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## COMMUNICATIVE FUNCTION AND PRONOMINAL VARIATION IN BAHRAINI ARABIC

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**1.0. Introduction.** The sociolinguistic situation in Bahrain, in which dialectal differences correlate closely with sectarian allegiance (cf. Blanc's 1964 study of Baghdad) has been extensively described in a number of recent studies (Holes 1980-86, Prochazka 1981, Al-Tajir 1982). This paper attempts to show that variation in the phonological form of the second person enclitic pronouns in Bahraini Arabic (BA) depends in the first place on whether the speaker is referring to his interlocutor in "solidary," "ritual" or "deictic" mode (see below for the explanation of these terms). Subordinate to this primary distinction between different modes of reference, variation in deictic reference, in particular, seems to be related to changes in the speaker's communicative intent: whether, for example, he is trying to persuade or cajole the other speaker, telling him a story, posing him a riddle, telling him a joke, etc. Only by classifying interpersonal reference and communicative intent in this way does it seem possible to explain the at first sight random switching between alternative phonological realizations of the same enclitic pronominal morphemes. As we shall see, the relative imperviousness of solidary and ritual pronoun use to variation has to do with the non-local, community-wide values which such modes of reference represent, while variation in deictic usage is one of a number of ways in which speakers can signal changes in the moment-by-moment negotiation of their communicative intent (see Brown and Levinson 1979).

**1.1. Solidary reference.** What is referred to in this paper as solidary reference has been described in Yassin's (1977) paper on bi-polar address forms in Kuwait. The system he outlines also applies to all Arabic-speaking speech communities in Bahrain, with a few minor differences. By **solidary reference** is meant the use of dyadic formulaic expressions which make explicit the status relationship which interlocutors perceive to exist between them. There are a number of sub-systems of solidary reference, but the one with which this paper is concerned involves the exchange of formulae which have the following general structure:

**Vocative particle + kinship term + second person pronoun enclitic**

The rule for the correct use of such expressions is that the speaker chooses the kinship term which describes what he perceives as his/her relationship with the interlocutor and suffixes to it a pronoun enclitic which is appropriate to the interlocu-

tor's sex. The commonest kinship terms employed are brother, sister, mother, father, paternal uncle and kinsman, and although speakers who have these blood relationships to each other do make use of this kind of solidary reference, it is more common to hear it being used in a metaphorical sense. If, for example, a speaker sees that he is older than an interlocutor he is free to use a solidary formula which a father would use to a son; if the younger man returns the response of a son, he has explicitly accepted that he is talking to a generational (and, in an Arab society, status) superior. The metaphorical use of such solidary formulae is often a tactic used to lend force to an argument (superior-inferior), to express support or empathy (peer-peer), or group solidarity between speakers when discussing matters of general communal interest (kinsman-kinsman). Some examples will make this clear:

Older man: 9aTni finja:l gahwa **yabu:k**  
Give me a cup of coffee oh your father!  
 Younger man: laHZa yubba  
Just a minute, dad!

In this example the formula /yabu:k/ consists of the particle /ya/ oh, /bu:/- father and -/k/ 2nd person masculine singular enclitic. The young man's reply is a form of address normally used by children to their fathers. Here the use is metaphorical, and exemplifies a structurally asymmetrical exchange which expresses an asymmetrical (superior-inferior) relationship.

Woman: yaLLah bina **yaxtič** 'imšay daffatič!  
Come on. Oh your sister, get a move on!  
 Same-age woman: la tista9ylay **yaxtič** šda9wa 9a:d?!  
Why be in such a hurry, oh your sister?

Here, /yaxtič/ has the structure /ya/ + /xt/- sister followed by -/č/ 2nd person feminine singular enclitic. Because the two women are generational peers, they use a structurally symmetrical (peer-peer) form of solidary exchange. The tone is one of polite chivying.

Shi'i villager A: il-KiSi:S **yanasi:bək** ra:Hat  
The stories, oh your kinsman, have gone.  
 Shi'i villager B: we:n ra:Hat?  
Gone where?  
 A: ma dri, šammarat u ra:Hat  
I don't know, they just upped and went.  
 B: la **yanasi:bək** 9aTna qiSSa waHda!  
Go on, oh your kinsman, give us just one!

Here, speaker A was an illiterate old Shi'i man from the village of Buri, and B was a somewhat younger, educated Shi'i from Bani-Jamra who worked at the government agricultural extension unit

and who was concluding an official visit to the first man with a cup of coffee and a general chat. Speaker B was at this point trying to persuade A to tell some stories about life in the pre-oil era of Bahrain's history. The use of /yanasi:bək/ by both parties emphasizes their shared confessional allegiance and is appropriate in talk about matters which relate to this shared religio-social background. The use of /yabu:k/ by speaker A, which could have occurred given the age difference between the speakers (and did, in fact, at other points in the conversation), would have been interpreted as emphasizing speaker A's age superiority over speaker B - an odd conversational move in these circumstances. Solidary formulae are used to highlight aspects of the relationship between interlocutors which are relevant to topic being discussed, or which have a bearing on the right of the interlocutors to ask the other to perform some action.

In the examples, the two parts of the dyadic exchanges occur in consecutive turns in the conversation, but this is perhaps the exception rather than the rule. One speaker may make heavier use of his part than his interlocutor, often as a means of filling hesitation pauses. However, it seems to be the case that any pair of randomly selected speakers will know automatically which dyadic exchanges are possible and appropriate for them. Brown and Levinson's (1979:295-7) data on the relational nature of T/V usage in a Tamil village provide an interesting parallel to the solidary system outlined here.

**1.2. Ritual reference.** Like solidary reference, ritual reference routinely oils the wheels of casual BA conversation. This type of reference involves speakers in obligatory conversational episodes such as greeting, thanking, and congratulating each other, wishing each other well (cf. Ferguson 1967; Piamenta 1979). Oaths and curses also have a similar structure. There is practically no aspect of a speaker's life which cannot be encapsulated within a ritual formula or exchange which normally involves the invocation of the deity /aLLa:h/. Here are some examples from BA:

Government agricultural adviser to peasant farmer at the end of a working visit and his reply:

- A: **agna:k aLLah ya: Hajji**  
**May god make you wealthy, Hajji!**  
 B: **sallamk aLLah**  
**God save you!**

Woman to another woman who had done her the favor of reminding her of a name she had forgotten:

- A: **il madrasa illi maə9arf isimha...**  
**The school whose name I don't know...**  
 B: **il hida:ya?**  
**Al-Hidaya (School)?**  
 A: **il hida:ya! bayyaḌ aLLah we:hič!**  
**Al-Hidaya! May God whiten your face!!**

A mother to her naughty son: **aLLah yigarbilk!**  
**May God confuse you!**

These expressions normally consist of a factitive verb with **God** as its subject and a second person pronominal enclitic suffixed to the verb or to its object. As with solidary exchanges, most of these ritual expressions demand a set response, as for example when thanking someone for a service rendered:

A: **raHim aLLah wa:lide:k**  
**God have mercy on your parents!**  
 B: **u inta wa:lide:k**  
**And on yours.**

**1.3. Deictic reference.** By deictic reference is meant unmarked second person reference (i.e., non-ritual and non-solidary) when the interlocutor is being referred to as the object, recipient or beneficiary of some present, past or future action or state of affairs. Examples:

ana ba:gu:l lik šay wa:Hid...  
I'll tell you something...  
 Subbu **le:čim** la?!  
Pour some coffee for yourselves, why don't you?!  
 we:n **abu:k?**  
Where's your father?

Some examples from actual data will illustrate the co-occurrence of the three types of pronominal reference in spontaneous speech:

bada't Haya:ti, **yaxwayyik**, fil arba9i:na:t... u lo git lik  
 iS-Sidg, **sallamk aLLah**  
I began my life, oh your little brother, in the 40's... and  
if I were to tell you the truth, God save you...

A: 9idna ašga:l... 'ajjar lik **aLLah Hajji**  
We've got work to do... God grant you reward, Hajji!  
 B: ašga:layšo 9indač **yaxu:k?**! ha:dinta taTrid fi **mo:trič!**  
What work d'you have, oh your brother? You just run  
around in that car of yours!

In the next to last example above, the speaker is a Shi'i dialect comedian being interviewed by a (Sunni) radio presenter of roughly the same age. He establishes this by the use of a solidary formula **brother** and the diminutive form adds a feeling of closeness (elder-brother/younger-brother invoked). He then begins the story of his life with a deictic reference /lo git lik/ to the presenter, and the ritual formula /sallamk aLLah/ is used here as a gap-filler while he organizes his thoughts. In the last example, speaker A, an agricultural extension worker, is con-

cluding a visit to an ex-farmer. The ritual phrase /'ajjar lik aLLah/ is used in this case to signal leave-taking. B responds by gently scoffing at the claim that A does any work at all. He makes two deictic references to speaker A, using the (in his dialect) masculine enclitic -/č/, and one solidary reference /ya:xu:k/.

Having illustrated briefly the three distinct types of pronominal reference in BA, we now turn to the question of how variation in the phonological form of the enclitic seems to function as a signal of changing communicative intent. The discussion which follows is based on a survey of a large corpus of natural conversational text and on the close analysis of a few texts which were particularly interesting from the point of view of the changes which occurred in the speech roles of the participants.

2.1. Sect, locale and dialect type. Previous studies of BA (e.g., inter alia, Holes 1983a) have shown that two different types of dialect coexist in Bahrain, one of which has a number of sub-variants. The first type, and until recently the best documented (henceforth, Type 1) has been referred to as "Eastern Arabian" (Prochazka 1981, after Johnstone 1967) or "Sunni" (Holes 1981), although it might be objected that a proportion of those Bahrainis who speak it are Shi'is. Nonetheless, the Type 1 dialect is recognized locally as a hallmark of the Sunni sect and is spoken in Bahrain in such predominantly or exclusively Sunni areas as Al-Muḥarrag town, Al-Ḥidd, Rifa' (East and West), Budayya', Zallāg, and the villages of Jaw, Askar and Galāli. It can also be heard in certain Sunni quarters of the capital Manāma (e.g., Al-Fāḍil). In radio soap-operas, and other media manifestations in which typical Bahraini speech is appropriate, it is the Type 1 dialect which is most often used.

The second type of dialect (T2) has been fully described in Al-Tājir 1982. It is spoken by a group known locally as Baḥārna, which signifies Arabic-speaking monolingual Shi'is of local (i.e., non-Iranian) origin. T2 includes an educated urban variety heard in the capital, Manāma, where the Baḥārna are in majority, and a number of slightly but significantly different sub-varieties, all of which share certain phonological and lexical characteristics, which are spoken in more than sixty exclusively Baḥārna villages spread throughout the islands.

Although no reliable figures are available (the last time census data on sectarian affiliation was collected was 1941), it is likely that there are slightly more T2 speakers than T1 speakers, which almost exactly reflects the statistical balance between Baḥārna and Sunnis. From this point on, it will be convenient to distinguish three dialect types: T1, T2a and T2b, the a and b representing, respectively, the urban/educated T2 and the rural/uneducated T2. T2 speakers who have been through the state education system are invariably T2a users (except, perhaps, in private with aged peasant parents) whether they live in Manāma

or a village. T2b is nowadays limited to village dwellers who have had little or no formal education and do agricultural or other village-based manual jobs. As a consequence of the general spread of literacy, many of the typical features of T2b seem to be rapidly disappearing, and are being replaced by T2a, T1 or supradialectal features borrowed from literary Arabic. Typical examples of this would be the replacing of the T2b lexeme /gada/ to go by the T1 and pan-colloquial /ra:H/, and the replacement of /K/ ( a voiceless retracted velar stop) in words like /yiKu:l/ he says, /Ka:Di/ judge by T2a/T1 g, thus /yigu:l/, or supradialectal /q/, thus /qa:Di/. Villagers are themselves acutely conscious of the stigma which attaches to T2b speech and even illiterate village speakers make an attempt to avoid particularly ridiculed features of this dialect in the cross-dialectal speech contexts which can arise in public places such as markets.

2.2. Dialectal pronominal systems. Three basic systems of deictic second person pronominal reference occur in BA:

Table 1. Basic systems of 2nd person enclitic deixis.

	<u>masculine</u>	<u>feminine</u>	<u>c.plural</u>
Type 1	-k	-č	-kum
Type 2a	-k	-š	-kum
Type 2b	-č	-š	-čim

Speakers who consistently use one or the other of these systems in natural conversation (i.e., where they are unaware of being recorded) were not difficult to find, although, as noted above, Type 2b speakers are very likely to switch to variable extents to a Type 2a system in contexts where they feel their speech is on view. The point of this paper is to examine what kinds of factors seem to trigger variation in the individual speaker's use of these systems by examining lengthy pieces of natural conversation (5 to 30 minutes). Are, for example, solidary, ritual and deictic types of reference all equally likely to exhibit variation in the speech of a speaker who shows variation? What types of change in the communicative intent of the speaker are associated with a switch in the pronominal system he is using? What kind of symbolic meanings, in other words, do changes in the choice of pronominal forms convey? In an attempt to answer these questions, transcripts of both in-group and inter-group conversation were examined.

3.1. In-group variation in the use of pronominal systems. In general, there was least variation in pronominal systems where interlocutors shared the same basic system. Type 1 speakers always gave other T1 speakers k/č/kum and received back the same system; T2a speakers always gave other T2a speakers k/š/kum and were similarly addressed. This was true for all types of reference - solidary, ritual or deictic. However, the T2b group

consistently differed from T1 and T2a speakers in their treatment of non-deictic types of reference. While they gave each other /č/š/čim/ in deictic reference, they always used /k/ instead of /č/ in male solidary reference and varied between /k/ and /č/ in male ritual reference and between /čim/ and /kum/ in plural ritual reference:

Table 2. Variation in pronominal reference systems: in-group conversation.

	Reference:											
	basic			deictic			ritual			solidary		
	m	f	pl	m	f	pl	m	f	pl	m	f	pl
Type 1	k	č	kum	no variation			no variation			no variation		
Type 2a	k	š	kum	no variation			no variation			no variation		
Type 2b	č	š	čim	no variation			k~č	š	čim~kum	k š (no data)		

How do we explain this variation found in same-group Type 2b conversation? A close examination of factors in conversational context goes some way to providing an explanation. In ritual reference, it was noticeable that where speakers made use of formulae which have a currency wider than that of the T2b group (sometimes which could be as wide as that of the Arab world as a whole), the standard /k/ and /kum/ forms were invariably used, e.g.,

/Hayya:k aLLah/	<u>May God preserve your life!</u>
/raHim aLLah abu:k/	<u>May God have mercy on your father!</u>
/aLLah yisallimk/	<u>May God save you (pl)!</u>
/is sala:m 9ale:kum/	<u>Peace be upon you (pl)!</u>
/jaza:kum aLLah xe:r/	<u>May God reward you (pl)!</u>

However, in formulae which are typical of the T2b group only and especially those used for cursing, speakers who use /k/ and /kum/ in community-wide formulae, normally use /č/ and /čim/,

/aLLah yi9arbilč/	<u>May God confuse you (m)!</u>
/xana:g yiHmilč/	<u>May you (m) choke to death!</u>
/čabbčim aLLah/	<u>May God destroy you (pl)!</u>
/sle:ma yičibbčim/	<u>May a pestilence destroy you (pl)!</u>

Thus, in in-group Baḥārna conversation among villagers (Type 2b) the local pronominal reference system is maintained in ordinary interpersonal (deictic) reference and also in those types of ritual personal reference which have a markedly in-group flavor (especially insults and oaths). However, where instances of ritual personal reference are no more than, as it were, the acting-out of highly stylized social exchanges which are common to all Arab communities and carry no in-group significance (e.g., greeting, leave-taking, inquiring after health, thanking, etc.)



the community-wide /k/ (masc) and /kum/ (c.pl) replace /č/ and /čim/. Put in a wider sociolinguistic context, the Baḥārna villagers appear to distinguish between stylized communicative events which characterize a pan-Arab speech community, and which are acted out millions of times a day throughout the Arab world, and a type of personal ritual reference which, by contrast, involves the use of in-group words such as /čabb/ and /sle:ma/, occurs unpredictably, and involves no set or stylized responses from the interlocutor. This type of ritual reference is functionally closer to normal deictic reference, hence the appropriacy of the local pronominal system for use in it.

Interestingly, there is a tendency of some Type 2b speakers to use the local pronominal system even in community-wide formulae when addressing certain types of interlocutor, e.g., /is-sala:m 9ale:čim/, said by a Type 2b educated male to a group of unknown village women drawing water at a well; the same speaker invariably used /9ale:kum/ when greeting unknown village men; and /aLLah yizi:dčim/, said by a grandfather in a fairy-story addressing his young grandchildren; in similar formulae to adults /kum/ was used.

The fact that such forms were addressed to uneducated women and children is significant. It is not that /kum/ would fail to be understood, but rather that both peasant women and children are considered to be, in some sense, socially incomplete beings in a patriarchal society. Peasant women are tied to domestic, in-group environment and have virtually no contact with men who are not members of their immediate family; small children are one of the main day-to-day responsibilities of such women, as well as keeping the house clean, washing the clothes and cooking. The use of the local pronominal system in stylized ritual exchanges which involve peasant women or children as participants symbolises the fact that they do not fully belong to the wider, male-dominated Arab speech community. When asked why he used /čim/ rather than /kum/ in the next to last example above, the male Shi'i speaker merely remarked "because they are women."

The categorical use of /k/ and /kum/ in solidary reference in in-group Type 2b conversation is also explainable in terms of the values which such use symbolises. Solidary forms are used by all speakers of BA of both sects whether in in-group or inter-group communication. They are fixed formulae which make conversationally explicit the relative generational or kinship status of any pair of interlocutors. As such, they function in the same way as community-wide ritual formulae, in the sense that both involve a verbal acting out of the fixed roles and obligatory episodes which structure any social contact. In the case of ritual formulae these involve speakers identifying themselves with pan-Arab patterns of agreed language use; in the case of solidary formulae, with a Bahrain-wide (perhaps Gulf-wide) system of generational peerage.

To summarize: while Type 1, Type 2a and Type 2b speakers all maintain their own pronominal systems in normal interpersonal

deixis in in-group conversation, the Type 2b group, whose system is the most phonologically deviant from community-wide norms in having /č/ for the masculine and /čim/ for plural second person reference, switches to community norms where community-wide values, embodied in stylized ritual and solidary reference, are being invoked. The exceptions to this are apparent only, since uneducated women and small children are not considered fully participating members of this wider speech community.

3.2.0. Inter-group variation. Our concern here is to see to what extent the different pronominal systems displayed in Table 1 are maintained in inter-group conversations in our three types of reference. This gives us the following possible combinations of interlocutors:

Condition (I)	Type 1	m: k	to Type 2a	k
		f: č		š
		pl: kum		kum
-----				
Condition (II)	Type 2a	m: k	to Type 2b	č
		f: š		š
		pl: kum		čim
-----				
Condition (III)	Type 1	m: k	to Type 2b	č
		f: č		š
		pl: kum		čim

It is apparent from this that the greatest inter-group mismatch occurs in Condition (III), where none of the enclitics correspond, and that the closest match occurs in Condition (I), where two out of three enclitics are the same for each group. Condition (III) is intermediate, with one match (feminine) and two mismatches. The following discussion is devoted to describing how these mismatches are resolved and what social and contextual factors seem to be involved in their resolution. But first a word about the data.

Data for Condition (I), i.e., Sunni speakers in conversation with urban educated Shi'a, was easy to come by, and the enclitic pronominal usage found in the transcriptions of data gathered in interviews which speakers knew were being recorded could be checked by listening in to cross-group conversation in public places such as shops, in which Type 2a-using shopkeepers engaged in often lengthy discussion with Type 1-using customers of both sexes. Conversations in school staffrooms and government offices also provided a check on the validity of tape-recorded data. Plentiful data, much of it recorded without the knowledge of participants, was also obtainable for Condition (II). The main participants here were educated Shi'i agricultural extension officers (Type 2a users) and illiterate Shi'i village farmers (Type 2b users). More Condition (II) data was obtained from conversations between educated Shi'i women teachers and their female pupils in rural adult literacy centres. Condition (III)

data was relatively difficult to obtain because the occasions when extended conversation takes place between illiterate Shi'i villagers and Sunnis are not that common and are difficult to engineer. Most of the small amount of data for Condition (III) was obtained from female Sunni literacy teachers (Type 1) interviewing their illiterate Shi'i students in village literacy centres. However, this kind of situation is artificial in the sense that the conversation does not arise naturally because of the combination of sectarian and status (teacher-pupil) differences between the interlocutors.

**3.2.1. Solidary and ritual reference.** In each of Conditions (I), (II) and (III), all Type 1 speakers used *k/č/kum* categorically and all Type 2 speakers (a and b) used *k/š/kum*. This finding is unsurprising when compared with the in-group data discussed above: even more than in in-group conversation, Type 2b speakers needed to conform to the powerful community-wide norms which govern such formalised behavior. The forms */č/* and */čim/* are simply too localized and deviant for inter-group use in formulae which express fixed social roles and statuses.

Type 1 and Type 2a speakers share */k/* (masculine) and */kum/* (plural) as parts of their basic systems, but differ in that Type 1 has */č/* and Type 2a */š/* for the feminine enclitic. No variation occurred in the solidary and ritual data for these feminine forms (and very little in deictic reference either, see 3.2.2., below). A possible explanation of this is that */č/* and */š/* as feminine enclitics are both in common use in a much wider area than Bahrain. */š/* is used by widely dispersed Bahārna Shi'i communities in Kuwait, Eastern Saudi Arabia, Qatar and the U.A.E., while */č/* is used by the Bedouin-descended Sunni majorities in these same areas. In areal dialectal terms, */š/* and */č/* represent what might paradoxically be termed rival "non-standard (in the sense of non-MSA) standards." In contrast to this, other differences between Bahraini sectarian dialects, e.g., Sunni */y/* versus Shi'i */j/* in words like */rayya:l/* ~ */rajja:l/* *man* (Holes 1980) and Sunni */q/* versus Shi'i */ǧ/* in words like */muǧanni/* ~ */muǧanni/* *singer* (Holes 1983b) are not distributed in the rest of the Gulf states in the same communally clearcut manner. For example, */q/* as a reflex of *ǧ* certainly occurs in the Bahārna Shi'i speech of Qatif in Eastern Saudi Arabia, whereas in Bahrain */q/* < *ǧ* is recognised as a purely "Sunni" phenomenon. I would argue that it is precisely because the distribution of */č/* and */š/* as rival forms of the 2nd person singular feminine enclitic corresponds so closely to a socio-religious cleavage extending over a wide geographical area, while the distribution of other equally widely occurring rival pairs such as */j/* ~ */y/* and */q/* ~ */ǧ/* does not so correspond, that */č/* and */š/* act as powerful foci of dialect loyalty for their users. By contrast, while */j/* ~ */y/* variation occurs throughout the Gulf (Johnstone 1965), there seems to be no Gulf-wide patterning discernible in which lexemes are affected, or in the social motivation for variation. The reasons why a */y/*-user switches to

/j/ and a /j/-user to /y/ in Bahrain (Holes 1980, 1983b) are quite different from those which might operate in Kuwait or Iraq because the basic social distribution (and hence significance) of these forms is different to start with (see Ingham 1982:31 for comparative data on /j/~ /y/ and the "multivalency" of such variables). The situation for inter-group solidary and ritual reference is summed up in Table 3.

Table 3. Variation in pronominal reference systems:  
inter-group conversation - solidary and ritual reference.

	basic system (in-group)		inter-group system
Type 1 to	k	č	kum----->no change
Type 2a	k	š	kum----->no change
Type 2a to	k	š	kum----->no change
Type 2b	č	š	čim----->Type 2a system categorically
Type 1 to	k	č	kum----->no change
Type 2b	č	š	čim----->Type 2a system categorically

**3.2.2. Deictic reference.** Unlike solidary or ritual reference, which both involve speakers in largely invariant patterns of exchange and are hence highly predictable, 2nd person deictic reference, as defined in this paper, is part and parcel of almost any two-party conversation in which the participants refer to each others' persons or affairs. Within any extended conversation, this type of reference may crop up in a wide variety of contexts: speakers may argue with each other, warn each other, tell each other jokes, cajole each other, etc. In all of these activities and others, they make skillful use of shared language knowledge (that is, shared knowledge of the significance of, amongst other things, linguistic choices) in order to achieve their ends.

It became clear, on a careful analysis of the inter-group data, that, for some speakers, variation in the use of the enclitic pronoun system was one of a number of strategies which they employed in trying to achieve certain communicative goals. As far as it was possible for this writer to discover, the achievement of these same communicative ends in in-group conversation did not entail such apparently deliberate exploitation of the pronominal (and other) systems - hence the first column of Table 2 which shows that no variation in the use of the three basic pronominal systems was recorded in in-group

conversation. In inter-group conversation, variation occurred quite regularly in two out of the three data collection conditions, as specified in Table 4 below.

Table 4. Variation in pronominal reference systems: inter-group conversation - deictic reference.

	<u>basic system (in-group)</u>		<u>inter-group system</u>
Type 1 to	k	č	kum----->no change
Type 2a	k	š	kum----->no change
Type 2a to	k	š	kum----->no change
Type 2b	č	š	čim----->k~č š kum~čim
Type 1 to	k	č	kum----->no change
Type 2b	č	š	čim----->Type 2a system categorically

It is clear from Table 4 that, for Type 1 and Type 2a speakers, the pronominal system is not a variable. Their two basic systems are maintained in inter-group deictic reference just as they are in inter-group solidary and ritual reference (Table 3) and in in-group reference of all types (Table 2). What is interesting is the behavior of the Type 2b speakers, the lowest prestige group. With their educated, urban co-religionists they vary between their own system and that of their interlocutors; with Sunnis they switch completely to the educated Type 2a system (though, as we shall see below, there was one interesting exception to this). Compare this with the first column of Table 2, which shows that in in-group conversation, Type 2b speakers maintained their own system categorically.

From the discussion so far, it should be clear that the partial (Condition II) and complete (Condition III) switch to the Type 2a system by the Type 2b speakers is a movement towards a dialectally more standard system. This switching would seem then to be a means by which aberrant speakers can overtly present themselves as linguistically more akin to, and acceptable to, other Bahrainis. But, in cases where variation rather than a complete switch to the Type 2a system occurs, what are the factors which favour the retention, and the replacement, of the local Type 2b system?

A detailed study of the data for three Type 2b speakers, who will be referred to as X, Y and Z provides some clues. Speaker X was a peasant farmer from the village of Sitra who was regularly visited by an agricultural extension officer from the government

farm, an educated Type 2a speaker from the Bahārna village of Bani-Jamra. Three visits were surreptitiously recorded and transcribed, producing about 1-1/2 hours of conversation. Speaker Y was an elderly, retired, ex-peasant farmer from the village of Būri. He was recorded in a 45-minute conversation with the same agricultural extension officer. Speaker Y was blind, and hence not aware that he was being recorded. (In both cases, the speakers were told after recording that they had been recorded and were asked for their permission for the data to be used in this study. Neither objected.) Both of these conversations were in the context of working visits, but were extremely varied in topic: village gossip, jokes, riddles, and general talk (a mixture known locally as /sawa:lif/ roughly chatting with no particular point) followed each other in unpredictable order. Speakers X and Y were both illiterate, though well-schooled in religion. Both of them had become close friends of the extension officer, their co-religionist. Speaker Z was a 70-year-old woman from Bani-Jamra village, recorded by her granddaughter telling a lengthy fairy-story (/xura:fa/ superstitious yarn) to a mixed group of adults and children from her own extended household. It might be objected that this context does not meet the criteria for inclusion under Condition (II). However, it is included here because, although the relationship of story-teller to interlocutor is not a Type 2a-Type 2b one, some of the characters in the story she tells do in fact embody social differences of the same kind. The motivation for the X and Y speakers' switches between the Type 2b and 2a pronoun systems seems also to underlie the switches in pronoun usage by some of the characters in the story which speaker Z tells, and whose direct speech she quotes.

At first sight, the only consistent thing about speaker X's and speaker Y's deictic pronominal usage with the agricultural extension officer seemed to be its inconsistency. However, when careful attention was paid to the topics being discussed, and the changing roles of the participants as the conversation progressed, it was possible to discern a clear patterning in the variation.

A first, and important, distinction to be made was between conversation about something and conversation for its own sake. The latter category includes instances (quite frequent) of extended joking, word-play and riddles.

<u>Conversation activity</u>	<u>2nd person deixis used</u>	
	<u>number of occurrences</u>	
	<u>Type 2b</u>	<u>Type 2a</u>
play on words	3	0
joke #1	0	0
joke #2	7	0
joke #3	2	0
riddle #1	0	3
riddle #2	0	6

In speaker X's data, for example, the diagrammed 5-1/2 minute extract, which began with a play on words and led to a series of jokes based upon words with a double meaning, and then to two riddles involving an extended verbal jousting with the agricultural extension officer illustrates this well. The diagram shows how speaker X switched between his basic system (Type 2b) and that of his interlocutor (Type 2a) as this part of the conversation proceeded. In this sequence, the 2nd person reference was either to the agricultural extension officer or to a you in the reported speech of a joke, but in all cases was masculine. The sudden switch from a Type 2b /č/ to a Type 2a /k/ which occurred at the end of the joking sequence is significant. Up to that point, speaker X had been picking up odd words used by his interlocutor and had been using them as a point of departure for a joke. In the play on words, for example, speaker X offers the extension officer a cup of coffee, to which the latter replies:

la, išrab sahmi  
No, (you) drink my share.

But /sahm/ also means arrow so X replies, using Type 2b /č/:

X: ašrab sahmič ə?  
I drink your share (arrow)?  
Officer: ey  
Yes  
X: 9adil - ila 9aTe:təni sahmič Kataltni! (laughs) is-sahm  
yiKtil!  
All right - if you give me your arrow, you'll kill me -  
(laughs) Arrows kill!

Jokes 1 to 3 involve, respectively, plays on /hawa/ desire/air, /flu:s/ money/branding iron and /sawwa finja:n gahwa/ to make a cup of coffee/coffee-cup. In all cases, the joke or play on words comes as an unpredictable consequence of a word used by the agricultural extension officer. At the end of this sequence, however, there is a pause, followed by a meta-statement from speaker X:

ya9ni ma miš kala:m illa 9ale:h ta9li:q  
I mean, anything one says, there's another meaning to it.

When the agricultural officer shows an interest in this:

9aji:b ... jami:9 il kala:m 9ale:h?  
Amazing... anything one says?

Speaker X assumes the role of a teacher, and sets his more educated interlocutor riddles based on village expressions used in speaker X's village:

we:š ma9na go:lat al-Hi:n ihna ngu:l "xari:T fi mari:T"...  
 we:šhu "lxari:T fi lmari:T"?

What's the meaning now of the saying which we say "xari:T fi mari:T"? What is "xari:T fi mari:T"?

There then follows a complicated verbal tussle in which the agricultural extension officer, who does not know the answer, tries to get speaker X to give him the answer. The same thing happens with the second riddle to which the extension officer also fails to find the answer. From the point where speaker X becomes the teacher posing verbal brain-teasers, and the extension officer becomes the student, X's pronominal usage, as well as a number of other elements in his linguistic repertoire (such as the total replacement of /k/ by /g/ in words in which Type 1 and Type 2a speakers have /g/), shows a complete shift to the educated, urban dialect of his interlocutor. This is in stark contrast to the session of spontaneous joking at his interlocutor's expense, when speaker X used his basic Type 2b system. The language switch seems to symbolise the change in role: when, as it were, teaching his (already educated) student the meaning of local /nawa:dir al-luğa/ language rarities, speaker X addresses him using standard dialectal pronoun forms; when joshing and joking, local forms are appropriate. The agricultural extension officer becomes more and more frustrated at his inability to give an answer and speaker X's gleeful unwillingness to give one. Note X's use of -/k/, not -/c/, in the highlighted forms:

Officer: tafaDDal ja:wib... we:š ma9na ha:da ba9ad?

Go ahead, answer... What is the meaning?

X: al-Hi:n ana as'alk u inta tis'alni!

Now I'm asking you and you're asking me!

O: ana as'alk

I'm asking you.

X: inta gilt - ana gilt lik "il xari:T fil mari:T" u 'ajabt 9ale:h ana 9ate:tək is-su'a:l u 'ajabt 9ale:h alHi:n.

alhi:n 9ate:tək su'a:l la:zim -

You said - I asked you "il xari:T fil mari:T" and I answered it as well. I gave you the question and answered it. Now I've given you a (second) question, you must -

O: ma 9arafna!

I don't know!

X: tiji:b 9ale:h

Answer it!

O: ida ma a9rif we:š əsawwi inta ja:wib!

If I don't know the answer, what can I do? You answer!

Speaker X finally (and, in view of the difference in their levels of education, ironically) exclaims:

hai dru:s!

(roughly) You need to have studied to understand this!



This example of conversation for its own sake illustrates well how changes in role and topic are associated with a change in the deictic reference system used. A similar pattern of covariation also occurs in what we have termed "conversation about something." On the one hand, episodes of teasing, cajoling, ridiculing and the expression of homespun philosophy always involve Type 2b speakers in the use of their local deictic system. But where such speakers are expressing moral precepts (normally grounded in Islamic belief), where they intend their words to have some general validity beyond the immediate context, where they are speaking man to man, they use the Type 2a system. Some examples from speaker Y will make these distinctions clear.

(a) Examples of use of the Type 2b system with /č/ and /čim/:

Subbu le:čim la?!

Pour some coffee for yourselves, why don't you?

(Chivying the extension officer who was in Y's view behaving in a dilatory manner.)

9indi De:f ɟari:b u we:š darra:č yaxu:k!

So I've got a guest - what's it to you, oh your brother!

(Ridiculing the extension officer's implied criticism of X's conduct towards his guest (the writer).)

ida ma 9arrast lo tistwi 'ajwad zama:nič inta sarsari...

la:kin ida 9arrast inša:lat minnič il čilma

If you don't marry, no matter how noble a man you are, you'll be considered worthless... but if you marry, nobody will gossip about you.

(Imparting village wisdom.)

alHi:n ə'limčim ha:dana al Hi:n əHa:ti ɟida:yi

I've just told you, haven't I, I'm thinking about my lunch.

(Testily repeating reasons for not wishing to tell a story.)

(b) Examples of use of the Type 2a system with /k/ and /kum/:

wala inta illi aLLah xa:lKinnak min 9adam ila wuju:d 9ala'an yiKta9 rizKək

God didn't bring you from non-existence to existence, only to cut off your means of sustenance.

(Moralising at the end of an account of an incident.)

aFa! ana rajja:l əHa:či:k

Fie! This is an (upstanding) man who's talking to you!

(Loftily rejecting the extension officer's questioning of the accuracy of Y's analysis of a third person's low motives.)

ha:da kawN aLLah mu maši:'atk inta  
This (the world) is God's work, it was not achieved through your will. (Enunciating a religious precept to condemn miserly behavior.)

We could summarise our explanation of variation in Condition II inter-group deictic reference by saying that the Type 2b system is used to refer to a foreign Type 2a interlocutor where the interactional episode is one which is perhaps more typical of domestic, in-group interaction between people who know each other as kin or neighbours, whereas the Type 2a system is used to indicate, literally or metaphorically, social distance and community-wide values. This is, of course, perfectly consonant with our earlier observation that, even in in-group conversation, Type 2b speakers use the Type 2a system to each other for ritual and solidary reference, since the latter are expressive of social relationships which have a wider relevance than that of the immediate neighbourhood or community. An examination of the transcript of speaker Z's fairy-story seems to bear this out. Speaker Z told a complicated story which had a theme common to many such /xura:fa:t/: the obligation of the fortunate be kind to the less fortunate, and the submission of both to God's will. In this story, there are two types of character: representatives of secular power - the Sultan, the merchants - who might be designated the "out-group"; and the hero and his family, extending over several generations - the "in-group." What is noticeable is that, although the language which the story-teller puts in the mouth of all the characters, out-group or in-group, is the same from the point of view of the lexicon and phonology, a consistent distinction is made in the 2nd person deixis which is used. The Sultan, his retinue and the merchants are referred to using the Type 2a system, i.e., the dialectal standard, whereas the in-group (the family and domestic characters) talk to each other using the Type 2b system. The following are some examples.

(a) Uses of the Type 2a system:

Ka:l "yaLLah 9aTu Haggkum"  
He said "Come on now, give your due." (Hero to merchants.)

daxalaw 9ala s-sulTa:n... Ka:l "sala:mun 9ale:kum" Ka:l "ha?  
 Tala9t, il Hamdu lilla:h! we:š il KaDiyya?" Ka:l "il  
 Kadiyya, aLLa rayyaHkum min iš-šarr, ə9allinkum ge:r sa:9a"  
They went to the Sultan. (The hero) said "Peace be upon you." (The Sultan) said "What? You've escaped, praise be to God! What happened?" (The hero) said "What happened, may God relieve you of the effects of evil, I'll tell you another time!" (Hero to Sultan.)

ana mittikil 9ale:k ya rabbi  
I put my trust in you, oh Lord. (Hero to God.)

## (b) Uses of the Type 2b system:

Ka:lat "fitšu wuju:hčim wa la 9ale:čim"  
She said "Reveal your faces and don't you worry." (Hero's wife to their daughters.)

Ka:lat "aLLah yirziKni u yirziKč inta"  
She said "God sustains me and you as well." (Recalcitrant daughter (=eventual hero's wife) to her father.)

min we:š ma adri atKabbal maratč?  
Why shouldn't I know how to deliver your wife? (Midwife to hero.)

Ka:lat le:him: "ru:Hu li jiddčim u Ku:lu we:š aHwa:lič ya:  
 jaddi u ile:n zabbar 9ale:čim la tistaHu:n ma 9ale:čim minne  
She said to them "Go to your granddad and say 'How are you granddad?' And if he scolds you, don't be ashamed, don't you take any notice of him." (Hero's wife to her daughters, referring to her father (and their grandfather).)

In these examples (many more similar ones occurred in the story), the social distance between the in-group and the out-group is symbolised in the use of the *-/k/* and *-/kum/* of the Type 2a (and Type 1) system to refer to the out-group whereas for in-group reference, across the various generation gaps, *-/č/* and *-/čim/* are used as they would be in Baharna villages. In this way, the storyteller uses her knowledge of how these systems are used in in-group and inter-group conversation in Shi'i village Bahrain to help bring alive the imaginary events and characters of her story. Significantly, perhaps, she begins her story by referring to her audience as *-/čim/*, thus linking them with the in-group in the story:

əSalli 9ala muHammad 9ančim u 9an ha:k ir-rajja:l...  
I pray to Mohammed (the Prophet) for you and for that man (the hero)...

Thus far in this section of the paper, we have dealt with inter-group deictic reference in Conditions (I) and (II) (Table 4, above). In Condition (III), the Type 2b speakers, when addressing the socially most distant group, the Sunnis, switched completely to the educated, urban Type 2a system *-k/š/kum* which, it was argued earlier, represents, along with the Type 1 *k/č/kum* system, a kind of non-standard standard in various areas of the Gulf. This complete switch is not surprising, since the kind of easy, metaphorical use of the Type 2b system exemplified earlier, which is possible with co-religionist Type 2a speakers, such as the agricultural extension officer, is not possible with socially distant Type 1 (i.e., non-Baharna) speakers or foreigners. (Type 2b speakers always used Type 2a forms when referring to me.)

Type 1 speakers and foreigners are strictly out-group to Type 2b speakers. The only apparent exception to this occurred in a conversation between a Sunni woman teacher and an illiterate rural school cleaner who was recounting the brutal behaviour of a now-divorced husband. In quoting her own words to her ex-husband, the Type 2b speaker used the Type 2b deictic reference system. This isolated instance of using the local system to give an in-group flavour to the narrative resembled the way in which speaker Z gave life to her imaginary in-group characters:

Teacher: iythajjaj ya9ni  
He used to argue, you mean?

Cleaner: ey bas yithajjaj ha:di han - no:ba 9irs Tayyiba  
 9ala - čidi Ka:9ida ana wiyya mart waladi batčallam  
 wiyya:ha, čidi radd hu u da:r 9ala hal be:za:t  
 yiKu:l "inti:n buKti:n ilbe:za:t." Kit "ma mahratč  
 illa tibawwiKni bil be:za:tə? il be:za:t ma buKt."  
 wa la ašu:f illa Kabadni...  
Yes, he just used to argue. That time of Tayyiba's  
 wedding, it was over - I was just sitting like  
 this with my daughter-in-law talking to her, when  
 he came back and went looking for this money. He  
 said "You've stolen the money." I said "Is that  
 all you can do, accuse me of stealing money? I  
 haven't stolen any money." No sooner had I said  
 that than he grabbed me...

Teacher: Taggič?  
He beat you?

4. Conclusion. The range of relationships which two speakers in a Bahraini Arabic conversation can contract - ritual, solidary, deictic - correlates with variation in the pronominal enclitic systems. One group of speakers in particular (the rural Bahārna) makes use of the available pronominal systems in normal deictic reference in order to signal the changes in the expression of affect which can occur in spontaneous conversation. This conscious exploitation of linguistic resources serves to constantly locate any part of any conversation in one or other ready-made frames of reference: a community-wide frame (solidary and ritual reference); a local out-group frame (deictic reference in which the affective content is social distance); a local in-group frame (deictic reference in which the affective content is intimacy). Variability in the pronominal system seems thus to act for these speakers as a means of both regulating conversational encounters within prescribed social boundaries (no variation) and at the same time allowing the speakers freedom to create their own affective meaning (variation).

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