

THE IMPACT OF SECT-AFFILIATION ON DIALECT AND CULTURAL  
MAINTENANCE AMONG THE DRUZE OF JORDAN: AN EXPLORATORY STUDY

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this paper is to determine if the Druze dialect and culture are in a process of being transformed and assimilated or if they are being maintained among a generational cross-section of 131 Druze respondents in the Jordanian village of Umm Al-Quttain. In this study, the data was collected by means of a questionnaire and participant interview. The study investigates dialect proficiency, domains of dialect use, and linguistic attitudes towards both the mother tongue dialect and the dialect spoken by the larger speech community. The results of this investigation indicate that there is a unambiguous case of dialect and cultural maintenance among the Druze of Jordan. The research proposes that the religious and social isolation of the Jordanian Druze in general, and this minority group in particular, from the mainstream Jordanian Sunni community, fostered by the existence of cultural and demographic islands, has significantly contributed to the maintenance of their dialect and culture.

**Key words:** dialect maintenance, dialect shift, Druze community, sect-affiliation, demographic factors, language attitudes.

ABSTRACTO

*El propósito de esta investigación es determinar si el dialecto y la cultura Drusa están en el proceso de ser transformados y asimilados o si están siendo mantenidos entre una muestra generacional de 131 drusos entrevistados en la aldea Umm Al-Quttain de Jordania. Los datos fueron recopilados por medio de cuestionarios y entrevistas a los participantes. El estudio investiga la proficiencia del dialecto, los dominios del dialecto usado, y las actitudes lingüísticas tanto hacia el dialecto de la lengua materna como al dialecto hablado por la mayoría comunitaria de parlantes. Los resultados de esta investigación indican que no hay ambigüedad en mantener el dialecto y cultura entre los drusos de Jordania. La investigación propone que el aislamiento religioso y social de los drusos de Jordania en general, y en este grupo minoritario en particular de la vertiente mayor de la comunidad de Sunni en Jordania respaldada por la existencia de*

*aislamientos culturales y demográficas, ha contribuido significativamente a mantener su dialecto y cultura.*

**Palabras clave:** *mantenimiento del dialecto, cambio del dialecto, comunidad drusa, afiliación sectaria, factores demográficos, actitudes lingüísticas.*

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## INTRODUCTION

The phenomenon of dialect maintenance and dialect shift has been the spotlight of numerous sociolinguistic studies over the second half of the twentieth century (e.g., Filipović, 2001, 1996, 1986; Holmquist, 2003; Lipski, 1994; Ward 1976). To date, most research has been conducted in urban contexts (Clyne, 2003; Florack & Piontkowski, 1997; Kipp, 2002; Kloss, 1966; Schmid, 2002). Hatoss (2006), who studied the maintenance of German language and culture in a rural settlement in Australia, suggests that as opposed to urban contexts, rural settings are traditionally characterized by low social mobility and a low level of exposure to other cultures. Traditional rural immigrant communities are relatively stable, and form linguistic enclaves (Clyne, 1994; Kloss, 1966). These linguistic enclaves are a key factor in the

maintenance of immigrant languages as they facilitate the local valorization of the immigrant language in public domains (Conklin & Lourie, 1983; Kloss, 1966).

Heinz Kloss is among the most widely cited and acclaimed authorities on language loyalty. One of Kloss' contributions to this subject was the development of a typology of linguistic and socio-demographic factors to explain why a minority group of speakers tends to maintain their language. In his paper on 'German-American Language Maintenance Efforts', he proposed six different factors contributed to language maintenance. He spoke of 'religious and societal insulation' as one of the most responsible factors for language maintenance. This occurs when members of a language group 'withdraw from the world' that surrounds them and build up a community of their own with a strategy of non-participation in mainstream American life. He contends that the point of departure of these groups was religion rather than nationality or language, i.e., their isolation and non-participation is caused by strong religious feelings.

Over the past few decades, many such studies of language maintenance and language shift were carried out in the context of Jordan. These studies have reached different conclusions depending on whether the speech community under investigation is integrated, or not, in the larger Jordanian speech community (Abd-el-Jawad, 2006; AL-Khatib & AL-Ali, 2005; Al-Khatib, 2001; Dweik, 2000). In their study of the Gypsies of Jordan as a minority group, Al-Khatib and Al-Ali (2005), for example, observed that socio-cultural isolation imposed by the majority culture is the factor most responsible for language and cultural maintenance among the Gypsies of Jordan.

#### OBJECTIVE OF THE STUDY

This paper draws on field research carried out between 2006 and 2007 in the Druze community of Um Al-Quttain, a rural area located in the North-Eastern part of Jordan. The

research examined the sociolinguistic history of this community, and the maintenance of their dialect in relation to the dialects spoken throughout the country. Of particular interest was to the contribution of sect-affiliation to dialect maintenance. This paper studies the impact of the following factors on dialect maintenance among the Druze of Jordan:

- (1) sect-affiliation,
- (2) resistance to intermarriage,
- (3) demographic concentration,
- (4) gender,
- (5) linguistic attitudes.

The study also discusses dialect use in cultural and religious domains.

A careful examination of the literature shows that no previous study has covered the linguistic status of the Druze of Jordan and this study seeks to fill that gap. By sect-affiliation we mean the internal thoughts, feelings and tendencies of a particular social / religious group in behavior across a variety of contexts. The paper attempts to provide empirical evidence of the Druze community's attitudes and acculturation strategies as opposed to the host society's attitudes and acculturation orientations.

#### WHO ARE THE DRUZE?

Any account of the Druze must include some discussion of their unique religion. The Druze form a religious sect which belongs to the Ismaili Shia. They are known as Sons of Grace (*Bani Ma'rouf*). The Druze are of Arab origin and belong, according to different sources, to Arab clans (see, Abu-Izzeddin, 1985; Oppenheim, 2006; Qutiesh, 2005). The core assumption on

which the Druze creed is established is clearly manifested in the following excerpt, taken from the online Encyclopedia Britannica (2003):

The *Muwahhidin* (Unitarians [or monotheists]), as the Druses call themselves, believe that there is one and only one God, indefinable, incomprehensible, ineffable, passionless. He has made himself known to men by successive incarnations, of which the last was Hakim, the sixth Fatimite caliph (n.p.).

The Druze have a long history of protective dissimulation (*taqiyya*), a practice whereby they would conceal their true beliefs and outwardly accept the religious beliefs of those amongst whom they live (Littlewood, 2001). The Druze experienced persecution as a result of their extreme deviation from orthodox Islam (Layish, 1982), or as Robinson (2006) puts it, because of their belief in Al-Hakim to be the incarnation of God, they were persecuted by mainstream Muslims, especially after Al-Hakim's death. This persecution has driven the Druze to resort to secretiveness of faith and the practice of (*taqiyya*).

Although the Druze religious beliefs are an outgrowth of the Ismaili Shia sect, it was greatly influenced by Greek, Judaic, Christian, and Gnostic philosophy (Robinson 2006; Oppenheim, 2006). The Druze do not seek to convert others to their religion as the call to convert others ended in the year 1042, and membership since then has been hereditary (Abu-Izzeddin, 1985; Littlewood, 2001). The Druze believe that the Qur'an and the Bible have exoteric and esoteric meanings and, above these two levels of meanings, lies the esoteric of the esoteric.

According to Swayd (1998), the Druze society is divided into two groups, namely the initiated (*Uqqal*), who are familiar with religious teachings, and the uninitiated (*Juhhal*), who are not familiar with the Druze doctrine. There are 30 sacred Druze manuscripts which represent the Druze scriptures, the most common of these are *The Epistles of Wisdom*. These sacred books are accessible only to the initiated members of the Druze community (Layish, 1982). The Druze

believe that as soon as one dies, his / her soul is reborn immediately into another body. If that person was bad in a past life, his or her body may return in the body of an animal. Reincarnation continues until one's soul becomes purified and unites with the Holy Soul (Rohland, 2006).

The Druze are not required to follow the Muslim duties of prayer, fasting, or pilgrimage to Mecca but may do so, especially if they feel that failure to do so may cause serious adverse repercussions (Oppenheim, 2006). They meet on Thursday nights in what they call among themselves *Khalwa*. They discuss community affairs during the first part of the meeting and they leave the other part for meditation, prayer, and discussing religious matters. The *Juhhal* are permitted to attend only the first part of the meeting (Rohland, 2006).

Exogamous marriage is prohibited in the Druze social system. The Druze marry only those who are Druze by blood. Today, the number of the Druze population is not agreed upon as different sources speak of different estimates of their numbers. However, the numbers of the Druze population worldwide vary from 700,000 according to Rohland, (2006) to 2 million according to Qutiesh, (2005). Most Druze today live in the mountainous regions in Lebanon, Syria, Palestine and Jordan. According to Swayd, (1998), an estimate of their numbers is as follows: 40-50% of them live in Syria, 30-40% live in Lebanon, 6-7% live in Israel, 1-2% in Jordan, and 2% live in the U.S.

Although they are scattered over different parts of the world, the Druze have symbols that unite them as a religious group. They have a flag with five colors, which according to Rohland, (2006), represents five prophets. There is also the star with five colors "representing the five luminaries who, along with prophets and helpers, teach the three levels of meaning essential to complete spirituality" (Swayd, 1998, p. 2).

Solidarity is one distinctive feature that defines the Druze community. Solidarity among the Druze can also be traced to the pillars of the Druze faith. There is a religious dimension to the display of solidarity among the Druze. Barouki, (2006) states that one of the seven pillars of the *tawhid* (monotheism) creed is mutual protection and assistance. This sense of brotherhood has always been a unifying force within the Druze society. The Druze people have certain traits that characterize them and distinguish them. They are known for their generosity, manliness, courtesy, and their respect for other faiths (Oppenheim, 2006; Ostrovitz, 2001). Based on the foregoing discussion, the Druze community seems to assume a unique and noteworthy position locally and worldwide.

#### The Druze of Jordan

There is very little work being done on the Druze of Jordan. The scarcity of such work could be ascribed to the community's small size. In the absence of any official census, it is very difficult to give exact figures of their number in the country. The International Religious Freedom Report (2005) estimates their population at around 20,000 persons. They live in different parts of the country; Amman, Irbid, Al-Azraq, Rusayfah, and Umm Al-Quttain. However, their biggest concentration is in Al-Azraq area. As a religious group, they have no political or religious representation in the political or religious life of the country. Farming has long been the primary type of work practiced by the Druze (Layish, 1982; Oppenheim, 2006; Rohland, 2006). However, recently the younger Druze are seeking civil jobs in the government or army.

According to The International Religious Freedom Report (2005), the Druze face no social discrimination in Jordan. However, they are not granted a confessional status as a separate

religious sect different from Muslims. Their places of worship and temples are not recognized by the government as religious venues, rather these temples are registered with the government as societies. In a word, the identification cards they hold state their religion as Muslims rather than Druze.

Um Al-Quttain, the location of this study, is a small village situated 55 km northeast of Mafraq city. It is a geographical continuation of *Jabal Ad Druze* (Druze Mountain). It borders with Syria at its southeastern part. It is located on the southeastern edge of the mountain. The village has a population between 5,000 and 7,000 inhabitants. The principal clans that inhabit Um Al-Quttain are Idamat, Mssa'ied, Shurufat, Shnablih and Druze.

Since official censuses have not treated them as an independent group, it was very difficult to reach an accurate number of the Druze in Umm Al-Quttain. However, interviewees in the village were asked to give an estimate of their number in the village. A very rough estimate of the total number of Druze, according to the majority of the village inhabitants, is about 1,000 people. The Druze in Umm Al-Quttain practice agriculture; however, recently more and more of them seek civil or army jobs. It should be pointed out that the Druze have their own neighborhood in the village, though some of them live in other parts of the village.

#### The Durzi Dialect

The Durzi dialect is spoken by the Druze in area of the geographically small, but densely populated, *Jabal Ad Druze* Dialect Region. It belongs to what is called the Syro-Palestinian family of dialects, which are still in use today in different parts of the Levant.

Due to lack of information on the nature of the Durzi dialect, an attempt will be made here to highlight the most prominent linguistic features that differentiate it from the other



colloquial varieties spoken in the region. The dialect shows considerable differences from the rest of the Levant dialects in vocabulary, phonology, morphology among other linguistic features. However, it closely resembles the southern-most Syrian dialects spoken by the Druze people. As far as the locale of this study is concerned, there are two dialects spoken in the village: the Durzi and the Bedouin dialects.

Generally speaking, different labels have been given by linguists in the Arab world to differentiate between the colloquial varieties, e.g., Nomadic-sedentary, Urban-rural, and Urban-Rural-Bedouin. Using the Nomadic-sedentary criterion to differentiate between these two dialects, we find that while the Durzi dialect can be classified as sedentary (qeltu-dialects group), the Bedouin dialect can be considered nomadic (geltu-dialects group), although some of its speakers are sedentary (cf. Blanc, 1964; Palva, 1976). On the whole, the differences between the two colloquial varieties is not so great as to preclude communication or hinder intelligibility between the two dialects' speakers, since the dialects share several other linguist features and belong to the same family of dialects (i.e., the Syro-Palestinian family of dialects).

The Durzi dialect is predominantly characterized by the following sounds and speech patterns, particularly consonantal segments. Even though all Standard Arabic (SA) consonantal segments are found in Jordanian Arabic as a whole, some of these segments, however, do not normally occur in the Durzi dialect. Among the phonological features which differentiate it from the dialects spoken in the region are the following segments: (Q), (Ð), (Θ), (d3), (ð) and (č). For instance, as far as the /q/ variable is concerned, contrary to the situation among the Bedouins, where the variant [g] is retained and heavily used, the Durzi dialect is characterized by retaining the [q] variant of this variable. For example, while a word like *qaal* (to say) is pronounced as

*gaal* by the Bedouins, it is pronounced as *qaal* in the Durzi dialect. The other five consonantal segments, /ð/, /θ/, /ð/, /dʒ/ and /č/ are distributed in the speech of the Durzi people as follows:

/D/ is the Durzi colloquial reflex of the SA phoneme /ð/,

/t/ is the Durzi colloquial reflex of the SA phoneme /θ/

/d/ is the Durzi colloquial reflex of the SA phoneme /ð /

/ʒ/ is the Durzi colloquial reflex of the SA phoneme /dʒ/

/k/ is the Durzi colloquial reflex of the SA phoneme /k/

It should be pointed out that with the exception of the SA segment /k/ which is realized in the speech of the Bedouins, in certain word-positions, as /č/ all of the other segments have the same SA realizations in the speech of the same group of speakers (i.e., the Bedouins) as /Dh/, /th/, /dh/ and /dʒ/ respectively.

Insofar as morphology is concerned, the Durzi dialect (DA), for example, has a double negation pattern that distinguishes it from the local Bedouin dialect (BA). Negation is realized in the speech of the Durzi people through adding [ma] before the verb, and [j] after the verb. For example: they would say /MaaDarabtakj/ meaning *I didn't hit you*, while Bedouins say /Maa Dharabtak/.

Also, there are differences between the Durzi dialect and the other dialects spoken in the region at the lexicon level. Consider the following examples:

DA	/Maaqa[ʔtakj/	→	BA	/Ma[ʔftak/	“I did not see you”
DA	/dayyaarah/	→	BA	/dalyah/	“vine
DA	/hallaq/	→	BA	/halhin/	“right now”
DA	/jaddih/	→	BA	/kundara/	“plastic shoes”
DA	/maxDaç/	→	BA	/xzaanah/	“ a closet”

DA /yabaarii/ → BA /yarabi/ “Oh God (to express exclamation)”.

Moreover, if they want to express resentment of someone’s behavior (mostly children’s behavior) or discomfort resulting from someone’s bringing bad news, the Druze would say /yaaqir/ which is a shortened form of /yaaqird/, literally meaning ‘*you monkey*’. Such a usage of this word is not found in the local Bedouin dialect and culture.

Religious celebrations, food, social gatherings, acceptable dress code and so on may also be responsible for language variation between the Bedouins and Druze. For instance, there are a considerable number of lexical items used in the Durzi dialect referring to objects that are unknown in the Bedouin culture such as types of food or women’s costumes. For example, the Druze wear certain items of clothing which are not used by the Bedouins. The following are illustrative:

(1) /tarbuuf/ with /qurS imʃanʃal/, is a small red cap worn by women, and it is usually decorated with gold coins;

(2) /Saayih/ or /mamluuk/ is a piece of fancy textile used to cover the lower part of the body.

The following are examples of the items used in Durzi for food.

(1) /kiʃk/ is a thick soup-like food made of wheat and yoghurt and is eaten with bread.

(2) /al-inbiit/ is a kind of home made wine.

(3) /maraabii/ or /ʃumaam/ is watermelon, however it is realized as /haruuʃ/ in the local Bedouin dialect.

## METHODS AND DATA COLLECTION

The purpose of the data collection process was to collect quantifiable data on *who* speaks *what* language to *whom* and *when* (Fishman, 1965). The methodology employed in this study is one of oral interviews, questionnaires, and self-report observations. Backing up the results of the questionnaire with data coming from other sources, namely interviews and participant observation, gives the results more credibility and significance. Additionally, by so doing, the negative effect of some of the possible pitfalls of sociolinguistic research can be reduced. These pitfalls relate to the inherent problem of reliability and validity in sociolinguistic research (Gorter, 1987). David (1991) also speaks of the importance of backing-up the findings of questionnaire with observation due to the expected discrepancy of what people claim they do and what they actually do with language.

The sample chosen for this study is limited to the families who were permanent residents in Um Al-Quttain and had lived in the village for at least twenty years. By employing the social network approach the researchers were able to select a total of 131 respondents for the study. It was also possible to gather a sample that represents different spheres of the Druze community with regard to age, sex, occupation, as well as educational background. Seventy males and 61 females were chosen for the purpose of this study. The present research then is based on data collected from 131 respondents, all of whom are Jordanian-Druze. Tables 1 - 4 below show the distribution of the sample according to age, sex, occupation and educational background.

Table 1: Distribution of Sample by Sex

Sex	Number of Respondents
Males	70
Females	61
Total	131

Table 2: Distribution of Sample by Age and Sex

Age	Male	Female	Number
10-14	12	11	23
15-19	14	12	26
20-29	15	17	32
30-39	11	10	21
40-49	5	3	8
50-59	7	7	14
60-	6	1	7
Total	70	61	131

Table 3: Distribution of Sample by Educational Background

Educational Background	Number of Respondents		Number
	M	F	
Grade 1-9	35	26	61
Grade 10-12	26	24	50
Two years college	1	1	2
Four years college	8	6	14
Illiterate	-	4	4
Total number of Respondents	70	61	131

Table 4: Distribution of Sample by Occupation

Occupation	Number of Respondents
Students	55
Housewives	30
Farmers	16
Army men	9
Teachers	6
Craftsmen	5

Mechanics	2
No Occupation	4
Others	4
Total Number of Respondents	131

The questionnaire employed in this study was fashioned after that used by AL-Khatib, (2001) and Dweik, (2000) in their studies on the Armenians and the Chechen of Jordan respectively. However, the questionnaire was modified so as to better serve the purposes of the present study. The first section of the questionnaire is designed to obtain demographic data pertaining to the respondent's age, sex, occupation, and education. The body of the questionnaire involves three main sections designed to elicit data on language proficiency, language use in different domains, and language attitude.

The second source of data comes from interviews. A number of informal interviews with members of the Druze community were conducted in the home of the interviewees. Different topics related to the Druze dialect were discussed. In addition to the discussion of language-related issues, numerous topics pertaining to the Druze culture as well as their traditions, behavior, customs, attitudes, problems that they face as a minority, and the attitude of the majority community toward them were discussed. It should be pointed out here that some interviews were also conducted with members of the majority community to discover their attitudes toward the Druze as a minority group inhabiting the village.

Due to socio-cultural constraints, the researchers were not allowed to interview female respondents. In Jordanian rural community it is unacceptable for a male stranger to meet with female members of the family. Usually male guests are received and entertained in the guest room by only male members of the family. Therefore, in such cases, the researchers resorted to

Druze assistants to administer the questionnaires and conduct interviews with the female subjects instead.

It is also worth mentioning that another source of data comes from one of the researchers' long personal experience with the speech community under investigation. He spent about three years in Umm AL-Quttain working as a schoolteacher. He became quite familiar with their traditions, habits and culture therefore he was able to enrich the study with a lot of information on their traditions, behavior, culture and lifestyle.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Domains of language use are defined by Fishman (1972a, p. 19) “in terms of institutional contexts or socio-ecological co-occurrences”. They attempt to designate the major clusters of interaction situations that occur in particular multilingual settings. He adds that “domains enable us to understand that language choice and topic... are... related to widespread socio-cultural norms and expectations” (p. 20). Holmes (1992) contends that using information related to domains of use in a speech community has two advantages. First, it is useful for capturing broad generalizations about any speech community. Second, it enables us to draw a simple model summarizing the norms of language use for the speech community under study.

Table 5: Response Percentages: Dialect Use in Different Domains

Question	B++	B+	B&D	D+	D++	NR	Sum %
1. What dialect do you use when you speak with your Druze neighbors?	-	1	5	11	82	1	100
2. What dialect do you use when you speak with your Bedouin neighbors?	10	15	56	10	9	-	100
3. What dialect do you use with your parents?	-	1	3	8	88	-	100

4. What dialect do you use with your brothers and sisters?	-	2	3	10	85	-	100
5. What dialect do you use with your relatives?	-	-	5	14	81	-	100
6. What dialect do you use in a religious meeting or ceremony?	-	7	47	20	24	2	100
7. What dialect do you use with your friends in school?	5	13	57	8	8	9	100
8. What dialect do you use when you are very angry?	1	3	9	15	69	3	100
9. What dialect do you use when you are very excited?	1	2	11	18	65	3	100
10. What dialect do you prefer to use when you are outside home?	5	11	48	14	18	4	100
11. What dialect do you prefer to use in your home?	-	1	3	11	82	3	100
12. What dialect do you prefer to use in the work place?	5	18	48	10	14	5	100
13. In what dialect do you dream?	-	2	9	16	65	8	100

#### Abbreviations key

B++ = Only Bedouin, B+ = Mostly Bedouin, B&D = Bedouin and Druze, D+ = Mostly Durzi, D++ = only Durzi, NR = No response.

The results of data analysis, as seen in Table 6, reveal that Durzi is the dialect employed by Jordanian-Druze in a wide range of domains. The use of Bedouin or Bedouin and Durzi appears to be restricted to certain social context such as school, workplace, or when socializing with other Bedouins. These results show the Druze of Jordan as still proficient in their dialect. Moreover, these results indicate that the dialect is in maintenance even among younger speakers. This assumption can be supported by the respondents' responses to items 3 and 4, which show that they tend to use Durzi 88% with parents, and 85% with brothers and sisters. Responses to



items 6, 11, 14, and 16 suggest that the Druze as a minority community are inclined to use the Bedouin rather than Durzi dialect only when communicating with Bedouins.

Breaking down the scores by the speaker's sex gives us a clearer picture of the variation tendencies between sex groups. We have observed, as seen in Table 6 below, that males are more inclined to use the Bedouin dialect when speaking with Bedouins than females. Females, in contrast, report less use of the Bedouin dialect across all social domains. This could be due to the fact that women in a village community have much lower exposure to the outside world than men. It is very likely that men's greater exposure has led them to use the Bedouin variety extensively, whether in the workplace or other work-related social gatherings.

Based on these findings, the researchers are in a position to say that the Durzi dialect is not being supplanted by the dialect of the majority. The findings obtained in the previous section also further demonstrate this conclusion. The appearance of the Durzi dialect in these domains of necessity in a consistent fashion plays a significant role in maintaining dialect use in the speech of the Druze people of Jordan.

Table 6: Response Percentages: Dialect Use by Sex of the Speaker

Question	Sex	B++	B+	BD	D+	D++	NR	Sum
1. What dialect do you use when you speak with your Druze neighbors?	M	-	1	10	16	72	1	100
	F	-	-	-	7	93	-	100
3. What dialect do you use when you speak with your Bedouin neighbors?	M	13	27	54	6	-	-	100
	F	7	2	56	15	20	-	100
4. What dialect do you use with your parents?	M	-	1	6	12	81	-	100
	F	-	-	-	5	95	-	100
5. What dialect do you use with your brothers and sisters?	M	-	3	6	14	77	-	100
	F	-	-	-	5	95	-	100

6. What dialect do you use with your relatives?	M	-	-	10	17	73	-	100
	F	-	-	-	10	90	-	100
7. What dialect do you use in a religious meeting or ceremony?	M	-	10	53	17	16	4	100
	F	-	3	41	23	33	-	100
8. What dialect do you use with your friends in school?	M	6	19	61	3	-	11	100
	F	3	7	52	13	18	7	100
9. What dialect do you use when you are very angry?	M	1	6	17	16	57	3	100
	F	-	-	-	13	84	3	100
10. What dialect do you use when you are very excited?	M	1	3	17	16	60	3	100
	F	-	-	5	21	71	3	100
11. What dialect do you prefer to use when you are outside home?	M	7	16	53	9	11	4	100
	F	3	5	43	20	26	3	100
12. What dialect do you prefer to use in your home?	M	-	1	6	10	80	3	100
	F	-	-	-	12	85	3	100
13. What dialect do you prefer to use at work place?	M	7	24	51	9	6	3	100
	F	4	12	42	11	23	8	100
14. In what dialect do you dream?	M	-	4	10	13	64	9	100
	F	-	-	8	19	65	8	100

### Linguistic Attitude

Fasold (1984) assumes that attitudes toward a language are often the reflection of the attitudes towards members of various ethnic groups. Similarly, Edwards (1982) suggests that people's reactions to language varieties reveal much of their perception of the speakers of these varieties. In any study of language attitudes, the concept of motives is important. Two basic motives are called instrumental and integrative motives. An integrative orientation reflects an interest in learning another language because of "a sincere and personal interest in the people and culture represented by the other language group, while an instrumental orientation

emphasize the practical value and advantages of learning a new language” (Lambert, 1974, p. 98).

Although the results shown in Table 7 are self-explanatory and their interpretation is largely a matter of viewpoint, a few general observations may be made. The data presented here along with the researchers’ observations strongly suggest that Jordanian Druze have positive attitudes toward their own dialect and culture. Most of the respondents agree that Durzi is more useful to them (item 1) than Bedouin, and that they view it as a more valuable means of communication (items 2, 3, and 5). Reactions to item 4 indicate that the majority of them (55%) are aware of the fact that it is important for them to use Bedouin. However, 44% of them still believe it is also important to them to speak Durzi. In items 6 and 7 the overwhelming majority of them have reported that Durzi is neither dying in the home nor in the community. In this way, most of the respondents display two contradicting types of attitude, i.e., the analyses reported in Table 7 indicate a robust association between dialect use and dialect attitude. The general attitude is that the respondents love their dialect and culture and would ideally wish to keep the dialect alive in their own families.

Table 7: Response Percentages: Attitudes of the Druze to Durzi and Bedouin

Question	Bedouin	Durzi	Both Dialects	Yes	No	No Response	Sum %
1. What dialect is more pleasant?	2	77	18	-	-	3	100
2. What dialect is more useful to you?	5	65	26	-	-	4	100
3. What dialect can you express yourself in better?	-	85	10	-	-	5	100
4. Is it important for you to speak the Bedouin dialect?	-	-	-	65	31	4	100

5. Is it important for you to speak the Durzi dialect?	-	-	-	85	8	7	100
6. Is the Durzi dialect dying or might die in your home?	-	-	-	2	95	3	100
7. Is the Druze dialect dying or might die in your local community?	-	-	-	8	89	3	100

The attitudes of the Durzi-speaking community come to the foreground as they reflect upon the dialect that they use in the home. Attitudes displayed by families about Durzi use in the home were often just as powerful as a verbal command. A university male student-in his early twenties states that you were judged negatively if you didn't speak Durzi and that people's reactions would often be "I can't believe you don't speak Durzi!" One can only imagine the feelings of disapproval or even embarrassment that a person would feel after such a negative reaction from his / her parents. Upon asking some of the respondents about their attitudes toward using Bedouin in the neighborhood, a great number of them attributed the ability of the speakers to use Bedouin well to their contact with the majority speech community. Initially, some respondents reacted negatively, but after careful probing, they stated that their answers associated this negativity with their insecurity in speaking the Bedouin dialect. Other respondents thought that those who use Bedouin in places beyond their neighborhood want only to impress other people, i.e., the Bedouins, with their competence in the dialect and win the Bedouins' social approval. It should be noted that despite the emphasis on the Durzi dialect, no respondent reported his / her parents having negative attitudes towards Bedouin or any of the other local varieties, and thus discouraging acquisition. In every case, the respondents reported that their parents do encourage them to use both varieties, the Durzi and Bedouin.

Based on these results, it may be proffered that the attitudes of the Durzi-speaking community toward the local spoken dialect are both instrumental and integrative, but it is more instrumental than integrative. This assumption is supported by the respondents' answers to item 4 in which the majority of them (65%) reported that it is also important for them to speak Bedouin. The foregoing discussion implies that the Druze community members are drawn by two forces, namely the desire on their part to be viewed as members of the host speech community in order to achieve certain social and instrumental ends, and the desire to maintain their dialect, culture, and identity.

#### Age as an Indicator of Dialect Maintenance

It has been observed in numerous sociolinguistic studies on language maintenance and language shift that immigrant speech communities are bound to experience a shift gradually to the language used by the majority speech community within three to four generations (Al-Khatib, 2001; Fishman, 1966, 1996; Milroy, 1987; Sawaie, 1985). Janet Holmes (1992) postulates three phases that a language goes through on its way to extinction as its speakers shift progressively to the other language; (1) migrants are virtually monolingual in their mother tongue, (2) their children are bilingual, and (3) their grandchildren are often monolingual in the language of the 'host' language.

Table 8 below reveals no significant differences between the four age groups with regard to their use of the two dialects in the home and the surrounding neighborhood. These results appear to indicate that the four age groups overall did not provide significantly different ratings. It appears that the older respondents (those in the 50+ age-group) had higher user rates than the other three age groups. It should be noted that in the current case, the initiative came from the

youngest members (those in the 10-19 age group) of the community. Generally, it is this generation that begins to show a desire to use something from the dominant dialect in the home, though such a use is still not that significant. A comparison between Tables 8 and 5 shows that, across all age groups, there appear to be a high intergenerational maintenance among the Druze of Jordan. Conversely, the results support those arrived at earlier in Tables 5, 6, and 7 which show the Druze speech community as very loyal to their dialect and identity. However, it should be noted that despite this trend, we have observed many of the children using Bedouin fluently at school when interacting with Bedouin children.

Table 8: Response Percentages: Dialect use in the Home and Neighborhood by Age

Generation	B++	B+	B&D	D+	D++	NR	Sum %
10-19	-	4	6	9	80	1	100
20-29	-	2	4	13	80	1	100
30-49	-	-	4	13	81	2	100
50+	-	-	1	8	91	-	100

#### Aspects of Cultural Maintenance

Acculturation is defined as a process in which members of one cultural group adopt the beliefs and behaviors of another group. Even though acculturation is usually in the direction of a minority group adopting habits and language patterns of the dominant group, acculturation can be reciprocal, i.e., the dominant group may also adopt patterns typical of the minority group.

Assimilation of one cultural group into another may be evidenced by changes in language preference, adoption of common attitudes and values, membership in common social groups and institutions, and loss of separate political or ethnic identification (Adler & Kamel, 2004; Hazuda et al., 1988). Similarly, Brown (1994) defines acculturation as the process of becoming adapted to

a new culture. It is a reorientation of thinking and feeling. He adds the process of acculturation runs even deeper when language is brought into the picture. According to Scollon and Scollon (2006), patterns of social behavior are also given a firm cast during the period of enculturation.

There is a growing amount of literature on the factors that explain the inseparability of culture and language (AL-Khatib & AL-Ali, 2005; Crawford, 1995; Clyne, 1988; David, 1991; Dorian, 1987; Edwards, 2006; Fishman, 1996). All these studies accentuated the importance of studying language in relation to culture. Fishman (1991) contends that the relationship between the two concepts is three-dimensional. Firstly, there is a kind of indexical relationship between language and culture. Secondly, the most important relationship is that culture is in the language and is expressed in and through the language. Thirdly, a deeper relationship is the symbolic relationship. Fishman (1996) adds that “culture is expressed through language, when language is lost, those things that represent a way of life, a way of valuing, and human reality, are also lost” (p. 79).

As far as the Durzi-speaking community is concerned, all evidence points to the fact that there is still an attachment relationship between the Druze of Um Al-Quttain and their ethnic background and roots. Informal and formal discussions with several members of them indicated that they have a sincere faith in their beliefs, though they have a limited ability to explain them. The spread of mass media, the availability of internet, and the spread of satellite channels service in a world of intercultural communication seem not to arouse any kind of curiosity among the *uninitiated* class (90% of the Druze community) to know more than what they are allowed to know about their beliefs. Interviews have provided the researchers with the knowledge that there is a sense of satisfaction among them on the roles they are given as *uninitiated* followers. A good example of their attachment to their roots is the heavy use of some expressions which are still

used by them. Among these, is *Abu Ibrahim!* (Abu Ibrahim Ismail, is a man of religion in the Druze creed), which is usually used to invoke help and support. Moreover, through the visits that the researchers made to some of the respondents' homes, it was noticed that the pictures of some of their religious leaders (*Uqqal*) are still displayed in their halls.

Socially speaking, they are still not adapted to living in close proximity to the Bedouins and reduce contact by physically keeping distance, particularly in terms of housing. The residential closeness of the Druze to each other also facilitates communication in their own dialect. Living in the same neighborhood provides more opportunities for them to practice their own dialect, habits and traditions, and their way of life. Despite the passage of almost 80 years, the Druze have maintained their culture and dialect through their resistance to inter-ethnic marriages. Their quest to maintain the purity of Druze blood, which is dictated by their religious beliefs, helps them maintain such a strict attitude towards exogamous marriage. Young people are expected and encouraged to find marriage partners from their own ethnic group. Most of the interviewees have reported that divorce is neither acceptable nor desirable, except in extreme cases, and polygamy is also detestable, according to their religious teachings. As said earlier, solidarity among the Druze, has long been one of the basic religious social commitments. Therefore, their commitment to socialization among each other goes beyond the boundary of their village. They tend to participate in social occasions that take place in other Druze areas of Jordan like Al-Azraq and Amman city.

Insofar as the traditional dress is concerned, men's dress is not different from that of the other people in the village. However, Druze women have a distinctive traditional dress that distinguishes them from the Bedouin women. For example, young woman wear a green velvet *gambaz* embroidered with silver thread. The material is in keeping with the preference for velvet,



satin and other ornate fabrics in fashioning costumes. Older Druze women will be observed in more conservative simple black dress with white veil. This attire is often seen in larger Druze communities (The Levant, 2008). In wedding parties, the Druze celebrate with songs and music different from those used by the Bedouins. These songs maintain the cultural and moral standards of the group in their very performance. Although the musical instruments, *rababa*, used in the folklore of the two cultural groups are very much the same, the Druze have their own songs which differ in lyrics and music. Some of the songs which are associated with the Druze folklore in Umm Al-Quttain are /Hnajina ya Hnajina/ and /?Ifan/ which is a long poem that is sung by one person and to be repeated by others. To conclude, it could be said that the Druze of Umm AL-Quttain have a great sense of attachment to their heritage and culture, though, for pragmatic reasons, they are very careful not to be seen different from others.

## CONCLUSION

The research results show that the Druze of Um Al-Quttain are engaged in a process of dialect and cultural maintenance. All evidence points to the fact that the process is the outcome of a considerable number of socio-cultural factors, and such factors are not expected to be weakened in the foreseeable future.

This research has also shown that there have been at least two factors of great effect in determining the type and amount of maintenance among the Druze speech community: (1) the ideological / religious climate of the Druze community, including the positive attitudes exhibited by the Druze toward their ethnic background, and (2) the rural context with limited access to the larger Jordanian communities. These factors act as powerful elements for resisting the

mainstream Jordanian community and have a strong positive impact on the maintenance of the Durzi dialect in the community.

The impact of a number other sociodemographic factors cannot be overlooked. These can be summarized as follows:

- (1) Intermarriage. It is a well-known fact that intermarriage between different groups can lead to and accelerate language shift. As said earlier, Exogamous marriage is prohibited in the Druze social system. The Druze marry only those who are Druze by blood. Therefore, this strengthens maintenance of their dialect and culture.
- (2) Language shift tends to be slower among communities where the minority language and identity are highly valued. Because the Durzi dialect is seen as an important symbol of their ethnic identity, it can generally be expected to survive longer.
- (3) The existence of linguistic and cultural islands restricts the interaction of the Druze with the majority culture, and strengthens community ties among themselves.
- (4) Using the Durzi dialect with the children in the home and in the neighborhood has helped the children to maintain and build their fluency in the dialect.
- (5) Residential contiguity makes communication in the Durzi dialect, particularly for women, easier; therefore they are found to be more faithful to their dialect than men, who in turn have easier access to the outside world.
- (6) Identity and sect-affiliation have very important roles to play in the process of dialect and cultural maintenance. As said above, the Druze of Jordan are not granted status as a separate religious sect. Their places of worship and temples are not recognized by the government as religious venues, rather they are registered as societies. This makes

them say their Prayers secretly behind closed doors. And inside their own communities.

Lastly, this paper is a contribution to sociolinguistic theory and has provided insights of the dynamic relationship between language and culture from the context of the Durzi-speaking community in rural Jordan. It directly supports Fishman's (2001) insistence on the intergenerational and demographically concentrated home-family-neighborhood-community as the basis for community dialect transmission and as the most suitable context for its continued use. The findings of the intertwined relationship between language and society presented in this paper suggest that there is much to be gained from turning the focus of investigation to the aspects of dialect / language maintenance and shift; the process of shaping and reshaping of identities by virtue of its own dynamic nature. Looking at language use as one of the varied social practices, it becomes possible to understand the social factors underlying any type of interaction.

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