-saeūdiyyi, yaenē fī ktīrīn m̄ntašrīn w bi-l-ēli šartē b̄t̄šūfē, εan ēli εam baḡkē, šār fī ktīr tanawwue,

⁹¹ The speaker sometimes repeated the same sentence in English since he is used to speak in English in Qatar.

bətlā^qē yaenē kull əd-daražāt əl- 'ižtimāēiyyi l-mawžūde fī-^yā, bass kull marra lamma mən^qēud naḥkē w nəžtemeē maē baēd-nā mənḥess kullayāt-nā min nəfs əl-mustawā w mən^qēud əa-nəfs ət-tāwle w nəfs əl-^qāede, nəmbəseṭ, bi-l-munāsabāt kullayāt-nā mažmūēīn w 'anā əllī əaməlt 'aktar, əāmel group administrator əa-l-what's lə-l-ēēli kull-ā 'anā, 'ēh, 'anā bšažžəe, kull yōm flān byaḥkē maē flān, naeref kull əl- 'axbār up to date w xāššatan baed əl-mašākel əllī šāret ean-nā bi-sūryā w bi-ḥumš taḥdīdan, mā ēād mənšūf baed-nā fa-hāyy wasīle tawāšol žəyyede bi-n-nisbit 'il-nā ktīr 'imbasaṭnā wa^qt šərnā naeref šū əam...yaenē mā kunnā, mā kān fī wasīlet 'ittišāl bēn baed-nā, gēr 'innu ktīr fī musāēadāt dəmn, yaenē fī wāḥed waḍəe-u māddī 'aḥsan min tānī, bətlā^qē wāḥed əam ysāēed ət-tānī, 'ayy 'in kān taēlīm w dirāse ḥada byšīl-u, byəbeat-u byəaml-u, hēk əam byšīr, mawžūde hāyy, kamān naḥna bəržəe ^qūl-lik bi-n-nisbi 'il-nā kullayāt-nā bətdall bi-ḥumoš taḥdīdan, ləssāt-ā mawžūdi hādi, w 'anā šaxšiyyan bḥubb 'innu l-'ax yəḥterem 'axū-h əl-'akbar, yəḥterem 'abū-h, la-halla^q, šawwarē 'əntē masalan, šū hiyyi 'innu l-wāḥed bydaxxən sīkāra ^quddām 'abū-h, masalan fī ean-nā dəmn əl-ēēli, 'anā baeref rgāl mā bydaxxən ^quddām 'abū-h əl-huwwi 'akbar minn-u, lā' mā bydaxxən, hāyy min bāb əl-'iḥtirām hādi⁹² w kuwayysi hādi...w gēr əllī hādā baḥkī-lik yāḥ ean ḥumoš ka-mužtamaē, fī eand-on tafāeol 'ižtimāēē ktīr ḥəlu, bi-l-munasābāt əl-bətsīr, yaenē masalan əz-zawāž, ən-nās lāzem taḥdar w tšārek bi-l-hadāyā w bi-kull šī, bi-l-əarādāt, byḥubbō yḥuṭṭō 'aḥsan mā eand-on w mumken hinni mā eand-on ^qktīr la-yḥuṭṭō bass bətlā^qī-^yon byḥuṭṭō, 'ayy šē eand-u yaenē bass byḥəss ḥāl-u 'innu dēf byḥuṭṭ, eareftē? w...it's ok! kamān bətlā^qē 'innu dayman 'innu ḥumoš mašgūli, dayman eand-ik munāsabe⁹³, maēzūmi ealā zawāž, maēzūmi ealā mūled, maēzūmi ealā wafāt, hādā kull-ā munāsabāt, w hādi bətlā^qē ḥāl-ik 'əntē əam təfāealē maē əl-mužtamaē, yaenē tətzakkarē d-dinyā, tətzakkarē l-'āxar, tətzakkarē kull šē w tətzakkarē l-fa^qīr w l-ḡanī, yaenē əl-mužtamaē mxallaṭ, 'anā hōnīk bi-ḥumoš taḥdīdan kull 'usbūe eand-ē našāt 'ižtimāēē, at least yaenē, kull 'usbūe fī našāt 'ižtimāēē lāzem tkūn mawžūd fī-^yon, hiyyi eazā', hiyyi žanāse, hiyyi ṭḥūr, mūled, hiyyi...bətlā^qē ḥattā n-nās mā byxuššū-nē mubašaratan, fī rfi^q-ē fī munāsabe hōnīk: yaḷla mənruḥ! w gēr əl-munāsabāt əl-ēādiyyi əllī hiyyi ka-'əeyād, masalan eīd əl-fiṭr, eīd əl-'adḥā, l-'əeyād əl-islāmiyyi lə-kbīri hāyy əl-mawžūde ean-nā naḥna hādi 'əl-ā rīḥa w ṭaemi xāšša 'innu l-'atfāl byəštəro tyāb ^qzdīdi, byənzlō byəaydō, byəmbuštō, l-'ahāle byəžtəmeō w

⁹² The speaker used *hādi* from CA *hādi*, while in HA is *hāyy* 'this'.

⁹³ The morpheme /-at/ here is pronounced /-e/ as borrowing from DA, in HA /-at/ becomes /-a/ or /-i/.

lāzem yzūrō baed-on, 'awwal lēle byrūhō εand əl-'abb w l-'umm law mawzūdīn, byrūhō εand əl-'ax lə-kbīr byzūrū-h, byətgaddō εand-u, εareftē? baedēn masalan lāzem əl-'uxt bətzūr axū-^wā 'aw l-'ax, byəaydō, byəaṭō baed-on flūs law hiyyi ramziyyi hiyyi, masalan εašrīn dūlār 'aw mīt dūlār, la-halla^q bətlā^qē byəaṭō, əl-'abb byəaṭē la-wlād-u, 'anā brūh wlād 'əxwāt-ē baēṭī-^yon, εīdiyyi, hēk nəfs əš-šē, ḥattā l-walad huwwi byəstannā l-ēīd la-yzīb w ylamm mašārē, min hādā xamsīn w min hādā...w hāyy š-šagli bətlā^qī-^yā ktīr ḥəlwe, w la-halla^q taetəber min əl-εādāt əl-žəyyidi εan-nā nahni hādi, byzī-ke ēīd mūlad ən-nabawē masalan, kull-ā munāsabāt dayman mawzūde w ḥattā εalā mustawā l-'usbūēī, nhār əḡ-ḡumēa bətlā^qē, nahna ḡ-ḡumēa taetabar zāy ēīd, ḥattā bi-ḥumš ən-nās kull-ā təlbes w təmbəseṭ w təṭlea sayyārīn, byəšwū, byāklō, byəšrabō, byəmbustū, kull wāhed εalā mustawā, l-ḡanī byrūh ḥafli kbīri w l-basīṭ byāxod εēlt-u mišwār, byəmsō bi-š-šāree, bysāwō šē, yaenē kull-u mabsūt, hēk ḥumoṣ!

I am Dr. M. from Homs. I left Homs in 1983 and studied medicine in Romania. I specialized in pediatrics and then went back to Homs. I worked as a doctor, and I lived there. I'm one of those who didn't really want to expatriate. I've been offered a lot of citizenships -Italian, Romanian, German- but I wanted to come back to my family so badly, to my mother, my sisters. I was very determined to marry a girl from my own district, my area. Our family upbringing is extremely important to us; it still influences us in choosing the right wife. We still value the Sharia traditions, including respect towards one's father, family, siblings, and communication with the family in general. Sometimes I like to visit my siblings, and they love to come and see me too. This is one of the things that influenced me most. I've lived away from Homs for more than 30 years, and I still feel the need to go back whenever I have the chance. I insist on it. When we live abroad, we usually stay away one or two years, and when we come back we feel like we regain the spirit of our country. That's precisely what happens in Homs, we say. Everybody loves to belong to their own country. We have many nice traditions in our town. People talk about Wednesdays as the Fool's Day. People in Homs are very funny: they tell jokes all the time and laugh a lot. They love to show off. For example, where I live in Qatar, I joined a group of people from Homs. We meet every Wednesday, 40 or 50 of us, all from different social classes; engineers, doctors and other workers meet up all together. We talk, we have fun, and

our aim is to spend some time together – just people from Homs. We have dinner together, and we have a chat, a laugh and so on.

Homs people are known first of all for their modesty; they're simple, they're not scheming and they don't cheat like they do in other regions like Damascus and Aleppo. There are some differences among Syrians, I mean among the people themselves. The Homsis is hospitable, more naive than people from other regions, and his vision of the future is a little limited. It's as if he doesn't have a perspective of their future; Homsis never think about what is going to happen next. It's like they don't perceive the future, but they are still very good people. They like receiving guests and giving and accepting invitations. There are seven brothers and two sisters: nine of us in total. Seven are engineers, but everyone has studied and is well-educated, thank God. They are all wealthy and so are their children, who are either engineers or doctors, thank God. Today they're all scattered around the world: Romania, Germany, Algeria, Lebanon, Doha, Saudi Arabia... There's variety among the families. You can find all kinds of generations and social classes, but every time we gather and talk, we all seem to be at the same level. We all sit at the same table, having fun; everyone's always invited to special occasions, and I'm the most proactive one. I'm the administrator of the family Whatsapp group, and I encourage that a lot; every day someone talks to someone else, so we're all up-to-date, especially about the problems in Syria and, more specifically, in Homs. We don't see each other anymore, so this is a precious means of communication for us. There wasn't a means of communication between us before, if not for helping each other within the family. For example, if some of us were better off materially than others, they would help in any way possible. For example, one of my sisters' sons wanted to complete his studies, so someone in the family gave him a hand by sending some money over or providing him with something he needed - it happens. Let me repeat that we, in Homs, have this spirit, and I love the fact that the younger brother still respects the older brother and the father today. We wouldn't dare smoke in front of our fathers. In my family, I know some people who don't smoke in front of their father or older people.

This is called 'respect'. What else can I say? This form of respect exists in Homs as a society, and it's a very nice social convention.

During special occasions, for example at weddings, people have to attend and bring presents. For the folk songs, they like to wear the best clothes they have. They might not have much, but they give whatever money they can as a present. The

important thing is that the people feel that all guests are giving something, no matter how much, you know? Homs is a very busy town; we're always celebrating something: weddings, *mūled*, funerals, that kind of stuff. You feel really involved in society. So you remember what the world around you is like - the people, the rich and the poor, the variety of people. Most of all in Homs, I join in at least one social activity every week. Every week I participate in a social event, even though I have nothing to do with it: a funeral, a circumcision, a *mūled* of people I don't know but I may be indirectly related to. If a friend goes, I go along. Among those frequent events, there are also other celebrations: the breaking of the fast, the sacrifice feast, the Islamic festivities and the Great Feast. The latter, in particular, has a taste and smell all its own. Children buy new clothes. They go down the streets greeting each other, having fun; the families gather and pay each other visits. The first evening they go to their parents' home, if they're still alive, and then to their brother's to have lunch together, you know? Then, for example, the sister has to visit her brother, or vice versa; they wish each other 'Happy Holidays', and they exchange money - a symbolic sum, for example 20 or 100 dollars. There's still this exchange of money gifts between siblings today. The father gives his children some money, and I give some to my nieces and nephews, like that. Kids wait for this celebration to save up some money too, \$50 from one, and then from another... It's one of the best traditions we still have today. Then we celebrate the feast of the prophet's birth, for example, plus all the festivities that happen regularly, even weekly. For example, Friday is like a holiday. On Fridays we all put on our best clothes in Homs. We have picnics, and barbecues; we eat, drink, and have fun, depending on your means, of course. Maybe the rich will go to a big party, and a normal person will take his whole family for a walk. They all have a walk together along the street - they do something together anyway. Everybody's happy; that's Homs.

5.2.27. Text 27

Speaker 25: S.K., female, 38 years old, degree, living in Qatar since 2015 and in Egypt from 2011 until 2014

marḥaba 'anā S., bḥubb 'aḥkī-lkon ean ḥāl-ē, 'anā dārsi 'adab əl-luḡa l-'inglīziyyi min žāmaeat əl-baet bi-ḥumoş w eām mawalīd-ē wāḥed w tmānīn w 'anā ḥāliyyan bi-d-dawḥa, bi-n-nisbi la-l-waḍa'e əl-ēām yaenē halla^q mustaqarrīn bi-d-dawḥa w

mfakkrīn nəržæ ea-sūryā la-təhdā l-'awḏāe, 'amma bi-n-nisbi šū bḥubb, bḥubb əl-makyāž ʔktīr ʔktīr w kamān bḥubb əš-šobbing bi-šəkʔl eām, bḥubb 'əštərē tyāb w bḥubb əl-mašī ktīr w bḥubb eaməl riyāḏa bass mā ea-tūl eand-ē waʔət, bḥubb əl-'aklāt, bḥubb əl-kebab w l-yabrāʔ, waraʔ əl-eəneb yaenē, w t-tabbūli, ḥummos, ət-tabbūli ktīr taybi. bḥubb əl-mašī bass hallaʔ bi-qaṭar...waʔət kunnā bi-mašʔr nətlæe kull yōm, mašawīr w raḥlāt w nāxod lə-wlād nitsallā w bdāwem bi-l-madrasi, 'anā bidarres la'ənnu, w 'ibn-ē yədroš maē-ē fašl 'awwal bi-nəfs əl-mabnā, baedēn 'izīnā hōn ea-qaṭar 'ixtələfet əl-ḥayāt milyōn w tmānīn daraži! mā fī... 'izā šāfō ḥadi māšē bi-ṭ-ṭarīʔ eālam bitzammər-lo 'ənnu 'hādā lēš māšē?' mā byšīr ḥadi yəməšē bi-ṭ-ṭarīʔ kull-on eand-on sayyārāt 'ašlan, lā fī 'išārat murūr wa-lā 'ənnu taēaddē, wallah 'išāret əl-murūr mamnūe 'əntē taēaddē, qaṭar byḥuṭṭō šabak la-l-mušāt li'annu mā yʔaṭṭē li'annu kull 'otōstrādāt murīea yaenē w earīḏa, sureat əs-sayyāra bətxawwef, mā xarž əl-wāḥed yimšē 'abadan, bidd-ē rūḥ mišwār bidd-ē waʔef ea-l-'ostrād w 'aššər la-taksi w 'əṭlæe maē-u, mā ḥadi byəməšē bi-š-šawāree, 'ašlan bi-š-šəf twaššəl daržet əl-ḥarāra la-l-səttīn w ruṭūbi kamān šē sabēin w 'izā eallaʔnā l-mukayyaf bi-l-ğurfī w ea-l-eāli tuzurbē min əš-šōb, mā fī ġər əl-bətkūn mukayyifi w ḥāyy bi-š-šiti, bi-š-šəf 'izā timšē min bab əl-bēt w tinzlē la-taḥʔt ea-l-bināy təṭlæē la-bāb əs-sayyāra bitkūnē zarəbtē ea-l-'āxer, 'ēh w hallaʔ eam dawwer ea-šugʔl mišān 'əštəḡel w 'ətsallā. 'ahl-ē bi-s-saeūdiyyi 'il-ē xamsi snīn mā šuft-on w kamān ḥattā 'izā ruḥt la-eand-on 'aktar min šahar mā fī-nē ḏall la-hōnīki li'annu 'əssā ž-žaww 'ašəab, hōnīk 'ašəab w 'ašəab, fōʔ əš-šōb w byəlbes əl-wāḥed niqāb w hēk...inšallah mnəržæ la-sūryā 'ēh w 'izā mā zabbṭet bi-sūryā bidd-ē rūḥ ea-'urobbā, 'anā eam fakker 'almānyā, 'ax-ē hōnīki, əṭ-ṭabīea ktīr ḥəlwi, qaṭar kull-ā marsūmi rəsʔm bass 'abrāž, yaenē ḥattā l-xaḏar mlazzʔīn, yaenē kull-u šināeē, yaenē ḥattā l-baḥar mā byəṭḥarrak! ean žadd mā byəṭḥarrak, mā məʔl əl-baḥar əl-mutawassəṭ, 'ēh...byʔūlō ḥəlwi 'almānyā, fī šār sūrīyyīn ʔktīr. bass hinnī šaeb bāred, bardīn, bass əl-manāzer eam šūf-ā bi-š-šūra šē byāxod əl-eaʔl, 'ax-ē ʔāl bi-'almānyā baed əs-sāea sətti mā fī muwāšalāt, xāleš...bass 'ēmat byfiʔō? əš-šubʔḥ, 'ēh bass yaenē ea-l-ʔālīli 'ax-ē ʔāl-lē taēē hādā žaww-ik, mā tʔeudē bi-l-bēt, la-l-mašī, lə-s-siyāḥa, l-manāzer šē btāxod əl-eaʔl, 'in kān ḥadāyeʔ, 'in kān ḥayawānāt, 'in kān baḥra, 'in kān manāzer ṭabīeyyi, 'ēh šē byāxod əl-eaʔl, bi-l-xalīz əl-ḥayāt money, bass mā fī-ke təšterē əs-saeādi. w fōʔ-ā 'innu mā ḥada fādē la-ḥada, yaenē ḥattā law taerraftē ea-nās žudad mā ḥada fādē la-ḥada, wēn naḥna kunnā bi-mašʔr? mnižē mən əd-dawām, mənām sēeatēn, mnəṭgaddā 'yaḷḷā ea-l-mišwār!', mənruḥ ea-l-maṭeam, mnākol būza, šawārma, falāfel,

mnəržæ šē sāea tisea yaḷḷā ea-ž-žirān, nəṭlae εand əž-žirān, nəshar la-s-sāea ṭnaeš bi-l-lēl εalā⁹⁴ ahwi šāy w dahak, mnənzal mənnām, mā bhəss bi-hādā l-wa⁹⁴ət, halla⁹⁴ kān 'ibn-ē yəṭlae maε-ē ea-ž-žirān, ēēli ḥumšiyi min əl-xāliidiyyi, kull yōm yəshar la-εand-on la-ḥattā ynāmō w byənzal εa-l-bēt, kān ykəffē s-sahra huwwi w 'anā bənzal!

Hi, I'm S., I'd like to talk to you about me. I was born in 1981, I studied English literature at the *al-baēt* University in Homs, and I currently live in Doha. Let's talk about my family: we live in Qatar and we're thinking about returning to Syria as soon as the situation improves. As for my tastes...I love putting on make up and going shopping. I like buying clothes, walking and working out, but I rarely have the time to do it. I like to eat Kebab, Yabraḡ⁹⁴, Warak Enab⁹⁵, Tabbuleh and Hommos. Tabbuleh is delicious.

I love going for walks, but now in Qatar... when we lived in Egypt we used to go out every single day: we loved going for walks and excursions. We enjoyed ourselves with the kids and I used to work at school, because I'm a teacher, and my son would study with me in the same building originally. Then we came to Qatar and our lives have changed a lot! There isn't any... I mean, if you see someone walking in the streets, the drivers honk at them, as if to say 'Where do you think you're going?' You can't walk in the street; everybody drives, but there aren't any traffic lights at zebra crossings. That's it, it's strictly forbidden to cross the road at the traffic lights in Qatar. They put some obstacles there so that pedestrians can't cross, because the roads are wide and drivers go terribly fast along them. There's no way you can cross those roads, not at all. If I need to walk somewhere, I'd better stop and call a taxi if I want to keep going, because you can't go on foot. In summer, the temperature can hit 60°C and humidity can increase to 70%, so even though you turn the air conditioning on full, you're still sweating at home. The only thing to do is to go to the air-conditioned malls... in winter! In summer, if you walk from your house door to the ground floor of your building, you'll get totally drenched in sweat once you've covered the stretch from the main gate to your car.

You know, now I'm looking for a job because I need to take my mind off things. My parents live in Saudi Arabia, and I haven't seen them for five years but if I visited them for a month I couldn't cope with staying there that long. The weather is worse

⁹⁴ Stuffed grape leaves.

⁹⁵ Stuffed grape leaves with rice and spices.

there; it's way more difficult, because you have to wear the niqāb, despite the heat.

I wish I could return to Syria, for God's sake, and if the situation doesn't get better in Syria, I'll most likely go to Europe. I'm thinking about moving to Germany, because my brother lives there and he says nature is amazing there. In Qatar everything looks sketched, it's all fake. All you see is skyscrapers everywhere, and the green areas look artificial. Nothing's real; the sea itself doesn't move! It really doesn't move; it's not like the Mediterranean Sea. They say Germany is neat, and there are many Syrians there by now. But Germans are cold people, even though the landscapes I see in the pictures are stunning. My brother told me that after 6.00 pm there's no more public transport. Do you know when they get up? Very early in the morning! My brother told me: 'You should at least come and visit me; this is the right place for you. Believe me, you would never stay at home; you can go for walks anywhere and it's the perfect place for tourists. You'll just love the landscape: gardens, animals, lakes, the nature itself; everything's so beautiful. In the Gulf, you can only find money, but money can't buy us happiness. What's more, nobody's got any free time; I mean, even though you get to know somebody, they're never free. Guess what we used to do in Egypt? We used to return home, sleep a couple of hours, have a quick lunch and then we'd be like: 'Let's go for a walk!' We'd go to the restaurant, have an ice cream, šawārmā, falāfel, and we'd get back home at around 9.00 pm and then once more we'd be like: 'Let's go to our neighbours!' We'd stay up until midnight drinking coffee, having a laugh, then we'd go back home to sleep. You never realized that time was actually flying. My son used to come with me to the neighbours, a Homsī family, from Khalidiyyi, and every day he stayed there until really late, until he was so tired he'd come back home. Then he'd go downstairs and stay up late again, while I went to bed!

5.2.28. Text 28

Speaker 26: Y.M., female, 68 years old, high school, living in UAE since 2011

kīf-ik? šū 'axbār-kon? kīf-ā l-māmā w l-ḥāḥā w l-earīs əl-ḥəlu? earīs-ik ḥəlu? tawīl hēk w bḥəbb-ik 'akīd... 'əntē dārsi earabē kamān w eayši bi- 'itālyā? māšaḷḷah, māšaḷḷah yəxzer əl-ēn... min zamān kənnet 'uxt-ē, mart 'ibrahīm, ḍallet bi-ḥumş šē eaşra snīn w mā btaeref kilmi earabē, kull-u bi-l- 'inglizē, kull-u bi-l- 'amērkē w rāhet la-hōnīki rabbet banāt-ā 'amērkā w wlād-ā 'amērkā, 'abadan, mḥāfza ealā 'amērkā, bənt-ā bəḥubb əl-earabē bass mā ḥada byə^qder eallem-ā, mā-n-ā mēl, mā-n-ā mēl

mustaḥīl, bass 'antē tənɛaddē ɛarabiyyi, 'abū-ke l-ḥāḥā ɛarabē, lekan tənɛaddē ɛarabiyyi 'antē mā 'ažnabiyyi.

mā šuftī-^yā hāyy Jennifer bi-l-hāyy...šū-smu hāyy? ɛa-t-tilfīzyūn, Jennifer əl-'amrīkiyyi mā šuftī-^yā? Jennifer, Jennifer hāyy əllī btəṭlae bi-l-musal...lā' bi-l-barnāmež ^ənhār əs-səb^ət, lek lēš mā taerfī-^yā? rubḥet, 'axdet əl-'ūla, ɛaṭū-^wā žā'yzi, mā btaḥkē ɛarabē, mā təfham wa-lā kilmi bi-l-ɛarabē bass ḥāfzi ɛa-l-'aḡānē, bass bəṭḡannī, bəṭḡannī la-'umm kalsūm, bəṭḡannī la-'asmahān, waḷḷah ḥəlu, ḥəlu l-barnāmež, kull-u 'aḡānī, halla^q masalan byɛamlū-lik mə^əl šrīt, bəṭwa^qfē, bəṭḥuṭṭē 'īd-ik ɛa-l-'āli w tšūfē šū byəṭlea-lik, 'ayya muṭreb bidd-ik tə^qəldī-h, bidd-ik tə^qəldī-h bi-šōt-u, bi-šakl-u, bi-ḥarakāt-u, bi-kəza...huwwi bi-l-'aṣəl barnāmež 'ažnabē, l-ɛarab šāṭrīn ɛamma yə^qəldō mazbūṭ, yaenē šē ḥəlu, ɛand-on ɛabqarīyye māšallāh w 'antē ɛand-ik 'ɛabqariyyi b-əl-luḡa l-ɛarabiyyi, hiyyi bithubb-ā, 'aḥsan min-nā ɛam taḥkē w baedēn əl-ḥumṣē w š-šāmē w l-fuṣḥā kull-u ɛarabiyyi. 'anā 'il-ē tlit 'snīn b-əl-'imarāt, ruḥt minn-on šahrēn w rzaet raddēt, bass ruḥt minn-on šahrēn halla^q la-ramadān byšīrō tlit sanawāt, 'ēh ^qaddēs 'il-ē mā nzəlt? yaenē hōnē ktīr mətdāy^qīn bi-šarāḥa, mətdāy^qīn ^əktīr ɛalā-balad-nā ɛalā waḡae-nā, mā saḥ^əl ^əbnōb, 'ēh...šū bidd-nā naemel, ɛam t^qūl-lī sawsan ^əktīr šōb ɛand-on bi-ḥumoṣ, šōb 'ēh waḷḷah, ^qālet-lē ktīr šōb, ^qulnā-lā taēē šūfē hōn əš-šōb, halla^q 'antē ɛand-kon šōb w ruṭūbi wallā bass šōb? 'āh mətel hōn maenāt-ā, bass hōn 'ašwab w 'əssā mā šuftē šē, halla^q baed šahar tfarražē hōn, mā btə^qdrē təṭlaeē la-barra wa-lā tətnaffasē, ka'ənn-ik fāyti ɛalā fur^ən!

How are you? How's everything? How's your mother? And your father? And your handsome groom? Is your husband actually handsome? Is he tall? He must really love you... have you studied Arabic, too? Do you live in Italy as well? God bless you. A long time ago, my sister's sister-in-law, Ibrahim's wife, lived in Homs. She stayed there for around 10 years, without being able to speak any Arabic: she spoke in English the whole time, American English. Then she moved away and raised her kids the American way, that's it. She's so into America. Her daughter loves Arabic, but nobody's there to teach her. She's not going to capitulate, she doesn't seem she's going to give up, but you're considered Arab, your father is Arab, that's it, you're (addressing to me) not considered a foreigner.

Haven't you seen that Jennifer, on... what's that show called? On TV, the American woman, do you know her? Jennifer! Jennifer! In the soap oper...no, no I mean on Saturday's show; how could you not see her? She won, first place, she got a prize, she

doesn't even speak Arabic, not a word, but she learnt the songs by heart and she sings kalthum and asmahān. The show's really nice, songs all through it; there's like a video, you get in front of it, you put your hand on the machine and you wait to see what happens. No matter what singer is selected, you have to impersonate them, you have to be able to reproduce their voice, their looks, their movements and so on... the original format is foreign, but Arabs are good at it: they're great impersonators - they're talented. (talking about the interviewer) She has a flair for Arabic - she likes it - she speaks it better than us. What's more, it's Homs Arabic, the Damascus one... but in the end it's all Arabic.

I've been living in the Emirates for three years; I went away for just two months, then I came back. I haven't left for three years now, so how long is it since I returned to my country? Three years at Ramadan. I'm so fed up. The whole situation is so unbearable; it's not easy at all, you know, what are we supposed to do? Suzān told me that in Homs it's really hot, you know, very hot, so we think she hasn't got a clue about the temperatures we have here! For example, is your weather humid and hot or just hot? Oh, so just like here, but here's even hotter, it's hard to believe. You'll feel the difference in a month. You can't even go outside and breathe; it's like being put inside an oven!

5.2.29. Text 29

Speaker 27: M.K., male, 59 years old, degree, living in Saudi Arabia since 1990 but he left Homs when he was 16 years old.

'anā t̄læet min ħumoş eumr-ī şəttæšar sini w nuşş, z̄ḡīr, kun²t læssā 'awwal li-l-bakalōryā, yaenē...ət-tālet sānawe, bi-šahar wāhed w ruħt ea-l-'urdon w baed mā ruħt ea-l-'urdon ⁴aed²t bi-l-'urdon w s̄āfart min əl-'urdon la-maş²r, ⁴aed²t bi-maş²r sini, baed-ā nzəlt...ħāwəlt 'āxod əl-bakalōryā, mā n̄gəħt bi-maş²r li'annu k̄ān f̄ādē li-l-'ixtibār tlitt ¹šhūr bass w bi-maş²r manāheğ ər-riyādiyyāt xam²s kutob, l-'inglīzē ktābēn, yaenē minhağ d̄axm, 'əssā 'aktār min manāheğ sūryā, šuftē manhağ sūryā yaenē ktīr...kbīr w şaəb. fa-nzəlt 'anā min maş²r, ruħt ea-l-'urdon marra t̄ānī, ⁴aett bi-l-'urdon, 'axatt əl-bakalōryā bi-l-'urdon w ruħ²t ea-l-eirāq, darast əl-ğāmaea bi-ğāmaet əl-mūşəl, 'idāret 'aemāl, 'ēh, fa-txarrağt min əl-eirāq bi-sint 'alf w tisea miyyi tmāna w tmānīn bi-taqdīr ġəyyed ġiddan w baed-ā ruħt ea-s-saeūdiyyi. fī s-saeūdiyyi...dawwart ealā šug²l bi-s-saeūdiyyi, 'awwal ⁴aed²t bi-s-saeūdiyyi 'arbaea

šhūr w tānī marra ⁹aett *hawālē šahar haṣalt ealā šuġ^l, muḥāseb la-mašrūe* ⁹aṣr *əl-*
'amīr əs-sultān bi-madīna, fa-'ištāġalt fī mašrūe ⁹aṣr *əl-'amīr əs-sultān fī-madīna*
sabae šhūr w rġeet, kān xallašnā šuġ^l, kān huwwi bi-'āxer taštībāt-u w rġeet w ⁹aett
bi-ġaddi šē šahar, ṭalabō min-nē 'innē kəmmel šuġ^l bi-manṭa⁹a beīdi w 'anā kunt
xāteb bidd-ē 'itzawwaġ, fa-ruḥ²t ⁹addem²t *'istiqālt-ī 'anā, 'ālū-lē mnaeīt-k sakan w*
sayyāra w hādā, 'ulti-llon lā', 'anā bidd-ē t⁹ġġawwaz mā bidd-ē 'aṭlae min ġaddi, fa-
b⁹īt bi-ġaddi, dawwart ealā šuġ^l, 'ištāġalt dawāmēn w baed hawālē 'usbūeēn tlāti
'iġā-nē earḍ min madrasi 'innē 'əmsek lə-ḥsābāt eand-ā fa-ruḥt 'ištāġalt bi-ha-l-
madāres bi-rāteb 'arbaeat 'alāf⁹ryāl w tarakt wazīfī waḥdi min ət-tentēn li'annu l-
madrasi dawām-ā min əs-sāea sabae əṣ-ṣub⁹ḥ la-s-sāea tlāti 'illa tult w kunt 'ištāġalt
bi-d-dawām ət-tāni min əs-sāea 'arbaea w nuṣṣ la-s-sāea tmāni w nuṣṣ, fa-'ištāġalt bi-
hāyy əl-wazīftēn hadōlē hawālē 'arbae snīn. baed sintēn 'anā ṭalabt ziyādet rāteb bi-l-
madrasi w ṣār rātb-ī bi-'arbaea w nuṣṣ, bi-l-mu'assasi ṭalabt minn-ā ziyādet rāteb
min 'alfēn⁹ryāl la-tliit 'alāf⁹ryāl, mā wa⁹⁹afū-lē, 'umt tarakt əš-šūġ^l w ruḥt fataḥt
maḥallāt, lā', 'ab⁹l mā fataḥt maḥallāt əl-malābes, rəġeū 'ālū-lē lā' rġae ea-š-šūġ^l w
nzawwed-lak, naemel-lak ər-rāteb bi-tlit 'alāf, bass əd-dawām kān⁹ktīr ṣaeb, yaenē
kān eand-ē dawām tmint sāeāt bi-l-madrasi w 'arbae sāeāt baed əḍ-ḍuh⁹r w 'aḥyānan
'āxod šuġ^l bištāġl-u b-əl-bēt yōm əl-xamīs w l-ġumēa li'annu l-madrasi mā fī-^yā
dawām yōm əl-xamīs baed əḍ-ḍuh⁹r w l-ġumēa euṭli. baed-ā tarakt əš-šūġ^l 'anā
w'axatt rās māl-ē w fataḥt maḥall malābes, ṣərt 'ištāġel bi-fasāfīn əs-sahra w tayōrāt,
fataḥt maḥall w sawēt-u baedēn tliit maḥallāt, faraeēn bi-s-sū⁹ w farae bi-š-šāree ər-
ra'īsi.

I left Homs when I was 16 - I was very young - it was long before my diploma: let's say in the third year of high school - it was in January. I moved to Jordan, and after living for a while in Jordan, I left for Egypt. I stayed in Egypt for one year, where I was trying to get my diploma, but it didn't work out. There were only three months left to prepare for my exams, and in Egypt the teaching syllabus for high school specializing in Science includes five books of Mathematics and two books for English. A huge syllabus. A lot more than the Syrian teaching syllabus - you know how it is there, don't you? Huge and complicated. So I left Egypt and moved back to Jordan. I stayed in Jordan, got my diploma there and then moved to Iraq. I studied Business Management at Mosul University and got my degree in 1988, with a 'very good' mark. Then I moved out to Saudi Arabia.

In Saudi Arabia, I started looking for a job. I stayed there four months the first time. The second time I stayed a little longer and after about a month I found a job as an accountant for the Sultan's palace project in Medina, and I worked for him in Medina. I came back after seven months, because the project was almost over. I returned to Jeddah and I stayed there for about a month. They asked me to finish a job in a remote region, but I was engaged, and I wanted to get married, so I resigned since I didn't want to live Jeddah. They tried to convince me with: 'We'll give you a house, a car...' but I refused. I told them I wanted to get married and I didn't want to leave Jeddah.

So I remained in Jeddah and I looked for a new job. I was working two jobs and after about two or three weeks I got an offer from a school as an accountant. So I started working for them with a salary of 4,000 riyals (SAR). Then I left one of the two other jobs that I had, as the job at the school was from 6.00 am to 2.45 pm. My second job was then from 4.30 pm to 8.30 pm. I continued this way for four years. After about two years, I asked for a pay rise at the school, so my salary became 4,500 SAR. I also asked for a pay rise at my second job, but they didn't accept. They were paying me 2,000 SAR, so I quit my second job and before starting my business in the clothing field, they offered me a salary of 3,000 SAR. This time I didn't accept, because I realized that working in shifts was very hard: I was working eight hours at the school plus four hours in the afternoon and sometimes I also took some work home on Thursdays because it was my afternoon off and on Fridays because it was a holiday.

After I quit, I got my shares and I opened a clothes shop. I started selling evening dresses and suits. At first I only had one shop, but now I own three clothes shops: two branches by the street market and one on the main street.

5.2.30. Texts 30

*kānō^q āēdīn^ʔ tnēn ġamb baēd w l-bāb beīd w ġamb-u fīš əl-kahrabā yaenē d-ḍaww, fa-
^qāl-lu wāhed la-t-tāne...^qāl-lu:*

halla^q min hōn la-l-bāb fī-k tġīb-ā bi-tlit xaṭwāt?

^qāl-lu: 'ēh fī-nē!

^qāl-lu: ṭayyeb warġīnē la-šū:f! w hadāk^q ām ḥāl-u wāhed, tnēn, tlāti!

^qāl-lu: šu^ft?!

⁹āl-lu: 'ēh tfē d-daww min ġamb-ak!

Two people are sitting⁹⁶ beside each other. The door and the light switch beside it are on the other side of the room.

One man says to the other: 'Can you get to the door in 3 steps?'

The other one replies: 'Sure I can.'

'Ok, show me what you can do.'

He stands up: one step, two steps, three steps and he finally gets to the door.

'See?' he says.

'Well done! Now turn off the light!'

⁹āl lēš ħumṣē byħuṭṭ xamsi lērāt bi-l-frīzār? mišān ḍall xaḍra! hiyyi lōn-ā 'axḍar əl-xamsi lērāt, mišān mā bəṭṣīr ṣafra!

Do you know why a Homsis puts five lira notes in the freezer? To keep them green! (five liras notes are green and they risk becoming yellowish over time).

⁹tnēn ħamāsni, kān fī hāyy əl-baṣāt əd-dorēn, rāhō, hāyy mā mawġūdi bi-ħumṣ wa-lā bi-sūryā, kān mawġūdi bi-London, fa-rāhō rəkbū w wāhed rəkeb əl-bāṣ min taḥ²t w wāhed rəkeb min fō⁹, fa-baəd rubaē sāea nadā-lu hādā əllī min fō⁹, ⁹āl-lu: yā 'abū aḥmed...!

⁹āl-lu: šū?

⁹āl-lu: wēn ṣurtū 'əntō?

⁹āl-lu: wallahi naḥni ṣurnā ⁹aṭṭeīn šē xamsi kilometer, 'əntō?'

⁹āl-lu: naḥni əam nəstannā š-šofēr!

Two Homsis get on a double-decker bus, which is not a common thing either in Homs or in Syria - it is in cities like London – anyway, they get on, and they decide to split up: one downstairs and the other upstairs, and after 15 minutes the one upstairs called to his friend:

'Abū Ahmad!' said the one downstairs.

'What's up?'

⁹⁶ Some jokes are translated into English using the Simple Present even though in the Homs Arabic version the speaker talked in the past tense because it makes the joke more meaningful.

'Where have you been? We've travelled about 5 kilometres, and you?'

'We're waiting for the driver!'

fī wāḥed ḥumṣē rāḥ ealā ḥamā fa-lā^qā bi-ḥamā nās eam təštəḡel eam trakkəb ən-nās ealā ktāf-ā w yeubrō l-εāṣē min ʔaraf la-ʔaraf, waḷḷahi hā-l-ḥumṣē kayyaf ^qāl: 'waḷḷah la- 'arkab ealā hā-l-ḥamwē mišān yiwaṣṣəl-nē', fa-nəzel rəkəb ealā ktāf əl-ḥamwē w lammā wuṣlū ^qāl-lu:

'ənti taeref lēš 'anā rkəbt ealā ktāf-ak?

^qāl-lu: lēš?

^qāl-lu: mišān y^qūlō ḥumṣē rəkəb ealā ḥamwē!

^qāl-lu: lək 'anā ḥumṣē ḡāyy 'ištəḡel hōn!

A Homsy guy went to Hama and found out that people there used to let others ride on their shoulders so they could cross from one river bank (River Orontes) to the other. He found it funny and he decided to try a ride on a Hamawi's shoulders. Once they were done, the Homsy asked the other: 'Do you know why I took a ride on your shoulders?'

He answered: 'No, why?'

'I did this so people can say that a Homsy rode on a Hamawi's shoulders,' explained the Homsy.

The other replied: 'Well, actually I am a Homsy who came to work here '!'

ḥumṣē rāḡee ealā bēt-u b-əl-lēl, ḥumṣē kān w sakrān, bi- 'āxar əl-lēl, fa-εam yḥuṭṭ əl-muftāḥ, mā eam yədxol, mā yaeref yḥuṭṭ əl-muftāḥ, fa-ʔəleet mart-u šāfet-u mə-l-šubbāk, ^qālet-lu:

lək yā 'abū šāleḥ, šū nəsyān əl-muftāḥ, zəttə-llak yāḥ əl-muftāḥ?

^qāl: lā', əl-muftāḥ mae-ē bass zəttī-lē l-buxš!

A Homsy guy is walking back home. He's drunk. It's dark and he can't unlock the front door. His wife's watching him from the window.

'Did you forget your keys? Shall I throw mine down to you?'

He replies: 'I do have my keys. Just throw me the keyhole!'

5.2.31. Texts 31

Speaker 28: M.K., male, 59 years old, degree, living in Italy since 1983

fī wāḥed ḥumṣē mharrəb bandōra, wa⁹⁹afū-h ɛa-l-gamārek sa'alū-h 'wēn rāyeh min wēn ḡāy, rāyeh ɛa-ḥumoṣ w mā-dra šū...xalaṣ mā mənḥakkī-k šē 'anti ḥumṣē, mišān hēk trūk kull l-bandōrāt, bidd-ak tākol əl-bandōrāt', ballaš yākol banadōra 'Aḷlah yaēin-ak ya saēid', byākol banadōra tānī 'Aḷlah yaēin-ak ya saēid',

⁹āl-lū: lək ɛam tākol bandōra šū bidd-ak min saēid?

⁹āl-lon: hādā rfi⁹ē ḡāyy ḡāyeb warā-yē sayyāret flefli ḥamra!

A Homsī guy used to contraband tomatoes. One time he was stopped at Customs and was asked: 'Where are you going? Where do you come from? Are you going to Homs or where? This time we'll let you go because you are Homsī, but you'll have to leave without the tomatoes so you'll have to eat them!'. The Homsī started eating and after the first tomato he said 'May God help you, Said!' and again for the second tomato, 'May God help you, Said!'.

The officers commented: 'You're eating tomatoes - what does Said have to do with them?!' The guy answered: 'He's a friend of mine who's coming after me with a heavy load of chili peppers!'

fī wāḥed ḥumṣē ⁹āēed huwwi w mart-u, ⁹ālet-lu:

mā baeref lēš ən-nās byaḥkō dayman ɛalē-nā, ⁹āl-lā:

li'annu rās-ik yābes mi⁹l ha-ṭ-ṭāwli! (w da⁹⁹ ɛa-ṭ-ṭāwli bum bum),

⁹ālet-lu: 'uf 'uf mīn ɛam ydu⁹⁹?

⁹āl-lā: lā' xallī-ke ⁹āēdi 'anā b⁹ūm 'iftaḥ!

A Homsī couple is sitting together.

She asks him: 'why do people always talk about us?'

He answers: 'because your head is as hard as this table⁹⁷ and he knocks on the table – knock! knock!'

She reacts: 'Oh boy! Who's knocking on the door?'

He replies: 'Don't worry, I'll get it!'

⁹⁷ Idiom for saying 'you're very stubborn.'

ḥumṣē ēām ydawwer εa-šug⁹⁸l rāḥ yaemel muqābali maε šāheb əl-εamal, ⁹āedō w εağab-ū⁹⁸ w sa''al-ū w ġāwab, kān ⁹ktīr mnīḥ, əl-ḥumṣē ⁹āl-lu:

mumken 'əs'al-ak ⁹addēš əl-maεāš?

⁹āl-lu: 'awwal mā bətballeš naεī-k sətt miyyi w bæd šē šahrēn naεī-k 'alf.

l-ḥumṣē ⁹āl-lu: xalaş ləkan brūḥ 'ərğae bædēn!

A Homsī was looking for a job and he went to have an interview with the boss. They sat down, the boss asked him some questions and he replied and it was going well; then the Homsī asked him:

'May I ask you how much the salary is?'

He said: 'As soon as you start we'll give you 600 lira, but after two months we'll give you 1000 lira'.

So the Homsī said: 'well, I'll be back later, then!'

ḥumṣē 'iḥtara⁹ dukkān-u, sa'alū-h: 'inšāllāh mā xasərt ⁹ktīr?

⁹āl: lā...kunt εāmel tanzīlāt!

A Homsī's store burned down.

Some people asked him: 'inshallah, you didn't lose very much, did you?'

He answered: 'no...I was having a sale!'

⁹⁸ Referring to 'him', sometimes instead of the suffixed *-h* it is commonly heard a long vowel *ū*.

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