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Katrien Vanpee
University of Minnesota

MULTIDIALECTAL APPROACHES AND SOCIAL JUSTICE PEDAGOGY: TOWARD LINGUISTICALLY AND CULTURALLY DIVERSIFIED ARABIC CURRICULA FOR THE COLLEGIATE U.S. ARABIC CLASSROOM

Abstract:
As instruction in colloquial Arabic has increasingly become part of collegiate Arabic language programs, the primary colloquials taught have overwhelmingly been Egyptian and some form of Levantine Arabic. While these choices were to some extent informed by practical considerations, they reinforce imaginings of an Arab world in which cultural and political centers like Cairo and Damascus and their Arabic varieties are deemed the most valuable objects of study, consigning other areas of the region to the periphery. Those areas have remained relatively invisible in the curriculum, both linguistically and culturally.

As such, while the "MSA+Egyptian/Levantine" model has contributed to improvements in students' sociolinguistic competence, it inadvertently has sustained erasures. In the twenty-first century Arab world, increased intraregional flows of people and technologically mediated communication have rendered the linguistic and cultural diversity of the region more accessible to scholars and students, making curricula focused on the practices of a few "central" areas increasingly anachronistic.

In recent years, some linguists of Arabic have emphasized the importance of developing receptive skills in multiple colloquials, and of fostering learners' metalinguistic awareness of the wide-ranging linguistic variation in Arabic (Soliman, 2023; Trentman, 2022; Trentman & Shiri, 2020). In their discussions of multidialectal approaches to Arabic, the potential of such approaches to include more systemic engagement with the cultural diversity of the Arab world has not yet been foregrounded. As cultural practices vary based

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on the same factors that determine linguistic variety (Kubota, 2003), it follows that multidialectal approaches will be most impactful if the multicultural content of course materials in various colloquials receives equal attention as the comparative study of colloquial features.

Social justice pedagogy, which has remained underexplored as a yardstick for Arabic curriculum design, equips us to "include marginalized voices not as an additive component, but as an integral part of the knowledge about the world with which we ask our students to engage" (Tarnawska Senel, 2020, p. 65). Its focus on the inclusion of marginalized groups and the interrogation of power dynamics is helpful to curriculum designers looking to destabilize instructional models focused on centers of power. Similarly, it creates space for those linguistic varieties that have, for one reason or another, enjoyed lower "linguistic legitimacy" (Reagan & Osborn, 2021, p. 43, 67).

This paper argues that pairing multidialectal approaches to the teaching of Arabic with the principles of social justice pedagogy can support Arabic curriculum designers in their efforts to diversify their curricula both linguistically and culturally. The author will review those principles of social justice pedagogy that may contribute to the successful design and implementation of linguistically and culturally diversified Arabic curricula. She will offer examples of curriculum design at various levels (beginning, intermediate, advanced) that takes such principles as its starting point, and of ways in which existing, textbook-based curricula can be adapted toward greater linguistic and cultural inclusivity. Additionally, she will discuss the challenges involved in this process, and address misgivings Arabic language educators may have about the feasibility and desirability of a fundamentally diversified Arabic curriculum.

Keywords: curriculum design ◆ diversification ◆ multidialectal approaches ◆ social justice pedagogy ◆ Arabic

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Introduction

In this piece, I build on a previous article (Vanpee, 2022) in which I point to the fact that in terms of Arabic colloquial instruction, collegiate U.S. Arabic programs have by and large prioritized the teaching of Egyptian and/or Levantine Arabic.[1] The addition of colloquial instruction to Arabic curricula that previously focused primarily on Modern Standard Arabic (MSA) has been vitally important to improve our students' sociolinguistic competence in Arabic. Yet our field's relatively consistent focus on two colloquials out of many has also, however inadvertently, sustained erasures. As we, in our Arabic programs, reinforce imaginings

[1] I am grateful to the anonymous reviewers of the present article for their thoughtful and helpful comments.

of an Arab world in which cultural and political centers like Cairo and Damascus and their Arabic varieties are deemed the most valuable objects of study, we simultaneously consign other areas of the region to the periphery. Those areas have remained relatively invisible in the curriculum, both linguistically and culturally.

In the following pages, I compare the privileging of specific language varieties in U.S. Arabic language curricula to similar practices in English and other world language classrooms in the U.S. context. As an analytical lens, I use the concept of linguistic legitimacy. I briefly review the issues caused by the curricular centering of just a few colloquials alongside MSA. As I explore ways of addressing those issues and argue for the value of linguistically and culturally diversified curricula, I discuss the possibilities held by recently proposed multidialectal / variationist approaches to the teaching of colloquial Arabic.[2] I describe how such approaches can be strengthened by combining them with insights from social justice pedagogy. In the second half of the paper, I offer examples of lessons and course projects grounded in a combined multidialectal/ social justice approach that works toward curricular diversification.

My argument for the linguistic and cultural diversification of collegiate U.S. Arabic curricula has several ultimate goals. Systematic attention to diverse Arabic colloquials should help students better understand discourse in a wider range of Arabic varieties. It should also help lower affective barriers students may have developed against studying colloquials. Such barriers, which themselves can hinder students' comprehension,[3] can result from unfamiliarity and from received ideas about the lower epistemic value of specific Arab linguacultures. These ideas are a reflection of ideologies of linguistic legitimacy known to be perpetuated and reinforced in educational and professional environments, the media, and informally among language users (Chakrani, 2015; Hachimi, 2013; Lippi-Green, 2012; Piller, 2016; Reagan, 2019; Reagan & Osborn, 2021; Shiri, 2002; Soulaimani, 2019). Because such ideologies lead to a devalorisation of some colloquials and the communities that use them, curricular diversification also aims to increase the space for, and validation of, our instructors' and heritage learners' diverse linguacultures in the classroom, to create a more inclusive educational

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[2] While Soliman uses the term "variationist," the approach for which she advocates appears to be largely the same as the approach Trentman & Shiri have named "multidialectal." For convenience's sake, I use only the term multidialectal in the remainder of this paper.

[3] See Oxford (1990) for a general discussion of the impact of affect on the language learning process, and Elkhafaifi (2005) for an Arabic-specific study of the correlation between listening anxiety and student comprehension scores.

environment. Finally, curricular diversification can help all our learners develop a more nuanced understanding of, and appreciation for, the situatedness of linguistic and cultural practices.

Curriculum Design and Ideology

Curriculum design for the world language classroom necessarily involves making complex choices about what to focus on most, least, and not at all, and how elements of the curriculum should be sequenced.[4] These choices are based on a combination of linguistic, student-oriented, pragmatic, logistical and ideological considerations. They include, for example, curriculum developers' assessments of student learning goals and needs; desires to make the curriculum cognitively suited to the level of the learners and align it with their age groups and interests; and desires to align course content with the ACTFL proficiency guidelines. They also include developers' understanding of which language forms are needed for expression and comprehension at the various proficiency levels and which forms can serve as scaffolds for the understanding of others. Additionally, the availability of instructional resources including textbooks and reference works; developers' personal expertise; and the degree of access to authentic texts all play a role. Finally, curriculum design is influenced by developers' ideologies: their beliefs about and attitudes toward the language, its varieties and registers, and toward users of the language and its varieties. These ideologies can be informed by developers' educational background and social experiences and the depth of their familiarity with diverse linguistic and curricular communities. Developers' ideologies are also informed by the degree to which they subscribe to or embody the linguistic and cultural practices, products, and perspectives of socio-economic elites.

[4] Traditional conceptualizations of curriculum have focused rather narrowly on material to be taught and experiences acquired. More modern understandings of curriculum, such as Eisner's (1994), have focused not just on what is taught ("the explicit curriculum"), but also on what is not taught (the "excluded curriculum" or "null curriculum"), and on elements of the educational environment that impart ideas or values onto students (the "implicit" or "hidden" curriculum—f.ex. classroom culture). Critical curriculum scholars like Au similarly include the educational environment in their definitions of curriculum, but, in their attention to the relationship between knowledge and power, additionally focus on how this environment structures access to learning and knowledge. Such critical understandings of curriculum are helpful to anyone studying the role of ideologies in the educational system. See Au (2012) for an in-depth discussion.

Language Ideologies, Linguistic Legitimacy, and Linguistic Hierarchies

Language ideologies that affect curriculum design include ideologies of linguistic legitimacy. These are beliefs that certain languages or language varieties are "superior in some fundamental way to others" and, reversely, that there are other languages/ language varieties that are in some way or another "inferior" (Reagan, 2016, p. 29). In other words, languages and language varieties are viewed as 'different, but not equal' and are categorized hierarchically (Bourdieu, 1977; Devereaux & Palmer, 2019; Hachimi, 2013; Piller, 2016). As linguists have noted many times over, while there are no *linguistic* grounds for the hierarchization (or "stratification") of languages or language varieties, judgments about the relative value of languages and language varieties have been, and continue to be, very common (Lippi-Green, 2012; Reagan, 2019). While as a concept, linguistic legitimacy was first articulated by Bourdieu (1991, 1997) and has received much attention in sociolinguistics, it has also been a concern for social justice educators, especially in light of the resulting marginalization and devalorisation of language varieties and speech communities (see, for example, Reagan, 2019, and Reagan & Osborn, 2002, 2021).

Globally as well as in the U.S. context, examples of ideologies of linguistic legitimacy are plentiful. One such example is standard language ideology (Lippi-Green, 2012), according to which people view standardized language varieties through a normative lens as more correct, more adequate, and broadly speaking "better" than non-standardized language varieties, and hence as the language variety that should be used and taught in schools and at universities. Standardized language varieties can coincide with what sociopolitical and racial elites grew up speaking at home. In the U.S. context, Standardized American English has been privileged in educational institutions at the expense of varieties like African American English (AAE) (Reagan & Osborn, 2002, 2021). This has also translated into educators' active devalorisation of non-standard varieties in the classroom. In the case of AAE, teacher-student interactions in which teachers disparage students' use of AAE and insist on them switching into "proper" English are well documented (see, for example, Baugh, 2000; Heath, 1983, as cited in Reagan, 2016).

Ideologies of linguistic legitimacy also inform the privileging, in educational systems, of the language varieties and the cultural practices, products, and perspectives of former colonial centers of power, and of sociopolitical elites. In the U.S. context, for a long time, the teaching of French was focused on the hexagonal Francophonie (i.e. the French spoken in the nation-state of France; Miller, 2022) and the teaching of Spanish on the standardized variety used in Spain. Linguistic and cultural communities that were not White, middle- or upper-middle class

and born and raised in the French or Spanish nation-state, as well as speakers who were not cisgender, were typically underrepresented in these language curricula (Miller, 2022; Zárate-Sández, 2021).

Given that the way people use language is an essential part of their culture and their identity, value judgments about the language variety people use translate into value judgments about their users. In the educational context, to marginalize or exclude people's linguaculture from the curriculum is to reinforce ideologies that present some communities and practices as "less authentic" than others (Chakrani, 2015; Godley & Reaser, 2018; Hachimi, 2013; see also Kumashiro, 2009, as cited in Baggett, 2022). Standard language ideologies have not just academically disadvantaged learners who are speakers of non-standard language varieties; the devaluing of those language varieties and attempts to keep them out of curricula and classrooms has had nefarious consequences for their speakers' experience with the education system, which othered and delegitimized not just their home language, but their selves (Reagan, 2016).

Various bodies of scholarship concerned with the impact of language ideologies in educational contexts and with the decolonization of world language curricula have problematized, among other things, the tendency in educational settings to primarily teach standardized language varieties and the cultural practices, products, and perspectives of elites and former colonial centers of power. Such scholarship includes work focused on critical language awareness;[5] social justice in the world language classroom; linguistic justice; and the work of advocates for inclusive and culturally sustaining pedagogies. Some teachers of English in U.S. classrooms are now validating AAE and incorporating it into their curricula (See f.ex. Devereaux & Palmer, 2019). Similarly, educators of French are exploring ways to teach the French of a global, as opposed to hexagonal, Francophonie (Miller, 2022; Schechner, 2022). Educators of Spanish are increasingly seeking to incorporate Latin American Spanish, and Latinx experiences, into their curricula (Ennser-Kananen & Quiñones-Oramas, 2022), and scholars of German have questioned the "monolithic, ethno-national, heteronormative, and ableist image of what it is to 'be' and 'become' German" (Randall, 2020, p. 43). To give an example of a less commonly taught language, already in the first years of this century, Kubota warned against the

[5] Shapiro defines critical language awareness (CLA) as knowledge or awareness about "the intersections of language, identity, power, and privilege." CLA pedagogy aims to foster students' critical language awareness "with the goal of promoting self-reflection, social justice, and [students'] rhetorical agency." (Shapiro, 2022, p. 4). For examples of scholarship on CLA and CLA pedagogy in the U.S. educational context, see the work of Alim; Godley & Reaser; Loza & Beaudrie (2021); Shapiro; and Wolfram, amongst others.

misrepresentation, in Japanese classes, of Japanese culture as homogenous and offered examples of ways to teach the diversity within Japanese cultural practices (Kubota, 2003).

Language Ideologies, Linguistic Legitimacy, and Arabic Language Curricula

Unsurprisingly, standard language ideology and other ideologies of linguistic legitimacy also impact people's views on Classical Arabic, Modern Standard Arabic, and the many Arabic colloquials. Sociolinguists of Arabic have documented how those views are articulated publicly and privately among native speakers, instructors and students of Arabic (native and non-native alike), and in the media, both within the Arab world and in the diaspora. For example, Chakrani (2015), Hachimi (2013), and Shiri (2002) have cogently demonstrated how ideologies of linguistic legitimacy are articulated, and resisted, in interdialectal exchanges between native speakers of Arabic in the workplace, on the stage of televised pan-Arab competitions, and during gatherings of friends.

Soulaimani (2019) has demonstrated how ideas about the linguistic legitimacy of Arabic language varieties are perpetuated in U.S. higher education—specifically, how they are perpetuated by Arabic instructors and students, and how easily they are undone when students are exposed to colloquials about which they had heard negative judgments (for example, stereotypes about North African Arabic as incomprehensible, too difficult, not usable beyond its local context, or too heavily influenced by French to still be fully "Arabic").[6]

In collegiate U.S. Arabic programs, Arabic instruction has focused on the teaching of MSA roughly since the mid-twentieth century (McCarus, 1987). The choice to teach MSA mirrored the way Arabic was—and still is—taught in schools and in higher education in the Arab world, and was certainly reflective of standard language ideology. As MSA has never been the language variety children in any community in or beyond the Arab world grow up speaking, the privileging of MSA in Arab and U.S. educational institutions often meant that students were exposed to imaginings of their home colloquials as less refined or grammatically unsound.

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[6] I myself have in years past commented on a supposed 'limited usability' of North African Arabic in conversations with students. I have since been confronted with a different reality and have come to see these comments, which I now regret, in a different light.

In the field of Teaching Arabic as an Additional Language in the U.S.,[7] we have, meanwhile, come some way from our preoccupation with the teaching of MSA. In the latter decades of the twentieth century, educators in our field increasingly articulated an understanding that the long-standing practice of teaching exclusively MSA in their programs left students unequipped to efficiently navigate a wide range of communicative situations. As those situations primarily pertained to Arabic speakers' informal communication in their daily lives, i.e. the contexts in which learners of other languages often learn to communicate first,[8] shifting our instruction away from an exclusive emphasis on MSA, which is primarily reserved for formal and often written correspondence, for many Arabic educators felt not only important, but urgent.

An increasing number of Arabic programs have begun to include the teaching of colloquial Arabic—a register of the language that is primarily used for informal communication and for much spoken communication.[9] One could argue that the increased incorporation of colloquial in our Arabic programs has largely been motivated by a pragmatic desire to improve the sociolinguistic competence of our learners. Just as importantly, however, in ideological terms, it came about in a broader social and academic context in which Arabic-as-an-Additional-

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[7] While Teaching Arabic as a Foreign Language, or TAFL in short, has certainly been a common way to refer to our field, the use of "world language" or also "additional language" avoids the "othering" dynamic created by the use of the word "foreign." While "world language" refers to characteristics of the language that is studied, "additional language" focuses on the relationship of this language to the learner vis-à-vis other languages the learner already uses, be it one or more home languages, or one's home language(s) plus other languages. In this article, I refer to the profession of Arabic instructors as Teaching Arabic as an Additional Language but I speak of the world language classroom, as the phrase "additional language classroom" might be confusing.

[8] I refer here to the phenomenon that Ryding has aptly named "reverse privileging." (Ryding, 2013, 2017).

[9] I make no claims as to whether programs that incorporate colloquial instruction are currently still in the minority or have become a majority, as I am not aware of any recent surveys that include all collegiate U.S. Arabic programs. In Elkhafaifi's survey of 58 Arabic instructors in higher education, the number of instructors who teach both colloquial and MSA amounts to 55% (Elkhafaifi, 2001, p. 60). In Abdalla and Al-Batal's survey, published in 2011-2012, the number of respondents who teach in programs that offer colloquial, either sometimes or consistently, amounts to 54.9% (Abdalla and Al-Batal, 2011-2012, p. 16). On the other hand, in 2018, Al-Batal writes that "exclusive privileging of MSA continues to dominate" (Al-Batal, 2018, p. 4). Al-Batal does, however, appear to also take K-12 programs into consideration.

Language educators increasingly rejected views on colloquials as degenerated, deficient forms of the language.

The addition of colloquial instruction to collegiate U.S. Arabic curricula has not only meant improvements in students' sociolinguistic competence; it has also contributed to some extent to a climate of valorisation of Arabic L1 speakers' home colloquials. As Soulaimani (2019) has demonstrated, however, the latter has not meant that all Arabic colloquials and their speakers are valorized to an equal extent in U.S. colleges and universities. After all, the idea of linguistic legitimacy does not solely apply to distinctions drawn between standardized and non-standardized language varieties. Especially since the standardized varieties of many languages originated as colloquials among other colloquials, the idea of linguistic legitimacy can also play out between non-standardized varieties (Hachimi, 2013).

As mentioned, the primary colloquials taught in collegiate Arabic language programs have overwhelmingly been Egyptian and some form of Levantine Arabic. It is not my intent in this paper to undertake a detailed examination of the contextual, pragmatic, and ideological factors that have informed these choices. As examples of such factors one could name the draw of well-reputed study-abroad programs in Cairo and the Levant, the time spent by many among the current generation of non-native Arabic instructors in these places, the status of mid-twentieth-century Cairo and Beirut as political and cultural centers in the Arab world, the high numbers of U.S. Arabic instructors of Egyptian and Levantine origin compared to others, and Arabic instructors' understandable preference to primarily teach the colloquial they grew up speaking or studied the longest. But one could also name ideological biases against, for example, North African Arabic, and the related questioning of the full "Arabness" of people from North Africa. As mentioned, the operation of these forms of linguistic prejudice, including in the educational realm, has been well documented (Chakrani, 2015; Hachimi, 2013; Shiri, 2002; Soulaimani, 2019). The factors I mention here do not form an exhaustive list, and an examination of their interplay could fill at least an article-length study. While that would undeniably deepen our understanding of developments in the field of Teaching Arabic as an Additional Language in the U.S., my focus is instead on the consequences this curricular dominance of two regional colloquials has had. Even if those consequences can be understood as largely unintended on the part of curriculum developers and Arabic program directors—myself included—, they are not trivial.

Curricular Centering and Marginalization: Erasures Despite Colloquial Instruction

To teach, in collegiate U.S. Arabic curricula, a shared formal register and then, almost across the board, the same two colloquial varieties, means to have students imagine an Arab world that has a linguistic and cultural core in Egypt and the Levant, and in which other linguistic and cultural communities remain largely unknown. In in our era of technologically-enhanced, globalized connectedness, it is very unlikely that our learners, throughout their lives, will solely encounter Arabic speakers from Egypt and the Levant. Primary study-abroad destinations are currently different from those in the historical moment in which the teaching of Egyptian and Levantine became popular, as established study-abroad programs in Cairo and Damascus have moved away, and students' study-abroad choices today tend to include Morocco, Qatar, and Oman. The Internet, satellite television and social media have made audio and audiovisual content from all over the Arab world easily accessible; cultural and political centers in the Arab world have diversified; and transnational travel in the region, as elsewhere in the world, has increased. In disciplines such as history, anthropology, political science, and literary studies, scholarship on areas of the Arab world other than Egypt or the Levant has increased. The success of the Association for Gulf and Arabian Peninsula Studies (AGAPS) as a professional organization and of the publications of its members can serve as just one of many examples.[10] In other words: we currently do not live in a time in which Cairo and Damascus or Amman and the colloquials spoken in those places serve as *sine qua non* points of orientation for Arabic learners. Regardless of the historical and contemporary role of these cities as political and cultural centers, to highlight almost exclusively life in these cities is to obscure the realities of life and language in other places in the Arab world, and misrepresents the region as more linguistically and culturally centripetal than it is. Similarly, as said before, to present the colloquials of these area as "core" is to create a hierarchy of colloquials for which there is no linguistic evidence. Regardless of the ease with which Egyptian and Levantine colloquial tend to be understood anywhere in the Arab world, that does not mean that Arabs elsewhere choose to learn those colloquials instead of speaking their own. If Arabic learners in the U.S. believe that Egyptian and Levantine are easier to learn than other Arabic colloquials, then that is because we have exposed them consistently to those varieties (or articulated that myth in front of them), and not to the many other varieties of Arabic. With almost no exposure to the colloquials other than those of Egypt and the Levant, our learners will not easily understand their non-Egyptian / non-Levantine interlocutors—for example, but not only, those from North

[10] Onley and Nonneman (2020) provide an excellent overview of the development of the field and AGAPS' journal, the Journal of Arabian Studies.

Africa. There are certain comprehension-based communicative barriers that our centering of Egyptian and Levantine Arabic does not remove. Simultaneously, this centering "others" the colloquials and cultural practices, products and perspectives of people from elsewhere in the Arab world. The only basis our learners have for understanding these practices, products and perspectives is grounded in their familiarity with how things are said and done in Cairo/ Damascus/ Amman, making these cities, again, the imagined "centers of how Arabs speak and live," to which all others are compared. Those other ways of speaking and living include those of our Arabic instructors and heritage learners whose family origins lie in other parts of the Arab world. When it comes to those learners, research has shown that when students don't see themselves represented in their curricula, they feel less connected to what they are learning (Hines-Gaither et al., 2022).

To sum up: It is absolutely the case that this center-versus-periphery approach to our curricula has done much to increase students' sociolinguistic competence in terms of improving their ability to speak informally. Yet this approach has its limits in facilitating comprehension of other colloquials; it is, in our current historical moment, becoming increasingly anachronistic; and worse, it validates certain Arab identities at the expense of others. As I have discussed elsewhere (Vanpee, 2022), not only does this approach perpetuate negative attitudes toward certain varieties of Arabic and the people who speak them, it reinforces these attitudes.

Curricular Diversification and Multidialectal Approaches

In recent years, several Arabic linguists have begun to advocate for the adoption of multidialectal approaches to the teaching of Arabic (Soliman, 2023; Trentman, 2022; Trentman & Shiri, 2020). Their advocacy is grounded in the reality that learners of Arabic during their lifetime are unlikely to find themselves in communicative situations solely with speakers of a single colloquial. Trentman, Shiri and Soliman refine the arguments that had previously been used for implementation of an "MSA+one dialect" approach: If the former emphasized the need for Arabic learners to be able to express themselves efficiently in communicative situations in which colloquial is perceived as the most appropriate register (i.e. just about all informal, and often spoken communicative situations), advocates for multidialectal approaches add to this an awareness that a learner's ability to express themselves in one colloquial does not automatically mean they will also comprehend what speakers may say to them in different colloquials. As such, the argument for multidialectal approaches has a practical dimension, stemming from a concern with enabling learners to function more efficiently in a variety of informal communicative situations with speakers from different Arab linguistic communities.

Simultaneously, Trentman's work on the plurilingual realities of study-abroad experiences also leads her to reinforce her critical stance toward monolingual ideologies, whether they take the form of privileging the teaching of one standardized language variety associated with socio-economic and political elites, or the teaching of a single colloquial alongside MSA (2022).

For educators looking to teach the linguistic and cultural practices of Arab communities inclusively, with an interest in nurturing students' awareness of language ideologies and attitudes and of the impact of asymmetrical power relations between Arabic speakers, multidialectal approaches carry great potential. Prioritizing students' exposure to materials from diverse Arabic linguistic communities and fostering students' comprehension of such materials implies removing those communities and their linguistic practices from the excluded curriculum and reinforcing the validation of such communities and their linguaculture as part of our work. To phrase this in the language of the popular Social Justice Standards that inform the work of social justice educators:[11] the adoption of multidialectal approaches helps students "respectfully express curiosity about the history and lived experiences of others" (Learning for Justice, 2018). It helps students "respond to diversity by building empathy, respect, understanding and connection" and "recognize stereotypes and relate to people as individuals rather than representatives of groups" (Learning for Justice, 2018). For our learners to develop familiarity with, and empathy, understanding and respect and for, those lived experiences, they first need to be taught. Similarly, for students to be able to understand the situatedness of any linguistic and cultural practices, to avoid overgeneralizing and stereotyping, and avoid positioning a speaker from a specific socio-economic and religious community in Cairo or one of the Levantine capital cities as a representative of all Arabs anywhere, diverse ways of speaking Arabic and embodying Arab culture first need to be part of our curriculum. And as language forms are never acquired from a single exposure, or any in-depth cultural understanding is acquired from one-time brief exposures, this means threading different colloquials, and the cultural practices, products and perspectives of the speakers of those colloquials, consistently and systematically into the fabric of the curriculum (Vanpee, 2022; see also Trentman & Shiri, 2020).

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[11] While the Social Justice Standards were initially developed for use in K-12, they are also widely used in higher education. As just one example, Glynn et al. (2018) unpack the Social Justice Standards and establish their connections to ACTFL's *World Readiness Standards for Learning Language*. As the sample unit plan overviews in *Words and Actions* demonstrate, these authors use the Social Justice Standards to guide social justice-focused curriculum design for the K-16 world language classroom.

Simultaneously, it is the case that until now, advocates for multidialectal approaches to the teaching of Arabic have focused their work primarily on the sociolinguistic gains students can make, and that they have not yet foregrounded the potential of such approaches to include more systemic engagement with the cultural diversity of the Arab world. Needless to say, I do not think there is any reason to believe that these scholars have no interest in selecting multidialectal materials that are not just of linguistic interest, but that are also culturally rich. That said, I do believe that as we set about sourcing materials for the implementation of a multidialectal approach in our classrooms, prioritizing materials that support not just students' learning about the features of different colloquials, but that enable both linguistic and cultural learning at once, is essential and would strengthen multidialectal approaches to the teaching of Arabic.

It is here that incorporating principles and insights from social justice pedagogy can help. This pedagogical framework is deeply attuned to the importance of teaching culture with the historical contextualization needed to lead to nuanced understandings (Glynn et al., 2018; Hackman, 2005). Its emphasis on critically examining superficial, generalizing or stereotyping content leads us to explore the shades of difference and the specificity of the cultural practices, products and perspectives of different communities (Hackman, 2005). (Note, additionally, how its embedding of critical thinking work in all course content aligns with the importance academic institutions claim to attach to the development of critical thinking across disciplines!) The sensitivity of the social justice pedagogy framework to communities and their linguaculture that have been marginalized (Tarnawska Senel, 2020), including marginalization in pedagogical contexts, helps us avoid imparting implicit messages to our students that the linguaculture of some communities in the Arab world would be more worthy of study and exploration than that of others. Its pedagogical focus on deepening students' awareness of the systemic and institutionalized nature of oppression, and on discerning how structures of power affect the ability of communities to access equitable treatment, is helpful in fostering the development of our students' awareness of how power relations affect linguistic communities (Lee et al., 2022). Finally, the importance social justice pedagogy, as an asset pedagogy, attributes to incorporating the linguistic and cultural backgrounds of our learners, who more often than not are diverse groups, helps us create curriculum that resonates with all, and in which no heritage learner of Arabic will feel that their own linguistic and cultural background is considered by their teachers to be somehow peripheral, as in: not worth talking about in the classroom.

To summarize once again: multidialectal approaches, in incorporating voices from diverse linguistic communities, are valuable to language educators seeking to teach Arabic and Arab culture inclusively. At the same time, the focus points of social justice pedagogy can ensure

that implementations of multidialectal approaches will not just be linguistically, but culturally rich and diverse. They can ensure that students' sociolinguistic and metalinguistic awareness is not just focused on communicative exchanges in situations of different formality and on patterned similarities and differences across colloquials, but on the impact power dynamics, ideologies and attitudes have on linguistic legitimacy, on linguistic and cultural visibility, on language users' communicative choices, and on linguistic accommodation (Chakrani, 2015; Hachimi, 2013). In other words, multidialectal and social justice approaches to the teaching of Arabic appear to be logical bedfellows.

Multidialectal Approaches: The How

Scholarship on multidialectal approaches to the teaching of Arabic includes the following praxis-oriented principles (Soliman, 2014, 2023; Trentman, 2022; Trentman & Shiri, 2020):

- Development of productive skills in learners' most familiar colloquial(s);[12]
- Development of receptive skills in a variety of other colloquials through intentional exposure to authentic materials in those colloquials at all levels of the course sequence;
- Scaffolding learners' comprehension practice of those other colloquials by:
    - fostering learners' understanding of the patterned ways in which colloquials overlap and differ from each other and from MSA (i.e. learners' metalinguistic awareness);
    - practicing with learners a reliance on the Arabic root- and pattern system and context clues to increase understanding.

While Soliman notes that these are strategies native speakers use to enhance their comprehension of discourse in less familiar colloquials (2014), simultaneously, these are, of course, standard comprehension strategies one would teach to strengthen comprehension of any Arabic textual material, regardless of the language variety of the material.

While these principles provide us with a general idea of what to emphasize as we adopt a multidialectal approach in our classrooms, at the moment of writing, scholarship on this approach is just beginning to offer specific ideas for the structuring of the curriculum,

[12] While these authors speak of students' "familiar" colloquial (or dialect), given that that term suggests an approach in which only one colloquial is emphasized, I prefer "most familiar."

assessment, and classroom activities. Below, I discuss examples of curriculum design that is grounded in a combined multidialectal and social justice approach.

Social Justice Pedagogy in the Language Classroom: The How

I have already outlined above some of the central points of focus for educators who use social justice approaches in their classrooms. While educators from a wide range of diverse disciplines and at all levels of the education system have documented their social justice-focused work in the classroom, I especially draw inspiration from those scholars who have brought their social justice orientation into the world/additional language classroom in U.S. educational institutions (Glynn et al., 2018; Johnson & Randolph, 2015; Osborn, 2006; Randolph & Johnson, 2017; Reagan & Osborn, 2021, 2002; Tarnawska Senel, 2020; Wassell et al., 2019; the contributors to Wassell & Glynn's 2022 edited volume; and the contributors to the 2018 issue of *Dimension*). Simultaneously, while I understand, with Adams and Zuñiga (2016), diversity and social justice approaches to be different from each other, work on teaching variation, diversity and inclusion in the U.S. language classroom also offers helpful inspiration for my curricular approach (f.ex. the edited volumes by Devereaux & Palmer, 2019, and by Meyer & Hoft-March, 2022).

Glynn et al. (2018) rely on Hackman's identification of five essential components of social justice pedagogy (Hackman, 2005). These components are content knowledge and mastery; opportunities for reflection; critical thinking work; equipping students with tools for social action and change; and awareness of the multicultural dynamics of the classroom. While one cannot consider one's approach to be social justice-focused if any of these components is missing, simultaneously it should be clear that in the world language classroom, not every class session will involve, for example, the critical discussions that are so vital to social justice pedagogy. Class sessions are also devoted to equipping students with the tools to speak and write about social justice issues, and to understand authentic resources that address social justice issues. Work on language forms or on colloquial features is, as such, an essential building block, and Hackman's five components are not necessarily the *only* elements of a social justice-focused unit, just as not all five will be present in every lesson plan or activity that forms part of a unit. As another example, student demonstrations of the tools they have developed to contribute to social change are often part of summative assessments that come at the end of units or that span semester-long work.

Curriculum Design Based on a Combined Multidialectal and Social Justice Approach

I developed and implemented the examples that follow in a collegiate U.S. Arabic program in which students are able to take six semesters of Arabic classes that meet either five or four

hours per week (five hours for the beginning and intermediate-level classes; four hours for advanced). Starting from first semester, MSA and some form of colloquial are combined in these classes. The primary colloquials we have consistently been offering are Egyptian, Levantine, and *Khaleeji* (i.e. Arabian Peninsula) Arabic. As each instructor is encouraged to offer whichever colloquial they desire in any given semester or year, students can go through our sequence receiving several semesters of training in the same colloquial, or they practice one colloquial for a semester or two and next switch into a class in which a different colloquial is emphasized. In addition to the integrated Arabic courses that form our six-semester sequence, students can occasionally, such as in summer, take a course fully dedicated to a particular Arabic colloquial. They can also continue Arabic beyond the advanced-level sequence by taking various Arabic literature courses taught in Arabic.

In our program, Muslim students of color, many of them of East African descent, are the majority of our learners. They come in with varying Arabic skills, from hearing it during Qur'ān recitation and knowing how to write the letters of the Arabic alphabet, to years of formal Arabic study, in some cases paired with lived experience in the Arab world. In every class we also have a small number of heritage learners whose family origins lie in different parts of the Arab world. Some of our Arab heritage learners come in with speaking skills in Iraqi, Sudanese, Palestinian, Egyptian, Jordanian, or Libyan Arabic, while others may have heard these colloquials at home but don't speak them. Typically, in each class we also have a handful of White students who are not of Arab origin. With undergraduate and graduate students learning the language in the same classes, our students' lived experience in the Arab world varies greatly—from zero to several years. I mention these details to emphasize the diversity of our student body, which includes differences in the colloquial(s) they identify as their most familiar one(s).

The example activities that follow were designed for learners who have different proficiency levels in Arabic, and hence may suit courses from the beginning through the advanced levels. While they can form part of a standalone curriculum grounded in multidialectal and social justice approaches, they can also serve as interventions in existing, textbook-based curricula.

I reiterate here that my combining of multidialectal and social justice approaches serves several overarching goals. One of them is linguistic: improving students' receptive skills in colloquials not limited to Egyptian and Levantine. A second, related goal is for students to deepen their understanding of, and appreciation for, Arab communities' diverse linguacultures. This should help students avoid overgeneralizing about those linguacultures and hierarchizing them. As we work against ideologies of linguistic legitimacy in this manner, our goal is additionally, and

importantly, to validate and make active use of our heritage learners' and instructors' diverse linguistic and cultural backgrounds in the classroom.

Looking at the course sequence as a whole, if we want learners to be able to rely on their most familiar colloquial(s) to support their comprehension of material in other colloquials, then it follows that development of productive and receptive skills in the most familiar colloquial(s) should begin at the lower levels of the course sequence. That does not need to mean, however, that in those lower-level semesters, work on colloquial should exclusively or largely be focused on the primary colloquial(s). Additionally, waiting until third, fourth or fifth semester to introduce multidialectal work would perpetuate the exclusion of linguistic and cultural communities against which I argue. Multidialectal work in lower-level Arabic classes can focus on basic features of the different colloquial, such as differential pronunciation of consonants and vowels, greetings, politeness phrases, personal pronouns, formation of verb tenses, and a limited number of high-frequency vocabulary words. Additionally, any multidialectal approach, regardless of the course level, would do well to consistently emphasize the significant overlap between colloquials, and the relative predictability of their differences, as this may help lower learners' affective barriers against encounters with less familiar colloquials.

As mentioned, Hackman identifies critical thinking work as a core component of social justice approaches (2005). Naturally, this often involves critical class discussion of the social justice-related issues under discussion. That does not necessarily mean, however, that work toward the equal valorisation of Arabic colloquials and cultural practices must take the form of a course unit around language ideologies and linguistic legitimacy. Such units would be a terrific addition to the kind of curriculum for which I advocate. But I view them as one possible curricular intervention among many others. Additionally, work against ideologies of linguistic legitimacy can also be done during start-of-semester syllabus discussions, to loop students in on the "why" of the inclusion of multiple colloquials. These ideologies can be further unpacked during program-wide lectures, whether in English or Arabic. When we piloted a lecture series on linguistic and cultural diversity in the Arab world, I started with such a talk before my colleague, in the next lecture, discussed colloquial and cultural diversity in a specific Arab country. As we shall see, reflection assignments in the classroom or at home can also work to elicit negative ideas students may have held about various colloquials, and to support their evolving thinking about these colloquials.

Lessons/ activities

Below follows an example based on two videos in different varieties of Arabic in which speakers introduce themselves and mention what they study. The first is a twenty-second excerpt of a video about a young Black Arab woman who belongs to the community of Yemen's *Muhammashīn* (Manasati30, 2022). The second video, which features animated characters who similarly appear to be Afro-Arab, introduces a student from Sudan (Sudan Changenow, 2018). These videos are part of a beginning-level social justice unit on education. While the linguistic content we focus on is most basic, I chose these videos precisely because they enable work not just on the language features students hear, but on the content. These videos align with social justice aims to include communities who have faced marginalization (as in the case of the first video) as well as people's labor to create a more just community for themselves and others (as in the case of the second).

One of the essential questions for the unit is: What is the relationship between education and social change? As such, unit vocabulary does not just include a list of fields of study. It also includes words related to access to education and the lack thereof ("opportunity," "scholarship," "loan," "expensive"). The viewing and discussing of material in which students in the Arab world present themselves and point to the importance of education in their lives or to their agency as students, actively supports our grappling with the essential question.

The learning objectives of the particular lesson on the two videos are both linguistic and social justice-focused. Linguistically, they aim to 1. increase students' awareness of the differential pronunciation of the consonant *jīm* in two Arabic colloquials, 2. enable students to compare how present tense verbs are conjugated for habitual action in various Arabic colloquials, and 3. learn the new words I focus on below. In terms of social justice-focused objectives, by the end of the lesson, students should be able to describe, in basic terms, the communities of the people in the videos, and what challenges they are working to address. While the language-focused work in this activity is part of the first class session, the homework assignment and next class session shift attention to the social-justice component of the lesson.

At the beginning level, the linguistic and social justice-focused learning objectives are kept simple. Both videos are also well suited for beginning-level learners as the speakers' words are simultaneously written out, enabling students to verify in the moment if what they think they hear is accurate. The multimodality of the materials serves as a scaffold for learning. At higher levels, the unit can be built around a larger number of essential questions and social justice-takeaways, and the learning objectives for this lesson will reflect higher expectations for demonstrations of student learning.

For this activity, which is intended to be done after students have learned how to share what they study in basic terms in MSA and their most familiar colloquial(s), the instructor gives students a worksheet. On that worksheet, she has clarified in English the exact goals of the activity for students. The pre-listening stage has students in small groups reflect on the title of each of the videos and discuss with each other what known vocabulary and types of words (f.ex. masculine human plurals) they think are present in each title. When the instructor discusses students' guesses with the whole class, she writes them on the board accompanied by question marks. The class reads the questions for the listening stage of the activity out loud before watching both videos. The instructor plays the two videos several times and has students discuss their thoughts on each question with their partners, and next with the whole group. During the whole group discussion, the class returns to the video titles and students correct their pre-listening guesses based on the information they now have. Students should now understand that *Ghadīr* is a woman's name but *Taghyīr* is not, and, if they didn't already, that *al-Muhammashīn* refers to a group of people in Yemen. Students are expected to infer from Ghadīr's mention of her city that she is Yemeni. They are next asked to share if anything in Ghadīr's MSA speech sounds different from what they expect. This draws attention to Ghadīr's use of the voiced velar stop [g] in the word *jāmi'a*. After students have identified this feature of Ghadīr's speech, the instructor asks students to share which other colloquial articulates the *jīm* in the same manner, to draw a basic comparison to Egyptian. Next, the instructor plays the remainder of the video at a reduced speed, reminding students that at this time, their goal is not to focus on comprehension of the words, but on identifying any other words Ghadīr says that contain a *jīm* pronounced as [g]. The point of this basic work on the local pronunciation of a consonant, which takes not more than a few minutes, is to increase students' awareness that even when people use a more formal register, one can still infer based on differential pronunciations where they may be from. The remaining language-focused work in this video is solely focused on having students guess the meaning of the expression *bi-idhni-llāh* as an equivalent of *in shā' Allāh*.

The class then turns its attention to the second video. After students have worked out that the speaker in the video is from Sudan and that she speaks in colloquial, the instructor plays back the video several times at a reduced speed and asks students to write down any features of her colloquial they see and hear. Students have the capacity at this point in the semester to recognize the *b-* in front of the present tense verb, the *mā* as negation word for the verb, and the word *kwayyis*. The instructor asks the class if anyone knows in which other colloquial people use *kwayyis*, and when students offer Egypt, emphasizes the likelihood of colloquial proximity in areas that are geographically close. Next, the instructor draws attention to the speaker's pronunciation of the word *jāmi'a* and asks students if the proximity between Egypt and Sudan also means people pronounce the letters of the alphabet in the same way. The remainder of the

comprehension work for this video focuses on the word *taghyīr*. The instructor asks students if they believe this word is a woman's name. She draws attention to the presence of the word at the bottom of the video followed by a victory sign and the word *al-ān*. She shows again the video about Ghadīr at the 1:52 time stamp, and provides examples of the word *taghyīr* in very basic sentences (such as: أنا بحب الروتين. دايماً عندي كاس قهوة بالصبح وباكل نفس الإشي بالليل. ما بحب التغيير.)[13] Once students have guessed the meaning of this word and the instructor has pointed out to them, based on its use in the two videos, that it is used in both MSA and colloquial, she gives students a homework assignment that helps them get a sense of the significance of this word in each video and of the broader context for each video.

For homework, students are asked to do some research at home on the Muhammashīn and on civil society activism in Sudan, especially since 2010, when the organization that produced the *taghyīr* video was established. Guiding questions the instructor distributes for this research include "Who are the Muhammashīn? Why are they marginalized? What is the education rate among them? Why was 'Sudan Change Now' founded in 2010? What did people in Sudan protest about in 2018 and 2019?" At the start of the next class period, the instructor uses questions on a slide to invite students to recount in Arabic what they saw in both videos, who the women in the videos are, and what these women are working toward. The next slide contains a set of true/false questions about the women and their communities, which the class also discusses in Arabic. Afterward, students share their findings from their at-home inquiry work with a partner in English, before sharing their findings out to the whole group.[14] The discussion of what Ghadīr is doing to improve her circumstances and of Sudanese efforts to effect reforms shifts the focus of the lesson from simply describing students, toward agency and activism. Simultaneously, the role of the instructor during this part of the class is to help students transition from discussing what they know to considering critical thinking questions. For example, for the video about Ghadīr, these questions revolve around the education system she has gone through ("What factors might make it difficult for Muhammashīn children to access it? In what ways might the educational institutions themselves contain barriers for

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[13] "I like routine. I always have a cup of coffee in the morning and eat the same thing at night. I don't like change."

[14] With regard to the use of English for this part of the lesson, I agree with Randolph & Johnson (2017, p. 112): "While language teachers may want to keep their students engaged in the target language 90+% of the time (as recommended by ACTFL, 2010), the strategic use of English from time to time can aid in the incorporation of critical pedagogies without necessarily sacrificing language goals."

Muhammashīn children's academic success?") and the video in which she speaks ("What information is absent from it? Why may she have been presented in this particular manner?").

In terms of the diversified curricula for which I advocate, note that the two videos in this lesson not only introduce students to language features of communities that are typically not part of our curricula, but that both videos feature Black Arab women. Needless to say, at the local level of my program, in which we have a substantial number of learners of East African descent, including resources that feature Black Arabs makes a ton of sense: as previously noted, curricula in which learners can see people who look like themselves represented tend to increase students' sense of belonging and their connection to what they are learning in class. As such, it is an important principle of social justice pedagogy (see, for example, Glynn et al., 2018 for a discussion). Specifically in terms of Hackman (2005)'s model of social justice education, this kind of intentional representation aligns with the component she calls "awareness of the multicultural group dynamics" of the classroom (p. 108). However, because to my knowledge Black Arabs tend to lack visibility in U.S. Arabic curricula in general, their inclusion in the curriculum is important for all of us. In this regard, the inclusion of a Nubian character in the *'Arabiyyat al-Naas* Part Two textbook (2nd edition) is a step in the right direction, even if that choice does not involve a venturing outside of the Egyptian/Levantine curricular "center." (The character is a Nubian man from Egypt).

Given the importance of regular exposure to any colloquial or localized feature students are expected to become familiar with, Yemeni and Sudanese colloquial samples return in following units and semesters, for example when the first-year students learn how to communicate in basic ways about ways to work on one's health. The example that follows here is of a short text written in Sudanese Arabic, which I have copied in below (Figure 1).

Figure 1. A short comic intended to raise awareness of safe practices to protect against COVID. (https://www.facebook.com/sudania.sd/, 2020).

The lesson around this text is part of a unit for second-semester students called "Our and Other People's Health." (For users of *al-Kitaab Part One*: this unit is built off of chapter nine in the book, in which Khalid speaks about the smoking habit he hides from his grandmother. The lesson that follows can easily be incorporated in this unit, even if one doesn't reconceptualize the entire chapter in the way I describe.) The essential questions around which I structure this unit are the following: "Whose health matters to us and why? Who bears responsibility for protecting people's health? What barriers can stand in the way of doing so?" While these questions may appear complex for a second-semester Arabic class, students can actually grapple with them in very simple language:

صحة من مُهمّة لي؟ من مسؤول عن حماية صحّتي وصحة الآخَرين؟ لماذا حماية صحتنا أحياناً صعبة؟[15]

The learning objectives for the lesson around the comic are again both linguistic and social justice-focused. Linguistically, at the end of the lesson, students are expected to be able to 1. identify the negation word *mā*, the connector *'ashān*, the demonstrative *dī*, and the question word *shunū* as used in multiple colloquials, including Sudanese; 2. identify features of Sudanese pronunciation, in this case of specific consonants and of the word for water; 3. demonstrate their understanding of the phrase *kullu kullu* ("at all, whatsoever") and its resemblance to the word *kull* ("all, every, each"). The social justice-focused objective of this lesson is for students to be able to explain, in basic terms, their preference for specific approaches to public awareness-raising campaigns and to create their own textual material for such a campaign based on their preference. If this text is incorporated in a higher-level class, students can additionally unpack the connection drawn in the comic between preventive health measures and notions of good citizenship.

The pre-reading work here serves not only to give students an initial idea of what the text might be about, but to activate certain language forms in students' most familiar colloquial(s) and to refresh their mind on what they remember from their previous exposure to material in Sudanese. The instructor starts by showing the class, on a slide, only the right side of the comic and invites students to describe what they see in the image. When students share the word they know for "bird," the instructor asks which bird speaks and introduces the word *babaghā'*. Students infer where the girl in the image may be from by reading the word *sūdānīya*. The instructor draws attention here to the parrot's colors and asks the class which Arab flag has these colors. This is an opportunity to draw attention to the many Arab countries that use these colors in their flags, and to discuss in brief terms the ideas behind those colors. Next, the instructor acts out the meaning of the word *aftakhir*, and students make an informed guess about what the words *sūdānīya wa-aftakhir* mean when read as a sentence.

The instructor then distributes a worksheet (see Appendix A), which can be written in MSA or any colloquial the students have been learning. Students are asked to discuss the pre-reading questions on the sheet in pairs and write out their responses. Specifically, they are asked to write

[15] Literally, these questions say "Whose health is important to me? Who is responsible for protecting my and other people's health? Why is protecting our health sometimes difficult?" Following Glynn et al. (2018), I intentionally aim for essential questions that are "open-ended, interesting, and even a little provocative" (p. 33).

down the words they know in their most familiar dialect for the question word *mā*; *li- (min ajl); mā'*; and *hādhihi*, and to list on the worksheet what they remember from the *taghyīr* video about Sudanese colloquial. The class discusses their responses to the pre-reading questions; next, the instructor shows the full comic, and distributes the text to every student (with a question mark added to the end of the first sentence to make recognition of the question word in that sentence easier). To draw attention to the colloquial register, a few students are asked to each read a sentence out loud; the instructor then reads the text out loud a second time to emphasize how the text is pronounced in Sudanese Arabic. Students are asked, again in pairs, to highlight or circle in the text the words they understand and to discuss with each other what the text is about, and to add in the left column of the table on the worksheet the Sudanese equivalent of the words they wrote in their most familiar colloquial(s). As the class discusses these words together, the instructor draws students' attention, first, to the similarity between the words in Sudanese and in the other colloquial(s) the students know, and, second, to the spelling in the text of the word *naẓīfa*, having students infer that the consonant *ẓ* in Sudanese Arabic can be pronounced as *ḍ*.

Next, the class turns its attention to some of the words students have more difficulty with, which may include *ḥāja, kullu kullu, and wish-(h)um*. Here, the instructor asks students to think of words that have the same root consonants (f.ex. the verb form *aḥtāj*), or that sound very similar. For *wish-*, the instructor might point to the different parts of the face mentioned in the text. When the class has guessed the meaning of these words, students add them to the table on the back side of the worksheet. Finally, the instructor asks students which colloquial they feel Sudanese is very close to, remembering both this text and the video they worked on prior, and re-emphasizes for the class some of the overlap, but also some of the differences between Egyptian and Sudanese.

The next set of questions on the worksheet revolves around the target audience for the text, as well as its purpose. Students' discussion of those questions in small groups precedes a discussion with the whole class, during which the instructor points to the similarity between the message of the text and the slogan *khallīk fi-l-bayt/ khallīk bi-l-bayt* ("Stay home"), which was used in Arab communities to encourage people to stay home early on during the pandemic.

At the end of class, students each pick one Arab country from a list of options, and are assigned for homework to find textual examples of the use of *khallīk fi-l-bayt* and similar slogans in the country they have chosen. They add the examples they have found to a shared slide deck the instructor makes available. At the start of the next class, the instructor writes the number and country of each slide on the board. After the class reviews the examples on the slide deck together, students move to the board to add a mark next to the three examples they liked most.

Next, the instructor shows on a slide, in Arabic, a list of textual elements that might appeal to an audience ("the colors are pretty," "the images aren't scary," "the video is funny," etc.) and facilitates a short class discussion in which students share in Arabic why they prefer the most highly ranked texts.

The remainder of this class period and the first half of the next one are dedicated to group work on material for a public awareness-raising campaign. Each group selects a public health-related issue from a list provided by the instructor, discusses a design they think would appeal to its audience, and decides in which register they'll create their text. The groups then create their text (this could be a poster, a comic, an infographic, and so on) and present their work to the class. The lesson wraps up by having all students again vote for their preferred text.

In terms of Hackman's model, this lesson emphasizes work to equip students with tools to take social action. On the note of language register, just as introductions to features of spoken Arabic at the lower levels can include a text in which speakers level up their speech to MSA, for the study of colloquials, written texts can be beneficial in addition to oral texts. The occasional focus on a written colloquial text enables students to focus on colloquial features beyond the fleeting moment in which they hear them spoken. Comics, caricatures, and tweets are some of the accessible sources for short texts in written colloquial.

Class projects

While the examples above have focused, linguistically speaking, on comparing colloquial features based on one, or a few, colloquial texts, sustained work on linguistic and cultural diversity can additionally be done in the form of semester-long course projects. In the following, I describe such a project for intermediate-level learners, that can easily be adapted for the advanced level. The project targets linguistic and cultural diversity at the same time. Its goal, in broad terms, is to deepen students' awareness of this diversity by having them engage with resources from communities and places that typically are (largely) invisible in our curricula. Similarly, while students will draw comparisons that will show similarities between different linguistic and cultural practices they explore, the goal of the project is also to deepen students' awareness of the situatedness of these practices.

The project I describe here involves the use of story mapping technology.[16] A digital story map platform like ArcGIS StoryMaps enables learners, both individually and in groups, to combine

[16] I am indebted to my colleague Shana Crosson at the University of Minnesota for introducing me to story maps and familiarizing my students and me with their use.

written (i.e. typed) text, recordings, images, maps, and videoclips into an interactive webpage to tell a multimodal story, so to say, that engages readers visually—including spatially—and aurally. The name of this tool should not lead one to believe that the platform is geared toward the creation of narrative fiction: it has wide usability across disciplines, from history, anthropology, geography, and environmental sciences to the world language classroom. In the language classroom, story maps are eminently usable to map out the connections between diverse linguistic and cultural practices, products and perspectives.

Story map projects can be used as summative assessments for class groups demonstrating their linguistic and cultural learning about a single or multiple colloquials and their speakers. The project consists of weekly assignments that span the course of a semester. At the start of the semester, the instructor explains the purpose of the project to students as phrased above. Each student chooses from a list of options an area or community they would like to focus on for the duration of the semester. (Options include, for example, the countries of Djibouti, Chad, Bahrain, Tunisia, and Libya; the al-Ahsā' region in Saudi Arabia and the al-Fujayra emirate in the UAE; Upper Egypt; Arabic speakers in Eritrea; and Arabic speakers in Nigeria.)[17] Next follows an orientation session in which students are introduced to the ArcGIS StoryMaps software and learn how they can upload materials to the class story map.

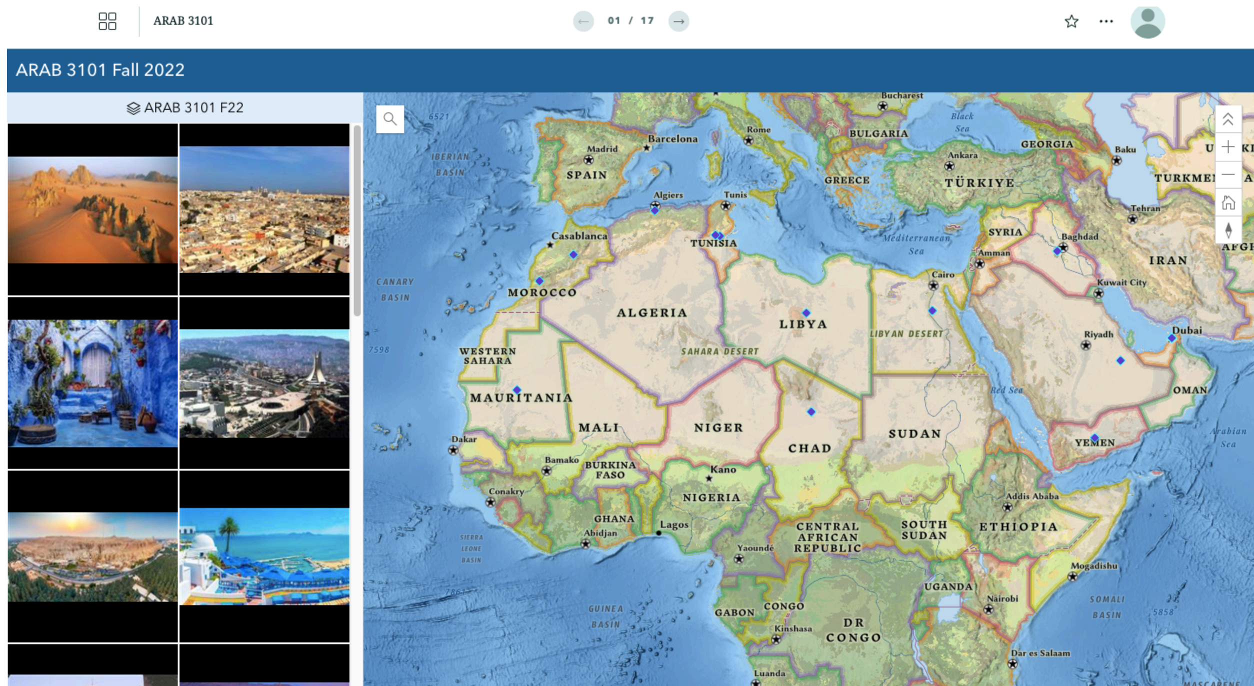
The weekly assignments involve a prompt to research a topic in the area or community students have selected, and to upload images or audiovisual material they have found to their story map page, accompanied by short descriptions the students write themselves. The topics move from visualizing where people live to cultural practices, products and perspectives that include both elements of surface culture like locally popular foods and garments, and elements of the deeper culture such as values and important causes. Students get a sense of the latter as they research community organizations people join and the activism in which they engage. Additionally, for several weeks students research elements of the local Arabic by finding videos, songs, and local content producers and identifying basic features of the colloquial (local pronunciations, words, ways of expressing possession/ belonging, etc.) in those materials. While students do the work

[17] As part of this project, a number of students will, of course, choose to explore linguistic and cultural practices in a specific Arab state. While not ideal in the sense that we don't want students to think of colloquials monolingually (i.e. to associate each country with one particular colloquial, see Trentman, 2022), the project does give students a way to begin exploring different colloquials beyond the ones that are foregrounded most in our curricula. To avoid these kinds of one-to-one associations between countries and colloquials, I have intentionally incorporated into the project options regions within a country, and Arabic-speaking minorities within countries.

of researching and uploading materials each time for two weeks in a row, every third week, they are asked to look at the contributions of two of their classmates, and to submit a reflection on what they have found. In the course of the semester, the story map as a whole develops into a rich, interactive map of places and communities in the Arab world around which students have put together a collection of materials with their own written descriptions. The instructor can select from the materials students have collected to devote periodic class sessions to comparisons between the linguistic and cultural practices students have found, and more in-depth study of some of them. A few class periods are also devoted to editing of students' writing in the story map. The grading rubric for the project includes points given for the quality of the materials found; the quality of students' writing in the story map; the depth of students' reflections; and the sense of responsibility students have demonstrated in their role as student-researchers (f.ex. did they fact-check information they provide; did they write about what they have found in nuanced ways; did they appropriately credit their sources; and did they enable their peers to learn from them by contributing to the project every week). At the end of the semester, the story map can be made available to the public to enable Arabic learners elsewhere to benefit from the students' work.[18]

[18] For an example, see Multiple authors. (Fall 2022). لمحة عن التنوّع الثقافي واللغوي في العالم العربيّ. z.umn.edu/ar-storymap.

Figure 2. Screenshot of an interactive story map created by intermediate-level Arabic students.



In alignment with the principles of multidialectal approaches, this project offers students repeat exposure to a number of colloquial varieties without expecting them to develop productive skills in them, but with the goal of strengthening their awareness of the similarities and differences between them, and increasing their ability to identify colloquial varieties.

Viewed through the lens of social justice pedagogy, by means of this project students play an active role in the incorporation of communities of speakers and their practices into the curriculum. By opening up their work to the public after the semester ends, students can offer the opportunity to engage in this learning to others, thereby working against curricular marginalization. Creating access to information for others beyond the classroom is an example of how the social action component of Hackman's social justice pedagogy model can be implemented (Hackman, 2005, and Glynn et al., 2018). Especially the weeks that have students research a local community organization or example of local activism lay a good foundation for critical class discussions around the issues communities are working to address, and the ways in which they take action. The reflective component of the project contributes not just to the development of students' metalinguistic awareness that is so important in a multidialectal approach. It also enables students to think more deeply about the cultural practices they are

seeing, and to track how their thinking about less familiar linguacultures is evolving, away from overgeneralizations and stereotyped imaginings informed by ideologies of linguistic legitimacy. As mentioned, this type of reflection is essential to social justice approaches (Glynn et al., 2018; Hackman, 2005). In Appendix B, I provide an example of a reflection form for this project. While at the intermediate level, I allow students to complete their reflection in English, at the advanced level, I allow students to compose their reflections in Arabic, English, or both.

On Challenges, Real and Anticipated

As I stated in the opening of this paper, curriculum design for world languages is complex. That is the case regardless of the target language, target audience, the experience level of the developers, and the approach followed. To introduce, in first-year Arabic classes, several colloquials alongside the colloquial in which students are learning to speak and alongside MSA is certainly a delicate balancing act, particularly when we actually want to excite students about the linguistic diversity of Arabic, as opposed to leaving them with a sense of overwhelm. In this regard, experimentation with the implementation of multidialectal approaches is still needed for all of us to get a better sense of reasonable "dosage" and frequency of exposure at this level.

However, as I demonstrated with the example of the Yemeni video in which the speaker uses MSA, any of the varieties students are learning can serve as a scaffold for students' introduction to variation. Additionally, if implemented mindfully, the combined multidialectal/ social justice approach I have proposed in this article has the potential of expanding students' imagining of the social and cultural contexts in which they can see themselves function. Furthermore, from the start, a focus on people's labor for inclusion, equality and a more just society will add not only to students' sense of the real-world relevance of what they are learning, but to the ways in which their course material resonates with them, as issues related to (in)equality, marginalization and social justice are not foreign to any of our learners in the United States.

Some colleagues might be apprehensive of implementing a combined multidialectal/ social justice approach based on the fact that no matter what, our expertise has its boundaries, just as there are limits on the time we can carve out to develop substantive knowledge either about language varieties or about cultural practices, societal issues and so on. For an educator working in isolation, these constraints may be even more painfully felt than for those of us working in teams. I do believe that this approach will work best when Arabic educators reach out to colleagues across institutions to consult and share expertise and resources. In that regard, I will be happy to share the modest collections I am slowly growing of authentic video material in different colloquials. Interested colleagues can email me at kvanpee@umn.edu.

Simultaneously, educators, whether in the school system or in higher education, are also, I believe, by definition life-long learners. It is not for nothing that professional development is part of our contractual expectations. Without there being any need for us to try and develop deep expertise on every linguistic and cultural community of the Arab world, to add to our existing understanding of the language and culture(s) we teach can be exciting and energizing. Finally, as mentioned, the example of the intermediate-level project shows that students themselves can become active participants in the creation of resource collections, the sharing of knowledge about diverse Arab communities, and the countering of unhelpful ideologies of linguistic legitimacy. The resources useful to this undertaking do not need to come exclusively from us as teachers.

Some might feel they favor a continued focus either solely on MSA, solely on Egyptian or Levantine colloquial, or on MSA plus one of these two colloquials because it is "practical." The argument about practicality, especially with regard to Egyptian and Levantine Arabic, may revolve around the idea that native speakers from all over the world will understand our learners. For others, "practical" might mean sticking to teaching the one colloquial in which one personally feels most comfortable, or it might be the articulation of a desire not to add the complicated questions around foregrounding linguistic and cultural diversity to one's workload. After all, since at this time no textbooks exist that follow this approach (and textbooks might not even be the most suitable medium for its implementation), trying it makes each of us a curriculum developer. I can certainly understand the practicality argument. Practicing one variety of Arabic per classroom can reduce the number of decisions one needs to make about the course content. But just as for the MSA+one approach, enabling students to function more appropriately in informal settings felt more important than the ease of teaching solely MSA, to me the benefits students will derive from familiarity with the many diverse linguistic and cultural practices of the region outweigh the comfort of sticking with just the few colloquials we have been teaching. Those benefits include inclusive learning environments in which students who feel seen and represented can do their best learning. As I have argued earlier in this paper, the discussion around which language varieties and cultural practices to teach is about much more than practicality alone. Privileging the linguaculture of just a few communities means reinforcing ideas about the unequal epistemic value of people's linguistic and cultural practices. Thoughtfully and intentionally centering the diversity of the Arab world doesn't just improve students' understanding of how people express themselves informally. It aligns better with the linguistic and cultural reality of the region and sets students up to develop a more nuanced understanding of it. It also enables more students and their families, and instructors, to find themselves in our curricula.

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Appendix A:

Worksheet for the colloquial text in Sudanese Arabic

(Front side of the worksheet. This worksheet can be written in MSA or in any colloquial the students are learning).

قبلما نقرا:

كيف نقول بلهجتنا هالكلمات؟

الكلمة:	**باللهجة ال..........:**	
لِ / من أجل (to express a goal)		
ما؟		
ماء		
هذه		

شو منعرف عن اللهجة السودانية؟ نذكر الفيديو عن "تغيير"!

كلمات: النطق:

(Back side of the worksheet)

كلمات جديدة ومعناها:

<u>بعدما نقرا، احكوا مع أصحابكن عن هالأسئلة:</u>

١. الكاتب شو بِدّه بهالنصّ؟

٢. بِحسب النصّ، الناس شو لازم يعملوا؟

٣. برأيكن، رح تحبّ الناس القصّة؟ ليش أو ليش لا؟

Appendix B:

Reflection form for the StoryMaps project

Reflection
1. **<u>Briefly describe here the material you uploaded in the past two weeks:</u>**   2. **<u>List here whose materials you explored for this week's reflection:</u>**   *(Take a close look at the work of two classmates).*   3. **<u>What are some things that stood out to you in the materials you uploaded? Why did they stand out to you?</u>**   *(You may write here about similarities and differences; things you enjoyed; things you didn't expect or things you have questions about. Write up your thoughts in a paragraph).*

4. **What are some things that stood out to you in you classmates' materials? Why did they stand out to you?**
   (You may write here about similarities and differences; things you enjoyed; things you didn't expect or things you have questions about. Write up your thoughts in a paragraph).

5. **Note here any new Arabic words you learned, their meaning and where they are used:**
   (no more than five words).

6. **Choose any of the videos you watched this week and write down any of the following language forms you heard:**
   (It is fine to focus on just one of the videos, and on just some on even one of the language forms below. Write each form out with its time stamp.)

- A greeting or politeness phrase:
- A question word:
- A pronunciation that struck you:
- A pronoun:
- A way of expressing present, past, or future tense:
- A negation:
- A number:

- A noun with an adjective you recognized:

7. **As you listened to videos this week, what was the hardest for you to understand?**