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A Journey Across the UAE Culture through the Voices of Young Emirati Women: Texts in Northern Emirati Arabic (Dubai, Ajman, and Sharjah)

Abstract Although some Gulf varieties, such as Emirati Arabic, have been gaining more attention in recent years, further investigation and resources need to be made available to the scientific community. The aim of this article is to offer the Gulf Arabic studies a contribution by presenting a selection of texts in the spoken varieties of Dubai, Sharjah and Ajman, which were recorded between 2015 and 2017, during fieldworks in the United Arab Emirates. The speakers are young women between the age of 21 and 31 and the topics regard the Emirati heritage, in order to add cultural value to the linguistic subject. The transcribed texts can provide further bases for comparison in the Emirati Arabic studies.

Keywords Ajman, Arabic dialectology, Dubai, Emirati Arabic, Gulf Arabic, Sharjah

1 Introduction and state of the art

The United Arab Emirates¹ strategic position, on the eastern coastal region of Arabian Peninsula and on the way between today's Europe and the Far East, has been attracting merchants, over the last centuries, all the way from Europe to China. The lands on which the present-day UAE exist were prized or exploited by the European peoples (namely the Portuguese, the Dutch, and the British) for a long time before being able to gain their independence from the British Crown on December 2nd, 1971² (Heard-Bey 2004: 367–370).

¹ Henceforth UAE. The federation includes the Emirates of Abu Dhabi, Dubai, Sharjah, Ajman, Umm al-Quwain, Fujairah, and Ras al-Khaimah.

² The Emirate of Ras Al-Khaimah joined this union in early 1972.

Although the UAE is considered a young state and is mostly known worldwide for its ultra-modern aesthetic, a fascinating history and some traces of age-old civilisation are still present in the country and in its traditions.

This study presents texts about some aspects of the Emirati culture and environment, based on the northern spoken varieties of the business hub Dubai, which follows in importance the one of Abu Dhabi, and other two northern emirates, Sharjah and Ajman. Sharjah is usually considered as the cultural centre of the UAE, while Ajman is the smallest emirate, even though, in recent years, its urban and tourist sectors have developed.

According to the Gulf Arabic literature (Johnstone 1967; Holes 1990; 2011; 2016; Ingham 1982) modern Emirati Arabic belongs to Gulf Arabic koine, which also includes the varieties of Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, Bahrain, Qatar, part of Oman and southern Iraq and Iran. In fact, Leung et al. (2021: 3) highlight that ‘The term “Emirati Arabic” is occasionally used in the linguistic literature as a reference to a set of specific varieties of the people living within the confines of the UAE.’ Nevertheless, there are differences between the varieties of Abu Dhabi and the ones of northern Emirates. The EA provided in the texts belongs to the subvariety of northern Emirati which includes ‘Dubai, Sharjah, Ajman, Umm al-Quwain, and part of Ras al-Khaimah’ (Leung et al. 2021: 3–4).

The studies which focus only on Emirati Arabic³ still require more investigation, although it is worth mentioning the studies which describe the main features of Gulf Arabic that represent the pioneering starting point of the Arabic dialectological studies of the region. To name just a few: Johnstone (1967), Qafisheh (1977; 1997), Ingham (1982), Al-Rawi (1990), as well as the works of Holes which include also recent publications (1990; 2001; 2005; 2006; 2011; 2016; 2018).

After the 2000s, further studies focused on EA were published in English⁴: Blodgett et al. (2007: 1137–1140) investigated the intonation of EA, Jarad (2017: 742–760) wrote about grammaticalisation in EA; al-Kaabi and Ntelitheos in 2019 issued an article about a syntactic analysis of verbal morphology in EA, while Wilmsen and Al Muhairi (2022) investigated the infixed *-nn-* in Northern Emirati Arabic.⁵ In addition, a comprehensive grammar of EA was published by Leung et al. in 2021 and a study regarding the subject expression and discourse embedded-

³ Henceforth EA.

⁴ The list of studies published in English and Arabic is illustrative only and does not aim to be comprehensive.

⁵ In 2019, the author of this article published a study about the Dubai variety.

ness in EA was published in 2013 by Owens et al. It is important to highlight the works in Arabic on Emirati varieties by ʿAbīd (2006; 2013) and also the two books by al-Maṭrūšī (2013; 2019).

2 Methodology and objectives

No transcribed texts of Sharjah and Ajman have ever been published, and the texts from Dubai date back to Johnstone⁶ (1967: 228–239). Therefore, the aim of this research is to present a collection of eight texts of northern Emirati Arabic in order to provide further bases for comparison in the field of Gulf Arabic studies. The texts derive from a selection of recordings by young women of spontaneous conversations and interviews⁷, that were personally gathered by the author of the article during research fieldworks in the UAE between 2015 and 2017. The recordings were transcribed and then translated into English⁸, and linguistic notes mainly compared to the available Gulf literature studies were added.

The transcription used in this article follows the system conventionally applied in the Arabic dialectology's field. The consonants are the following: ʔ, b, t, ʈ, ɟ, ʕ, x, d, ɗ, r, z, s, š, ʃ, ʈ, ɗ, ʕ, ɣ, q/g, k/č, l⁹, m, n, h, w, and y. The glottal stop at the beginning of words is not indicated. The vowel system consists of three short vowels¹⁰ /a/, /i/, /u/ and five long vowels, namely /ā/, /ī/, /ū/, /ē/, /ō/¹¹.

Informants did not prepare any previous speech and they were free to choose their topic, but it was suggested¹² to talk about the Emirati environment and traditions in order to add cultural value to the texts, besides the linguistic one. In fact, outside the Arabian Peninsula, Gulf tradition often remains little known, despite being fundamental to better understand the linguistic background. The five informants are young women, educated or

⁶ It is also worth mentioning the PhD thesis by Hoffiz (1995) about the morphology of UAE, focusing on the Dubai variety that, however, does not include transcribed texts.

⁷ A few other short recordings were collected, but the topics were not suitable with the purpose of this article, which presents recent texts from the Northern Emirates regarding local environment and traditions.

⁸ The English translation is sometimes rather literal because the texts have been translated into English so that the English syntax corresponds as closely as possible to the Arabic syntax, in order to facilitate the comparison to the readers.

⁹ It occurs also the emphatic variant ʕ in certain words.

¹⁰ The three short vowels could shift to the neutral mid-central vowel [ə] (Leung et al. 2021: 16).

¹¹ The phonemes /ē/ and /ō/ correspond to the diphthongs ay and aw in MSA (Johnstone 1967: 25).

¹² Questions or short comments asked by the author of the article are not included in the texts.

semi-educated, born in the UAE and aged between 19 and 31 at the moment of recording. In order to protect the speakers' privacy and encourage spontaneity, it was decided not to mention their full names, but only their first name, age, level of education (when possible) and Emirate of origin. Since there is no prior preparation, on some occasions the translations can include repetitions and the narration might seem fragmented. The eight selected texts (three from Dubai, three from Ajman and two from Sharjah) are arranged as follows:

Speaker 1, Texts 1, 2, 3: Hanan, 30 years old, Master's degree, Dubai.

Speaker 2, Texts 4 and 5: Ghalya, 30 years old, level of education (not mentioned), Ajman.

Speaker 3, Text 6: Sara, 31 years old, level of education (not mentioned), Ajman.

Speaker 4, Text 7: Elounoud, 21 years old, attending Bachelor's degree, Sharjah.

Speaker 5, Text 8: Sara, 21 years old, attending Bachelor's degree, Sharjah.

The three texts from Dubai are from the same informant, and as I was invited to her house twice to record them, they form the longest speech. The two texts from Sharjah were recorded by two students at the American University of Sharjah, at the Department of Biotechnologies. The three texts from Ajman were recorded during a visit to the tourist attraction¹³ 'Global Village' of Ajman, with the purpose of asking Emirati young women whether they would agree to be questioned about their local language for academic research. Most of them declined, expressing embarrassment. However, I was able to acquire and transcribe three short recordings by two speakers that were working there and who are originally from Ajman: Ghalya (speaker 2) is the owner of a clothes shop, and Sara (speaker 3) works in an Arabian essence shop.

It should be considered that the variety of the texts might be modified or influenced by contact with the other Arabic varieties such as Shami, Iraqi, and/or Egyptian. Moreover, the triglossic situation in UAE (MSA, EA and English¹⁴) emerges in the recordings of the graduate speakers and the college students at American University of Sharjah, even though the informants know that the purpose of the research was the investigation of EA, thus they tried to use only their own local language. Concerning

¹³ Despite being a tourist attraction, it is very popular among the local people, and it is also suitable for recordings.

¹⁴ See Hopkyns et al. (2021), 'The use of English and linguistic hybridity among Emirati millennials.'

the texts of Ajman, no English words were found. The definition of the code-mixing and switching in the Gulf, thus applied also in the UAE, is clearly explained by Holes (2011: 139) as follows:

This kind of Arabic-English mixing, however, has now been overtaken by a new and seemingly more invasive phenomenon. What one now hears in the Gulf is code-switching: the unpredictable to-ing and fro-ing between two languages, where a speaker might say three or four sentences in Arabic, then three or four in English. Sometimes a language switch will occur in the middle of a sentence. It is even commonplace nowadays to hear Gulf Arabs, in particular young women, talking to each other entirely in English, face to face or on their mobile phones.

In conclusion, this study would represent another step forward in the investigation of northern EA, by providing transcribed texts in the spoken varieties of Dubai, Ajman and Sharjah by young women. For future studies, the texts can be both phonologically and morpho-syntactically further investigated, in order to extend the linguistic description of northern EA; moreover, the texts can be used in drawing comparisons with the texts of Abu Dhabi variety published in the works Qafisheh (1977) and Al-Rawi (1990).

3 Transcribed texts

Text 1: *il-kandōra u l-ṣabāya fi-l-imārāt* ‘The kandoora and the abaya in the Emirates’

1. *Ṣādatan niḥna dāʔiman yisʔalū-l-nā yaʔni lēš ir-rayyāl yilbis kandōra bēḍa u l-ḥurma tilbis ṣabāya soda*, 2. *fa-š-šaxš il-ağnabi maṭalan yōm iyi l-imārāt yišūf ṣala tūl hāḍa*¹⁵ *l-lōnēn, il-abyaḍ u l-aswad fa-dāʔiman hāḍa s-suʔāl yi-takarrar: lēš il-abyaḍ u lēš il-ʔaswad b-ha-ṭ-ṭariqa?* 3. *maʔ anna tārixiyyan fi-l-imārāt mā kānat il-alwān b-ha-ṭ-ṭariqa*. 4. *kān ir-rayyāl yilbis aṣlan alwān tiṣābah alwān ir-rimāl yaʔni ṣa-l-bēğ, ṣa-l-aṣfar, tadarruğāt il-aṣfar yaʔni b-šikil ṣāmm*, 5. *fa-kān hāḍa tāriḫ-na yaʔni ḥatta hni ysawwūn musalsalāt tārixiyya aw l-ašyāʔ il-qadīma*, 6. *kān dāʔiman ir-rayyāl yilbis b-ha-ṭ-ṭariqa, mā yilbis lōn il-ʔabyaḍ* 7. *u aṣlan mā kān lōn il-abyaḍ bikūn mufīd* 8. *liʔanna taṣrifīn niḥna bīʔat-na ṣaḥrāwiyya fa-lībs il-abyaḍ maʔnat-ha lāzim yiğsil*

¹⁵ It is quite common in Gulf varieties to find a feminine singular demonstrative used with a masculine singular noun. In Holes (2005) some examples were found in Bahraini Arabic, such as *hāḍi l-baḥr* ‘this sea’ (2005: 23), *il-xaṭf hāḍi* ‘this setting of the sail’ (2005: 31).

ʕala ʔul ʔāni yōm, yitwassax b-surʕa, 9. ʕaʕān ʕi lōn il-aʕfar naʕs ilōn il-biʔa, 10. ʔatta aḡul-l-iʕ¹⁶ li-aḡraḡ il-ḥarb u ha-l-aʕyāʔ, fa-yilbisūn nifs ilōn il-biʔa u r-rimāl mā yibayinūn¹⁷, 11. fa-ḡuzʔ kān min il-ixtibāʔ aw ʔatta ḡuzʔ min an-naḡāfa, 12. taʕrifīn sābiqan mumkin ʔatta il-mawād li-l-ḡaṣil kānat aqall u l-prōcess kān mumkin aḡtar... 13. u l-nisāʔ¹⁸ kānaw yilbisūn il-ḡallābiyya aw l-kandōra illi hī tikūn šwayy mṭarraza min fōḡ u ʕa-l-id u tikūn mulawwana, 14. bas dāʔiman yilbisūn ʔabʕan iʕ-šila u l-burḡaʕ, illi hū nifs il-mask ʕala wayh¹⁹ il-marʔa²⁰, fa-hāy lli kān iʕ-šāʔiʕ, 15. baʕadēn ʔalʕat il-ʕabāya fa-ʔatta yigūlūn ḡuzʔ min it-tāriḡ... 16. fi il-baʕḡ yigūlūn maṭalan anna aḡlab iʕ-suwar it-tāriḡiyya illi fi-ha šurat il-marʔa mā lābsa fi-ha ʕabāya, lābsa fi-ha l-ḡallābiyya u iʕ-šila u l-burḡaʕ. 17. bas maʕ il-iiyyām šār maṭalan il-ʕabāya tikūn astar, fa-ayy šay nilbis dāxil mā yibayyin, 18. fa-ʔalʕat il-ʕabāya, fa-ʔatta awwal mā ʔalʕat il-ʕabāya, ʔalʕat il-ʕabāya il-hī ysammūn-ha swēʕiyya aw ʕabāt ir-rās illi tilbis min fōḡ ir-rās 19. itikūn ʕa-ḡaʕa waḥḡa ḥarīr, 20. bas maʕ il-iiyyām ʔabʕan mā kānat marina ḡiddan xuṣūsan fi-l-ḥaraka fa-ṭṭawwarat ŕuḡub nizlat ʕa-l-ʕitf u xallēna š-šila fōḡ 21. u šār il-aswad hū l-lōn id-dāriḡ u xuṣūsan liʔanna yigāṭṭi fa-nilbis ayy lōn taḥt mā yibayyin 22. u šār maʕ il-iiyyām ʔatta il-lōn il-abyaḡ hū š-šāʔiʕ ʕand iʕ-šabāb fa-iṭṭarraw yilbisūn kull iʕay abyāḡ, ʔatta hum il-malābis id-dāxiliyya yilbisūn lōn il-abyaḡ ʕaʕān mā fi šay yišif, 23. fa-šār inna-h hū l-lōn il-abyaḡ u l-ḥurma l-hīn b-il-lōn il-aswad maʕ anna l-hīn il-fatra hāḡi taqriban min ḥawāli sina ʔalʕat mōḡat l-ʕabāya li-mlawwana 24. u l-hīn l-ʕabāya tikūn wardiyya, xaḡra, bēḡa, sōda, fi-ha kull²¹ il-alwān yaʕni, 25. fa-atwaqqaʕ ʔatta il-ʕabāya fi-l-xaliḡ b-šikil ʕāmm il-hīn il-ʕabāya mōḡūda fi-l-imārāt u fi-ḡaṭar u s-saʕūdiyya u ŕumān, 26. il-ʕabāya iṭṭaṭit fi umam il-kuwēt u l-baḥrēn, šarat faḡaṭ l-il-ḥarīm li-kbār... mā fi... miš b-šikil ikbīr yaʕni, mub²² nifs ihni, 27. hni kaʔann-ha ḡuzʔ min il-haw-

¹⁶ The affricate form of /k/ > /č/ according to Holes (2018: 15) 'is found today throughout north-eastern and eastern Arabia, southern Iraq and parts of the UAE'.

¹⁷ Consonant elision since the double consonant in *yibayyinūn* is reduced to a single consonant *yibayinūn* (Qafisheh 1977: 29; Leung et al 2021: 28).

¹⁸ In EA, it is more common to use *ḥrim* 'women' instead of *nisāʔ*. This is thus a borrowing from MSA.

¹⁹ According to Johnstone (Johnstone 1965: 241; 1967: 37) in EA, as well as other Gulf varieties, ḡ > y and it is not conditioned by phonetic context. Holes (1980: 88) concluded that in Bahraini Arabic 'variation between the [j] and [y] allophones of /j/ is not free but constrained in a way which reveals both the linguistic dominance of the Sunni sect over the Shiʕi sect and the supra-dialectal influence of Literary Arabic in the speech of those who have been exposed to it in the course of their education.'

²⁰ Borrowing from MSA, in EA 'woman' mainly *ḥurma*.

²¹ The informant alternates *kull* and *kill*.

²² The negative particles before nouns and adjectives/active participles found in the texts of speaker 1 are *mub* which occurs everywhere in the Gulf, and *miš* which is not a local form. Concerning verbs, all speakers negate verbs with *mā*.

iyya l-waṭaniyya, 28. fa-maṭalan ḥatta baṣḍ il-ḡihāt tiṭlub min il-muwaḍḍafin ida kānat muwāṭna tilbis il-ṣabāya, 29. ṣala rāḥit-ha tilbis iṣ-šila aw mā tilbis iṣ-šila ṣala kēf-ha bas tiḥuṭṭ il-ṣabāya li?anna tibayyin ḡuz? min il-hawiyya l-waṭaniyya, 30. fa-dā?iman yaṣni it-tārīx badā b-hāḍi ṭ-ṭariqa u maṣ il-iyyām ṭabṣan dā?iman il-malābis tiṭawwar, 31. fa-l-ḥin dā?iman nitsā?al hal²³ il-ṣabāya tistamirr fi-l-imārāt baṣḍ ṣašra sanawāt? 32. aṣūf ḥāliyyan il-aḡyāl il-ydida aqall maṭalan istixdām il-ṣabāya, 33. yaṣni šāru yiṭlasūn bas b-iṣ-šila u yilbisūn malābis ṭwila u sātra u kil šay bass yaṣni miš istixdām il-ṣabāya. taḥt iṣ-šila niḥuṭṭ niḥna šabbāša, il-hadaḍ il-asāsi ṣādatan min ha-l-style inna tiṭabbīt iṣ-šila, 34. li?anna š-šila ṣādatan tikūn xafīfa u b-surṣa ṭṭih²⁴ 35. u maṣ iṣ-šaṣr in-nāṣim ṭṭih aḡtar fa-nuba šay yaṣni ka-stand tūḡaf ṣalē-ha, 36. bas maṣ il-iyyām niḥna ṣādatan lāzim iṭšir aṣyā? fi-ha taṭawwur fa-ṣaṣan niṭabbīt-ha hi b-imkān, b-ṭariqa baṣiṭa, 37. bass il-ḥin šār ḡuz? yaṣni inna tikūn fi-ha nafs it-tasriḥa u niḥuṭṭ-ha niṭabbīt iṣ-šila ṣalē-ha 38. fa-dā?iman fi taṣliqāt min iṣ-šabāb yigūlūn ‘lēš ṭḥuṭṭūn burḡ xalifa fōḡ rās-kum?’ 39. u atḍakkar ḥatta kānaw fi mudarrisin fi-l-ḡāmṣa yigūlūn ‘you are so beautiful but you look like an alien’ 40. yaṣni ḥarām hum yiṣtaqidūn anna hāḍa rās-na, ḡuz? min rās-na yaṣni mā yadrūn inna hāḍi muḡarrad šabbāša yaṣni tinḥaṭṭ!

41. u r-riyyāl ṭabṣan il-kanādīr ṭalṣat fi-ha mōḍā u mumkin kil dawla xaliḡiyya la-ha stayil-ha l-xāṣṣ, 42. mumkin aṣrif anā maṭalan min il-kandōra ida hāḍa kān gaṭri aw sṣūdi aw ṣumāni... 43. il-ṣumāni yikūn ṣādatan fi-ha taṭriṣ, il-gaṭri maṭalan yikūn fi-ha colour u ṣigab u s-sṣūdi yikūn wāyid mx-aṣṣar ṣala l-xaṣr yaṣni dayyig wāyid, 44. il-kuwēti id-ḍahr yikūn sāda yaṣni mā fi ay bizim ay šay, 45. il-imārāti yaṣni ṣindna niḥna maṭalan uxwān-i yirūḥūn ṣand il-xayyāt yigūlūn maṭalan nuba mōḍel ṣumāni, 46. fa-yilbisūn hum kull il-anwās baṣḍ il-aḡyān, bass hāḍa šā?iṣ aḡtar šay l-ṣumāni, il-imārāti baṣad šā?iṣ. [inaudible²⁵] 47. fa-ḥatta š-šabāb baṣad... šār lōn il-abyaḍ yilbisūn-ah fi ḡamiṣ il-munāsabāt 48. fa-hum baṣad yabūn taḡyīr, fa-yilbisūn yaṣni mōḍelāt ṣumāniyya aḡtar šay šā?iṣa baṣadēn il-mōḍelāt il-imārātiyya u l-ḡutra baṣad nafs iṣ-šay, 49. il-ḡutra, tariqat libis-ha ṭabṣan tixtilif, il-alwān baṣḍ il-aḡyān tixtilif: 50. il-abyaḍ ṣādatan fi-š-šēf, il-aḡmar ṣādatan fi-li-štā? li?anna yikūn iṣwayy aḡlaḍ, yikūn min šūf. 51. maṭalan is-saṣūdiyyin maṣrufin b-il-lōn il-aḡmar, ṣumāniṣ mulawwan fi-l-kuwēt baṣad il-lōn il-aḡmar šā?iṣ, yaṣni yilbisūn alwān ṭānya baṣad, 52. il-yōm ḥatta tiṣūfin inti iṣ-šēx mumkin Muḥammad bin Rāṣid yilbis alwān, ḥatta lōn azrag ḡāmiḡ, aw lōn aṣfar yaṣni ḡi zaṣfarāni, yaṣni aḡiss alwān muš mutadāwila yaṣni 53. fa-hū baṣad

²³ Interrogative stem borrowed from MSA to underline the main question.

²⁴ Assimilation of t as prefix of imperfective tense with ṭ > ṭṭih (Qafisheh 1977: 26–27). Another example in this text is ṭṭawwarat (it evolved).

²⁵ The term ‘inaudible’ is used in the transcribed texts every time the author was not able to understand a word in the recordings.

ṣala fikra wāyid yihtimm b-il-mōḍā, hū lli yiṭallaṣ il-mōḍā marrāt, 54. fa-ida libis-ah š-šēx baṣadēn kul-hum yilbisūn nafs il-lōn u nafs id-daraḡa u nafs il-ašyā? min ha-l-qabil.

55. *yaṣni faṣlan nigdir nṣarif iṣ-šaxṣ yaṣni min ṭariqat libs-ah sawā? kān li-l-raḡul u ḥatta l-ḥurma* 56. *agdir aṣrif inna hāy maṭalan saṣūdiyya min hāy il-ṣabāya aw hāy maṭalan gaṭriyya, 57. maṣ anna yaṣni l-ḥin maṣ il-iyyām širna niṣābah bass gabil fiṣlan kinna niṣarrig.*

1. We are often asked why men wear the white *kandoora* and women wear the black *abaya*. 2. Every stranger who comes to the Emirates always notices these two colours, black and white, 3. so it's a common question: why black and white are worn in this way? Although historically, colours weren't always like that: 4. men clothes used to be the colours of the sand, that is to say beige, yellow or shades of yellow. 5. This was our history, if you happen to see a history soap-opera or old things, 6. the man always dressed this way, he didn't use to dress in white. 7. It simply wasn't a suitable colour: 8. you know, we are surrounded by the desert and that means we need to wash our clothes almost every day, they get dirty very quickly: 9. that's why yellow clothes, the same colour as the environment, were more convenient. 10. Also, for war equipment and so on, they wear the same colour as the surroundings in war, so they can't be seen. 11. The main reason was to keep a low profile, or basically it was a question of neatness, 12. you know in the past there were fewer cleaning materials, and the process was a little ... 13. Women instead used to wear the *jallabiyah* or the *kandoora*, a little more embroidered both in the upper part and at the wrists and it was colourful. 14. They used to wear it together with a veil obviously and the *burgaṣ*, a kind of mask on the women's face: this was very common. 15. Then the *abaya* came out and it is said to have become part of our history. 16. Some people claim that most of the old pictures show women not wearing the *abaya*, but the *jallabiyah*, the veil and the *burgaṣ*. 17. With time the *abaya* has become more and more opaque, making the whatever is worn underneath invisible. 18. So, *abaya* came out and at the beginning was called *shweṣiyya*, the so-called 'top cloak', because it was placed over the head, 19. it was a single cut of silk. 20. However, body movements were uncomfortable, so we shifted it onto the shoulders and covered our heads with a veil 21. and black became the most popular colour also because in doing so, it could hide whatever was worn underneath. 22. With time, white became the most popular colour among young men. In fact, they have to wear everything in white, even their underclothes, which would be visible otherwise. 23. So, men's clothes are white, and women's are black, even though the *abaya* for about a year started changing its traditional colours, becoming coloured.

24. So, it's available now in pink, green, white, black, basically any colour. 25. You can find the *abaya* in the Emirates, in Qatar, in Saudi Arabia, in Oman. 26. The *abaya* disappeared in the states of Kuwait and Bahrain, because only adult women wear it, it's not as popular as it is here. 27. Here the *abaya* is part of the national identity: 28. for example, in some places, (women) employees are asked to wear the *abaya* if they are locals. 29. They are free to decide whether to wear the veil or not, but wearing the *abaya* is essential, because of its importance as a part of the national identity. 30. This is in short how the story began but of course clothing has changed with time. 31. Today we ask ourselves: will the *abaya* still be worn in the Emirates in ten years? 32. I can see new generations in the Emirates wearing the *abaya* less frequently: 33. they wear the veil and long covering dresses, but they don't wear the *abaya*. Under the veil we put the *shabbasa* on, a piece of clothing with the aim of keeping the veil still, 34. because it is very light sometimes and it may fall. 35. This happens mostly to women with straight hair, so they need something to keep it steady. 36. Sometimes we need an evolution of some things, so to fix the veil when we found an easy way to secure it overtime. 37. Nowadays it has become an essential part, it is as if it's used to make a hairstyle and in addition, we put it to fasten the veil. 38. We are subjected to the boys' comments: 'Why did you put the Burj Khalifa on your heads?' 39. I recall the professors at university saying: 'You are so beautiful, but you look like an alien.' 40. Too bad they believe those were our heads and not just a *shabbasa* which can be put on!

41. Men are used to wear the *kandoora*, which has now become a real fashion: every Gulf state has its peculiar *kandoora* style. 42. I can tell where a man comes from by his *kandoora*: from Qatar, from Saudi Arabia or from Oman. 43. The Omani style is usually embroidered, the Qatar one is a little colourful and it has the *igab*. Then there are the Saudi ones, which are a little more cinched, tighter at the waist; 44. then the Kuwaiti one is smooth at the front, very simple, with no clasps. 45. The Emirati one, my brothers go to a tailor, for example, and they ask for an Omani style. 46. They can wear every style they want, but the most fashionable of the moment is the Omani or the Emirati one. 47. So, boys have changed their style, too: they wear white clothes on every occasion, 48. but they also want change, so sometimes they put on more common Oman or Emirati or Qatar models and also the *ghutra*, 49. The styles of wearing *ghutra* is obviously different and sometimes the colours are also different: 50. white in summer and red in winter, the latter made in wool and therefore being a little thicker. 51. For example, you can recognize a Saudi thanks to the red colour. The ones of Oman people are colourful and Kuwaiti people dress mainly in red, but other colours are also common. 52. Today

you can see the Sheikh Mohammed Bin Rashid wearing different colours, even blue or saffron yellow and many other uncommon colours. 53. He cares a lot for fashion, sometimes he is the real trendsetter 54. so when he wears a colour, then everybody wants the same style, the same nuance, or the same clothes in this regard.

55. We can really distinguish a person based on what he or she wears, 56. thanks to her *abaya*, for example, we are able to tell whether a woman is Saudi or Qatari. 57. Now we are getting more and more similar, but in the past, we used to be really different.

Text 2: *il-imārāt* ‘The Emirates’

1. *bitkallim*²⁶ *il-yōm* *ʕan il-imārāt*: 2. *il-imārāt hī dawla ittiḥādiyya fī-ha sabiʕ imārāt*, 3. *fī imārāt abu ḍabi u hī akbar imāra u fī-ha akbar ʕadad sukkān aw akbar ʕadad muwāṭṭnīn fī imārat abu ḍabi*, 4. *atwaqqaʕ hī tašmal fī-ḥdūd itmānīn b-il-miya min sāḥat arāḍi l-imārāt u hī l-ʕāšma*. 5. *u ʕindna ṭāni il-imāra, imārat idbayy u hī ṭabʕan ṭāni akbar madīna fī-l-imārāt aw ṭāni akbar imāra fī-l-imārāt* 6. *u tuṣṭabar hiyya yaʕni ašlan il-madīna l-iqtisādiyya aw il-quwwa l-iqtisādiyya li-dawlat il-imārāt*, 7. *naḥin niṣṭabar ṭabʕan idbayy aḡmal madīna fī-l-ʕālam u ʕindna niḥna maṭal b-il-imārāti anna ‘dbayy dār il-ḥayy’*, 8. *atwaqqaʕ fī baʕḍ il-ašxāš zādaw fī-ha-l-maṭal ‘dbayy dār il-ḥayy illi yirūḥ fī-ha šāyib yirḡaʕ šābb aw yirḡaʕ ḥayy’ ʕašān fī-ha wāyid ašyā? ḡamīla u wāyid ašyā? ḥilwa*²⁷. 9. *il-madīna ṭ-ṭālṭa lli hī madīnat iš-šāriqa, aw b-il-imārāti naḥna nigūl iš-šārḡa*²⁸, 10. *ṭabʕan tuṣṭabar hī nafs il-madīna ṭ-taqāfiyya li-dawlat il-imārāt* 11. *u fī-ha wāyid mataḥīf* 12. *u fī-ha wāyid ašyā? li-ha ʕalāqa b-it-turāt u b-il-funūn u fī-ha maʕraḍ iktāb iš-šārḡa illi yiṣīr sanawīyyan atwaqqaʕ yaʕni ʕād akṭar min ṭlāṭīn sana* 13. *u gabiḷ fī-ha kān awwal maṭār fī-l-imārāt, šār fī imārat iš-šārḡa, kān mōḡūd fī-imārat iš-šārḡa* 14. *u baʕadēn ʕindna imārat ʕaḡmān u umm il-ḡewīn u rās il-xēma u li-fḡera*; 15. *ana lēn il-ḥīn mā ruḥt umm il-ḡewīn, kul mā afakkir ašīr il-ha yigūlūn mā fī-ha šay* 16. *u sirt rās il-xēma atawaqqaʕ min ṭalāt aw arbaʕ sanawāt. rās il-xēma baʕad madīna ḡamīla u fī-ha ḡbāl u fī-ha wāyid imārātiyyīn ḡom iš-šāḥḥi*²⁹ 17.

²⁶ Persson (2009: 26) suggests that ‘the *b*-prefix is used a marker of irrealis mood rather than being limited to function as a future/intentive marker’. Holes (2016: 290–291; 301–302) agrees with Persson considering the *b*-prefix as a general marker of irrealis meanings in Gulf Arabic along with its future and intention meanings.

²⁷ Within the same sentence, the speaker alternates MSA and Shami *ḡamīla* > *ḥilwa* ‘nice, beautiful’.

²⁸ In EA *q* is realised as *ḡ* in the contiguity of front vowels, for example *qāl* > *ḡāl* ‘he said’ or *ḡ* as in *qarīb* > *ḡarīb* ‘close’, thus the informant explains why Emiratis call the Emirate *aš-šārḡa* (Johnstone 1967: 2; Qafisheh 1977: 6–7; Leung et al. 2021: 14).

²⁹ The *šihūḥ* speak several varieties of Arabic.

u haḍēla yaʕni maʕrūfīn inna li-hum, u ʕādāt-hum il-xāʕša u ḥatta laḥḡāt-hum il-xāʕša u maʕrūfīn yaʕni li-šḥūḥ li-hum karam xāʕš ayḍan fa-fi ʕind-hum ha-l-aʕyā? kil-ha. 18. il-fuḡēra yaʕni mumkin ruḥt il-ha martēn [inaudible] 19. hi ḡarība min ʕumān u atawaqqaʕ min il-baḥr il-hindi u b-šikil ʕāmm baʕad-ha hi manṭiqa ḥādiya u manṭiqa yaʕni wagt aṣir il-fuḡēra aḥiss mā asmaʕ šay, asmaʕ bas hudū? asmaʕ ṭanīn fi-idni 20. fa-aḡūl yā rabb-i mā aʕrif il-muškila wēn? fi-l-ḡaww wa-lā fi-idni-i? 21. liʔanna mumkin fi dbayy dāʔiman fi aʕwāt u šōt sayyāra, šōt šāriʕ, šōt ʕaʕāfir amma il-hudū? illi hnāk yikūn... 22. yaʕni aḥiss ḥilwa il-manṭiqa ḥagg il-istiḡmām u ḥagg ir-rāḥa u b-šikil ʕāmm yaʕni fi-l-aʕyād u l-munāsabāt u xuṣūsan fi-fatrat li-štā. 23. aḡlab illi fi dbayy yrūḥūn il-manātiq iʕ-šamāliyya yaʕni rās il-xēma u li-fḡēra u ʕadatan ahl li-fḡēra u rās il-xēma iyūn dbayy fa-yikūn fi tawāzun!

24. dbayy aḡmal šay fi-ha anna kil marra fi maʕrūf, yaʕni ʕādi kul³⁰ šahr bināya ḡadida... ydida ʕala šāriʕ šayx Zāyid aw maʕrūf ydid 25. u taqriban xuṣūsan il-fatra l-aḡira šēx Mḥammad bin Rāšid aṭlaq ʕiddat maʕārīʕ, 26. min il-amākin il-ydida illi li-l-ḥīn mā riḥt il-ha hi qanāt idbayy il-māʔiyya, 27. sawwēna-h u aḡiran ʕindna nahr fi-nuṣṣ il-balad u ḥāḍa il-baḥr mimtidd min il-xōr lēn burḡ xalīfa u hni ḡarīb min bēt-na, ḡumērah. 28. ḥāḍa il-maʕrūf kān mafrūḍ yṣir min arbaʕ aw xams sanawāt bass il-ḥamdillāh u aḡiran tamm il-iftitāḥ, šibih kāmīl il-ḥīn. 29. il-makān iṭ-ṭani ḥāliyyan baʕad atawaqqaʕ makān ism-ah Dubai Parks u fi ʕibāra ʕan muḡammaʕāt alʕāb sakaniyya, alʕāb kaḥrabāʔiyya 30. u fi Lego Land u fi ḥadāʔiq māʔiyya u fi yaʕni ʕālam ṭāni u fi atawaqqaʕ maḍīnat Bollywood xāʕša bi-t-tamṭīl, 31. yaʕni fi-ha ha³¹-l-aʕyā? kil-ha baʕad mā šār-li aṣir-ha 32. u fi manṭiqa ydida u fi manṭiqat alʕāb isim-ha IMG baʕad alʕāb tikūn dāʔiman ṭabʕan ʕaʕān ʕindna l-ḡaww ḥārr fa-yikūn makān msakkar, miṭl il-mōlāt. 33. aʕhar mōl ṭabʕan mōl idbayy 34. u ana mā aḡibb aṣir mōl idbayy aḥiss... 35. yaʕni ṣaḥḥ hū ḡarīb min bēt-na taqriban maʕāfat ʕaʕra dagāyig, bass marrāt ʕaʕān il-zaḥma baxtār marākiz abʕad u natrik il-markaz ḥāḍa ḥagg is-suwwāḥ illi ḥābbīn yiṣūfūn mōl idbayy. 36. mōl idbayy fi-h aquarium u fi sinamā, fi manṭiqat alʕāb ḥagg il-atfāl... 37. u dbayy bi-šikil ʕāmm dāʔiman šiʕār-ha tiḡibb il-akbar, tiḡibb il-aṭwal, tiḡibb iʕ-šay illi muš mōḡūd fi-ayy makān ṭāni, 38. fa-dāʔiman ḥāḍa mumkin ʕallamet-na naḥna dāʔiman nikūn raqam wāḥid, u ḥāḍa šiʕār li-šēx Mḥammad bin Rāšid inna ‘ana u ʕaʕb-i niḡibb il-markaz l-awwal’ 39. fa-baʕḍ il-aḡyān ʕaʕb ann-ah nsawwi šay baṣiṭ, aḥiss lāzim yikūn ʕala mustawa min il-miṭāliyya u l-kamāliyya 40. u marrāt aḥiss mi-l-aʕyā? illi faʕlan ʕaʕba inna fi wāyid aʕyā? ydida tinzil u b-it-tāli mā ʕindna wagt nilaḥḡig, yaʕni mā ʕindna wagt aʕlan li-niṣūf ha-l-makān 41. anna maʕrūf ṭāni ṭilaʕ aw maʕrūf ṭāliṭ

³⁰ Reduction from double consonant to single consonant in kull (Qafisheh 1977: 29).

³¹ The invariable demonstrative, also used in Shami varieties, occurs in EA proximal singular and plural demonstratives (Leung et al. 2021: 173).

aw marrāt ḥatta nuba nibtikir šay ydīd yikūn šaṣb li?anna kul šay xalaṣ ṭālīf fi-s-sūg, kul šay mōğūd, 42. zamīl-i lli min abu ḍabi yigūl-li maṭalan ‘xātr-i nsawwi maktaba šala l-baḥr tikūn naṣ il-kabīna u niḥuṭṭ fi-ha kitub’, 43. aḡūl gilt l-ah xalaṣ hādī sawwēnā-ha, mōğūda, yigūl ‘zēn insawwi šaraba fi-ha kitub tikūn mōğūda fi-l-mōlāt ?aw baṣḍ il-amākin is-siyāḥiyya’, 44. aḡūl hāḍa baṣad mōğūda xalaṣ! 45. aḡlab il-afkār tikūn mōğūda xalaṣ u ṭurḥat, mōğūda u n-nās yistaxdim-ha yaṣni. 46. fa-hāḍa b-šikil baṣīṭ šan idbayy.

1. I’m going to speak about the Emirates. 2. It is a federation of 7 Emirates: 3. the Emirate of Abu Dhabi, which is the largest Emirate with the highest population, and with the highest number of locals. 4. I guess it covers 80% of the Emirates territories and it’s their capital city. 5. The second is Dubai, the second largest city of the Emirates or the second largest Emirate, 6. and it’s considered to be the UAE’s economic city or powerhouse. 7. We consider it the most beautiful city in the world, obviously, and there’s an expression in Emirati Arabic saying: ‘Dubai is the home of the living.’ 8. Some people like adding: ‘... and the home of youth: those who go to Dubai with white hair, become young again’ and this is because it’s full of beautiful things. There are many good things. 9. The third city is al-Shariqa: we call it ‘Sharjah’ in Emirati Arabic, 10. and it is considered UAE’s city of culture 11. and there are many museums. It’s full of traditions and arts: here the festival of books has taken place every year for more than 30 years, 13. and it housed the first airport ever built in the Emirates. 14. Then there are the Emirate of Ajman, Umm al-Quwain, Ras al-Khaimah, and Fujairah. 15. I still haven’t had the chance to visit Umm al-Quwain: every time I think about going, I’m told there’s nothing to see there. 16. I went to Ras al-Khaimah, three or four years ago I think, and it is also a beautiful city, with the mountains and many Emiratis who are the Shihuh: 17. they are well-known not only for their own traditions and for their own dialects, but also for their generosity and hospitality, for all those things. 18. I’ve been to Fujairah maybe twice, 19. it’s near Oman and the Indian Ocean, I think. That’s a very quiet area: when I go to Fujairah I don’t hear anything, just stillness. I can feel the stillness ringing in my ears. 20. So, I say ‘Oh my God, where’s the problem here? In the environment or in my ears?’. 21. Maybe it’s because it’s always so noisy in Dubai: noises come from the streets, cars, from the birds in the sky, but this city is so quiet; 22. I think it’s the perfect place to relax a bit during holidays or a special occasion, especially in winter. 23. Most people in Dubai leave for the Northern areas, that is to say Ras al-Khaimah and Fujairah, and the people move to Dubai from there, so there’s a balance!

24. The most beautiful thing in Dubai is the constant designing: it’s normal that every month there’s a new building on the Sheikh Zayed road, or

a new project. 25. Especially in the last few years the Sheikh Mohammed Bin Rashid has given the go-ahead for many construction sites in new places, 26. among the places I haven't gone yet there is the Dubai Water Canal. 27. Finally, we have a real river in the middle of the city, flowing through the Khor until the Burj Khalifa or here close to our home, Jumeirah. 28. This project was supposed to be completed about four or five years ago, and thank God it has been finally opened now, it's almost completed. 29. The other place, I think it's called Dubai Parks, is made up of a series of amusement parks; 30. and then there's Legoland, water parks, and this is another world, I think there's Bollywood, mainly dedicated to acting. 31. There are so many things there that, but I haven't visited yet. 32. Then there's another new place, another amusement park called IMG, and since we have hot weather, they built it indoor, just like a shopping centre. 33. The most famous shopping centre is the Dubai Mall. 34. I don't like going there, 35. even though it's very close to where I live, only 10 minutes away, more or less, but traffic makes it much longer to reach so we leave it to tourists. 36. In the Dubai Mall you can find a huge aquarium, a cinema, and a playground for children. 37. Generally speaking, in Dubai we like magnificence: basically, what is big, tall and long. We like having things nobody else has, 38. we have been taught to be the number one, just like the Sheikh's motto: 'My people and I like the top spot.' 39. Sometimes it is difficult to get to create something simple, because we tend to raise everything to new heights, to excessive levels. 40. Sometimes I find this hard because every time a new building comes up, we can't catch up with the sightseeing. 41. As soon as we visit a brand-new place, there's another one right after, and then another one. We also would like to be the creators of something very original, but it's difficult because everything seems to have already been invented on the market. Everything exists already. 42. A colleague of mine from Abu Dhabi told me: 'We would like to make a library on the beach: we are going to build beach huts filled with books.' 43. I replied: 'We have that, already.' 'Ok, so let's go around the malls or other touristic places with a cart containing books to sell.' 44. 'We have that one, too.' 45. Most ideas have been realised and people use them. 46. This is Dubai in a nutshell.

Text 3: *iz-zawāğ fi-l-imārāt* 'The wedding in the Emirates'

1. *il-sīrs fi-l-imārāt min akṭar il-mawāḍiʿ il-iḡtimāsiyya illi tikūn muhimma ḡiddan ʿand il-muḡtamaʿ il-imārāti*, 2. *ṭabʿan atwaqqas inna aḡlab iz-zawāğ yikūn min zawāğ taqlidi akṭar min annu hū zawāğ ḡubb* 3. *u atwaqqas min-i-l-ašyāʾ illi mumkin fi dbayy aw fi-l-imārāt wāyid ašyāʾ tḡayyarat: il-muwāṣalāt, is-sakn, il-ḡayā, is-sayyāra* 4. *bass iz-zawāğ aṣṭaqid anna mā zāl yiḡtafaḍ*

yaʿni b-naʿfs rūḥ il-māḍi fī-h. 5. ʿand-i uxt, uxt-i mitzawǧa u xū-y mitzawwiǧ u ha-l-iṭnēn taqriban zawāǧ-hum taqlidi, 6. inna il-umm, umm il-walad šāfat il-bint u šāfat-ha ǧamīla mabdaʿiyyan u baʿadēn saʿlaw ʿan-ha u aʿrfaw ʿan-ha aḳtar 7. u ʿugub šār tabādol iʃ-ʃuwar u ʿugub tabādol iʃ-ʃuwar 8. in šār fī muwāfaqa min iṭ-ṭarafēn ʿugub kān šār naʿfs il-liqāʿ, il-interview aw l-muqā-bala, wa law inna mā šār fī ayy kalam, 9. illi hū naḥna mumkin ninsammī-ha b-šikil ʿāmm ʿind-na ‘maʿrūf in-naḍra š-šaraʿiyya’ inna r-rayyāl yṭalliʿ l-ḥur-ma u l-ḥurma ṭalliʿ ir-rayyāl, yišūfūn okkēh, 10. ʿugub yikammilūn il-xuṭ-wa illi baʿd, illi hī tikūn il-xuṭba, 11. fa-yūn ir-riyāyil yixṭubūn il-bint min ubū-ha u l-abb yikūn ʿādatan yaʿni mōǧūd fi-l-māyis maʿ axwān-ah, 12. maʿ ʿa-l-ʿaqall yaʿni yišhadūn fi-ḥdūd arbaʿin šāxš ida aqall marrāt aw mar-rāt aḳtar ʿala ḥasab il-ʿāyla 13. bas yimkin liʿanna ʿāylat-na kbīra, ʿind-na naḥna sabīʿ aʿmām u ṭamān ʿammāt fa-maʿ azwāǧ-hum u maʿ ʿayyāl-hum fa-niṭlaʿ yaʿni ʿadad ikbīr 14. u yittafqūn fī-h ʿala l-mahar u mašārīf il-ʿirs u z-zahba, ubū-y b-šikil ʿāmm mā yitšarraṭ 15. bass iḳtīr min il-abāʿ yaʿni mā zālāw yiṭlubūn šurūṭ muʿayyana, mahar muʿayyan, il-ʿirs lāzim yikūn fi-fun-duq muʿayyan 16. u aǧlab šurūṭ il-muwāṭnīn inna maṭalan il-bint itikammil dirāsāt-ha ida kān baʿad-ha fi-l-ǧāmʿa 17. aw inna l-bint tištiǧil ida mitxārǧa u mā ʿand-ha šuǧl, 18. aw ʿādatan yikūn ʿand-ha bēt b-rūḥ-ha u hāḍa ʃiʃb yumkin fi-l-bidāya 19. bass yaʿni maṭalan maʿ uxū-y hum šartaw ha-š-šart fa-il-wālid ǧāl-l-ha il-walad il-ḥin mā yigdir yiʿiʃ b-rūḥ-ah fi-sakan 20. fa-hū by-iʿiʃ maʿanna awwal sina sintēn u lēn mā Allāh yifarriǧ-ha 21. xuṣūsan liʿanna xū-y ʿand-ah arḍ u ʿādatan ʿašān umūr il-bināʿ tiṣahhal 22. il-wāḥid lāzim yikūn mitzawwiǧ fa-ʿugub iz-zawāǧ il-mōḍūf byiṣahhal u wāfagat il-ḥurma u ahal-ha.

23. u baʿadēn ṭabʿan baʿd ha-l-fatra, fatrat il-xuṭba, yšīr ha-l-fatra ṭ-ṭarafēn yitšarraṭūn ʿala baʿd, 24. fa-yitkallim maʿ-ha b-it-taliṭfōn, hī tit-kallim maʿ-ah b-it-taliṭfōn, b-ṭimkān-ah hū yizūr-ha fi-l-bēt bas b-wuǧūd ahl-ha aw hī tiyi l-bēt 25. u hāy nādīran mā tšīr, nādīran itīšīr yaʿni bas yaʿni dāʿīman maʿ wuǧūd il-ahl, 26. ʿugub-ha min kamm iʃahr yikūn il-milʿa aw ʿaqd in-niqāḥ u tikūn zōǧt-ah baʿadēn b-šikil rasmi, 27. bass baʿad-ha tikūn hī ʿāyša fi-bēt-ha u iz-zōǧ ʿāyīš fi-bēt-ah, bēt ahl-ah, 28. fa-bass b-imkān-hum ʿugub ʿinna yiṭlaʿūn maʿ baʿd, ḥatta yikūnūn maṭalan maʿ baʿd b-rūḥ-hum fi-l-ǧirfa, yaʿni mā yikūn fī ʾiškāliyya, 29. u ʿugub-ha baʿd b-kam iʃahr ʿu-gub bišīr iz-zawāǧ b-šikil rasmi aw min naḥya iǧtimāʿiyya, yōm hī tilbis xalaṣ il-fustān il-abyaḍ, 30. ʿugub tigdir tiʿiʃ maʿ-ah fi ay bēt... 31. u xū-y tzawwaǧ taqriban tāriḫ wāḥid u ṭlāṭīn sabʿa alfēn u xamuṣʿaš u l-ḥin ʿand-ah ban-nūta zǧīra, ʿumr-ha ṭalāt iʃhūr. 32. fa-dāʿīman yikūn yaʿni iz-zōǧ u z-zōǧa muǧāḍaran mitzawwiǧūn³², baʿd šahr ʿaw šahrēn ʿaw ṭalāt iʃhūr in-nās tiʃal:

³² The suffix *-in* is the one used in EA for the plural masculine while in *mitzawwiǧūn* ‘married’, the suffix *-ūn* is borrowed from MSA (Leung et al. 2021: 50).

‘zōğt-ah hāmīl? zōğt-ah hāmīl?’ 33. *fa-mumkin hni yidḡaḡtaw il-ḥurma innu lāzim taḥmal*, 34. *fa-ḥatta law ḥabbat ūgub tāxoḡ break xams sitt sanawāt mā yikūn fī muškila*, *bass muš innu yitʔaxxar il-mawlūd il-awwal fatra ṭwila*.

35. *fa-iz-zawāḡ, ṭabʕan ḥafalāt iz-zawāḡ hāy ḥafalāt inna ḥawalaw, ḥāwalat il-ḥukūma kaṭīran yaʕni wāyid an itḡayyar mawḡūf ḥafalāt iz-zawāḡ u l-mašārīf illa ṭšīr* 36. *yaʕni ḥatta yitwaqqafūn dāʕīman innu muʕaddal iṣ-ṣarf fi-ḥafalāt iz-zawāḡ lā³³ yaqall ʕan mītēn u xamsīn alf u yiṣal ila l-milyōn u kil ḥāda yiṣīr ḥagg lēla aw lēltēn faqaṭ*. 37. *fa-ḥāwalat il-ḥukūma mubādarāt taxfif mabāḥar iz-zawāḡ u ha-l-ašyāʔ*, 38. *lākin ʕala ḡulit uxt-i il-ḥīn il-mōḡūf mā ʕād mawḡūf iz-zawāḡ bēn šaxšēn*, *il-ḥīn yimaṭṭil it-ṭabaqa il-iḡtimāʕiyya la-l-šaxš*, 39. *fa-yaʕni yimkin ʕādi hū yākil ay šay fi-l-bēt mā ḥad³⁴ yadri*, 40. *bass iz-zawāḡ kil ḥad yadri*, *lāzim il-wāḥid yaʕni yibayyin innu hū miš aqall ʕan in-nās u inna-h ʕand-ah mabāliḡ kāfya yigdir yiṣraf fi-ha u ʕand-ah il-umūr kil-ha yaʕni inna-h yidfaʕ aqsāt iz-zawāḡ ḥāda!* 41. *ḥafat iz-zawāḡ ʕādatan b-šikil ʕām yikūn... ḥafalāt il-ḥarīm ḡēr ʕan ḥafalāt... yaʕni mub mawṣūla ʕan ḥafalāt ir-riḡāl³⁵*, *fa-mā tikūn muxtalat* 42. *u ʕādatan il-ḥarīm yikūn ʕadad il-maʕāzīm taqriban fi-ḥdūd xamsimiyyat šaxš*, *xamsimiyyat ḥurma taqriban*, *u yikūn bass li-l-ḥarīm mā yikūn fī atfāl wāyid illa mā ʕada min ahl il-maʕāzīm aw min ahl il-miʕris ʔaw l-ʕarūs* 43. *u ḥafat il-ʕirs tibdaʔ taqriban min is-sāʕa ṭmān u nuṣṣ u tintiḥi ʕala s-sāʕa tintēn il-faḡr*, 44. *ṭabʕan min is-sāʕa ṭmān u nuṣṣ yibḡūn il-ahil awwal šay yikūnūn mitwāḡḡdīn*, *baʕadēn il-maʕāzīm taqriban līn is-sāʕa ʕašra*, *ʕašra u nuṣṣ...* 45. *ūgub tiṭlaʕ il-ʕarūs ʕala in-nās b-rūḥ-a biḡūn zōḡ-ha*, *bas hī la-wāḥid-ha*, *tiṭlaʕ min il-ḡurfa tirkab līn il-masrah*, 46. *baʕadēn yibdaʔūn in-nās yirkabūn u yihannūn-ha u yitṣawwrūn maʕ-ha*, *illi yiḥibb it-taṣwīr ṭabʕan*, 47. *u kull it-ṭāqa min il-mōḡūd kil-hum ṭāqa nisāʔi min il-muṣawwirīn*, *min illi yiḥuṭṭūn il-ʕašā*, *min il-waiters*, *kil-hum kil-hum yaʕni ḥarīm*. 48. *u ṭabʕan dāʕīman yikūnūn il-ḥarīm lābsīn ʕabāyāt*, *il-maʕāzīm xuṣūṣan* 49. *u fī nās mā yikūnūn lābsīn ʕabāya*, *yikūnūn lābsīn maṭalan faṣātīn u ḥaṭṭīn makyāḡ u msawwīn tasriḥa*, *ha-n-nās yikūn ʕādatan ahl il-ʕarūs aw ahl il-miʕris*, 50. *fa-il-yōm iḡa ana ruḥt maṭalan ʕirs u mā lābsa ʕabāya yaʕni hū axlāḡiyyan ʕādi innu b-imkān-i mā albis ʕabāya ḡiddam il-ḥarīm* 51. *bass yaʕni baʕadēn kul ḥad yistaḡsir šū ana aṣīr ḥagg il-ʕarūs aw šū aṣīr ḥagg il-miʕris*, *xuṣūṣan iḡa kint lābsa u kint amši u aṭḥarrak yaʕni...* 52. *fa-atḡakkar marra sawwēt nafs iṣ-šay fi-ʕirs ṣadiḡt-i*, *yaʕni ana miš min ahal-hum ka-ahl bass yaʕni hī ṣadiḡt-i u rabiʕti³⁶*, *fa-kil ḥad kān yisʔal ‘mnu ḥāḡi?’*, 53. *fa-ḥatta law mā kānaw yisʔalūn ḡiddām-i kān yisʔalūn il-ahil ‘mnu ḥāḡi?’*: *‘ḥāḡi ṣadiḡat Faṭma’ u ʔāḥ okkēh!* 54. *fa-kānat il-ʕabāya hī*

³³ The negator *lā* is a borrowing from MSA.

³⁴ It is also possible to transcript as *maḥḡad* ‘nobody’, as in Qafishesh (1977: 21).

³⁵ MSA borrowing: *riḡāl* > *riyāyil* ‘men’.

³⁶ In order to refer to ‘a friend’ is EA is common *ṣadiḡ* or *rabiʕ* (Qafishesh 1997: 253).

l-fāšla yaʿni bēn mnu l-ahal u mnu l-ḡarib. 55. u baʿadēn taqrīban ʿala s-sāfa tnaʿšši iyi il-miʿris maʿ ubū-h yiṣuffūn-ah lēn il-ʿarūs 56. u ʿugub tibda? il-marāsim it-tānya, min-ha gaṣṣ il-cake, yiṣrabūn il-ʿaṣīr aw marrāt ḥatta ʿasal maʿ baʿd 57. u yitammūn maʿ baʿd fi-ḥdūd sāfa, wagt it-tatbrikāt u ʿ-ṣu-war u ʿugub xalaṣ yirūhūn ḡurfat-hum baʿd takmil it-taṣwīr, baʿd taṣwīr šaxṣi u baʿadēn xalaṣ yirūhūn il-funduq. 58. gabiḷ kān lāzim maṭalan tikūn lēlat id-daxla fi-bēt il-ʿarūs bass il-ḥin lā, xalaṣ yaʿni mā ʿād ḥāy iṣ-šay mōḡūd, 59. il-ḥin tikūn aḡlab fi-l-fanādiq. 60. fa-gabiḷ ḥatta maṭalan ʿala gabiḷ sitt sabaʿ sanawāt kānat ‘iṣ-ṣabāhiyya’ šay muhim, tāni yōm ysawwūn ḥafḷa zḡira, ṣabāhiyya, 61. bass il-ḥin atwaqqaf ha-š-šay miṣ mhim wāyid u [inaudible] istaṣbat badāl-ha ḥaflat il-istiqbāl illi tikūn ʿugub mā rāḡṣin min šahr il-ʿasal b-usbūf aw usbūṣēn, 62. yaʿni dāʿiman yikūn fi-ḥdūd šahr aw šahrēn ka-ḥadd aqṣa, fa-ḥaflat il-istiqbāl ḥagg il-ahil.

63. ʿādatan naḥna fi yōm il-ʿirs mā naṣṭi ḥadāya l-ʿarūs aw l-miʿris, mā šay, 64. bass naḥin insīr u nitʿašša u niṭlaṣ, mā yikūn fi ayy ḥadāya, 65. mā yikūn fi wurūd min il-maʿāzīm li-l-ʿarūs, mā fi šay no, bass yaʿni il-ḥadāya tikūn min il-ahal fi-ḥaflat il-istiqbāl. 66. il-ḥadāya ʿādatan tikūn ʿibāra ʿan ḍahab aw itkūn maṭalan aṣyā? qad taḥtāḡ-ha il-ʿarūs, maṭalan aṣyā? la-ha ʿalāqa b-il-manzil u t-tanḍif, xallāta... 67. ʿala ḥasab ṭabʿan kul šaxṣ u miṣānit-ah, kul mā kān iṣ-šaxṣ qarīb min il-ʿarūs kul mā ʿaṭā-ha ḥadiyya ʿaḡla, 68. ṭabʿan id-ḍahab yikūn dāʿiman šāʿiṣ lākin fi ahal yaṣṭūn maṭalan maknasa, xallāta, ḡassāla, furn, ha-l-aṣyā? illi qad³⁷ taḥtāḡūn-ha aw mablaḡ māli, yaʿni ʿala rāḥit-hum yisawwūn fi-h il-aṣyā? illi yabūn-ha, 69. fa-il-ḥadāya tikūn dāʿiman muxtaṣra faqat ʿala il-ahal u l-aṣdiqā? illi yikūnūn ʿādatan mōḡūdīn fi-yōm il-reception 70. u mā nʿizim il-ḡurb, dāʿiman nʿizim il-ahal u ay šaxṣ maṭalan iyi l-istiqbāl maṣrūf innu lāzim iyīb maʿ-ah šay, amma l-ʿirs lā?! 71. fa-baʿd il-aḡyān il-aḡānib iyūn aṣrās-na yibūn ḥadāya ḥatta mā ʿindna makān niḥuṭṭ il-ḥadiyya ‘wēn niḥuṭṭ-ha il-ḥin? wēn niwuddi-ha?’, 72fa-yaʿni mumkin ḥāy iṣ-šay aṣhal, yimkin axaff ʿa-l-ḡamīṣ, yaʿni xamsimiyyat šaxṣ... 73. fa-atḍakkar fi šaxṣ marra ḡāl-li ‘inzēn Ḥanān lēš tʿizumūn in-nās tāklūn-hum u (y)irūhūn? mā fi šay, yaʿni yāklūn akil for free u yirūhūn!’

74. yikūn dāʿiman ir-radd il-ḡamīl inna naḥḍar naḥna ʿiris-hum, fa-yiṣīr ka-mā dām hum ḥaḍḍru³⁸ ʿiris-na fa-kaʿanna yiṣīr wāḡib tilqāʿi inna lāzim ana aṣīr aḥḍar ʿiris-hum 75. ‘la ḥarām, la faḍiḥa, hum yāw ʿiris-na, naḥna kif mā nsīr ʿiris-hum’ aw marrāt il-ʿaks: 76. naḥna sirna ʿiris-hum fa-ʿiris-na mā yāw fa-umm-i tigūl ‘kif yaʿni mā yāw? naḥin fi-ʿiris-hum ruḥna, ʿirs binit-hum, ʿirs walad-hum u binit-hum it-tānya u hum fi-ʿirs walad-na mā yāw?’ 77. fa-ḥatta ixtiyār yōm il-ʿirs baʿad šay wāyid mhim, fa-ʿaṣān ʿi aḡlab in-

³⁷ The particle *qad* is preserved in many Gulf varieties as Qatari and Emirati (Johnstone 1967: 15; Durand 2009: 173).

³⁸ The 3 m.pl. ending -aw can occur as the variants -o or -u (Johnstone 1967: 42).

nās taxtār il-weekend u taxtār ayyām il-iğāzāt maʿ anna ayyām il-iğāzāt fi-ha safar, fi nās itsāfar, 78. fi nās tikūn mōğūda, bass yaʿni ʿašān ʿi yihubbūn tikūn ayyām il-usbūʿ, 79. qāṣda ayyām id-dawāmāt yaʿni fi-l-fuṣūl il-ʿādiyya bass tikūn fi-l-weekend, fi-iğāzat il-usbūʿ.

1. The wedding in the Emirates is the most important social topic in the Emirati community. 2. I expect that most marriages would be traditional marriages more than they are marriages of love 3. and I expect that among the things that ... maybe in Dubai or in the Emirates many things have changed, such as the means of transport, the houses, life in general, cars, 4. but I believe that marriage still keep the spirit of the past. 5. I have a sister; my sister is married, my brother is married, and they both had a traditional marriage, more or less. 6. The boy's mother sees the girl, she finds her nice at the beginning and then she starts asking to know more about her, 7. and then they exchange photographs, and they get to know each other; after the photo's exchanging, 8. then if there is agreement on both sides, afterwards, there is the same meeting, the interview, even though no word is given. 9. We generally call it 'Shariatic legitimate meeting': the man sees the woman, the woman sees the man, they see each other ok, 10. and then they take the next step which is the engagement. 11. So, all the male members of the groom's family ask the bride's father for permission, and he usually is at the *majlis* together with the male members of his family, 12. so who witness (this event) can sometimes be more than forty people: sometimes less, sometimes more, it depends on the families. 13. Our family is very large: we have seven uncles and eight aunts by my father's family, with their wives, husbands, and children we are many of us! 14. Then they reach an agreement about the dowry, the wedding expense, and arrangements. My father doesn't generally have unusual requests, 15. but many fathers have specific requests, they still ask for specific request, for example a defined dowry or that the wedding has to take place at a specific hotel, 16. and among the most common locals' requests there is that of the bride to finish university first 17. or to have a job if she's already graduated but she doesn't have a job, 18. or often that she can have an house and this could be difficult at the beginning, 19. for example for my brother they reached an agreement: my father said to her that they couldn't live alone now, 20. so they live with us the first one or two years until God's will, 21. even because my brother has a plot and building is easier when someone is married, he has to be married so the matter becomes easy, 22. so her family and she agreed. 23. After this period, the engagement period the couple know each other better, 24. he speaks to her on the phone and she speaks to him on the phone, he can pay her a visit, at the presence of her family though.

25. In the very rare cases that she visits him, the family has to be always present of course, 26. and then after few months there is the marriage, they sign the contract (*ṣaqd an-niqāḥ*), and she becomes his full-fledged wife. 27. Even though she still has to live a period in her own family house, and he still has to live a period in his own family house, 28. but they can go out together or be alone in a room when they come for a visit, no problems anymore. 29. Then, after a few more months, the wedding takes place officially or from the social point of view: the day she wears the white dress, 30. and she can live together with him at no matter what place. 31. My brother got married on July 31st 2015 and has now a 3-month-old girl. 32. Just after they got married, after one, two, three months people start asking: 'Is his wife pregnant? Is she?', 33. as if they insist that she must get pregnant. 34. Actually, she can then have a break five or six years later, but not to let too much time pass before the first delivery.

35. Regarding weddings, I mean wedding parties, the government has been trying to change the traditions of wedding parties, as far as the expenses are concerned. 36. It is expected that wedding party usually costs between 250,000 and 1,000,000 (Dirham), all that for one or two nights only. 37. The government tried to reduce this squandering, 38. even though, as my sister says, a wedding is no longer a question between two people, but it shows the social class of a person. 39. You may eat whatever you want when you are at home, because nobody will ever see you. 40. But at weddings everyone knows, so you're supposed to show you're not outdone, that you have enough money to spend in the wedding party. 41. Wedding parties usually are ... women parties are different from ... women celebrate separately from men. There are no mixed celebrations, 42. and the female guests are generally no less than 500, no kids, only kids by the groom's and the bride's families. 43. The party starts at around 8.30 in the evening and finishes at 2 am. 44. The relatives arrive first at around 8.30 pm, and then all the other guests can show up, at around 10–10.30 pm. 45. Then the bride arrives alone, without her husband: she enters the hall and takes the stage. 46. She is followed by all the people who take turn to say hi and to take a picture with her (those who like to). 47. The whole staff is female: female photographers, waitresses and servants, they are all women. 48. Women all wear the *abaya*, especially the guests, 49. but some people don't: they wear evening dresses, make up and a hairdo, and we're generally speaking of the groom's and the bride's relatives. 50. If I went to a wedding today without my *abaya* is ethically accepted 51. but everybody (among all the women) would wonder if I was part of the family or not, especially when I wear a particularly nice dress or when I walk, when I move around. 52. I remember experiencing it once, at a friend's

wedding. I wasn't part of the family, but she is a very close friend of mine, and everybody was like: 'Who's that woman?', 53. of course not at my presence but they ask the family 'Who's that woman?' The family would then answer I was a friend of Fatima's. 54. So, the *abaya* identifies who is a relative and who isn't. 55. At around midnight the groom and his father arrive, and the groom reached the bride. 56. Then the second part of the party begins with the cutting of the cake. The newlyweds drink fruit juice or honey sometimes, 57. and they stay there around an hour for the congratulations and the photoshoot, and then they go to the hotel room after the photoshoot. 58. The wedding night used to be at the groom's house. But now it isn't anymore. 59. It usually takes place at hotels, nowadays. 60. Around six or seven years ago the *sabahiyya* (the morning feast) was very important, in fact the day after the party they used to celebrate a little during the morning. 61. However, I believe that this event has now been replaced by the welcoming feast, which normally takes place when the newlyweds return home from the honeymoon, let's say after a week or two. 62. The welcoming feast has to be celebrated within a month or two of the wedding. It is a family celebration.

63. We usually don't give the newlyweds the wedding presents on the very wedding day. 64. We attend the celebration; no presents, we eat and then we leave. 65. The presents and the flowers are not given by the guests, nothing no. Presents are from the family only, on the welcoming feast day. 66. They usually give golden jewellery or things that can be used by the bride, for example appliances, cleaning products, a faucet: 67. it all depends on the guests and on their budget. The closer to the bride they are, the more precious is the present. 68. Giving gold is widespread, but some relatives also give a broom, a faucet, a washing machine, an oven, other useful things or even money, so they can buy whatever they need. 69. So, presents are basically given by the relatives and by those friends who attend the reception. 70. We never invite strangers; we always invite the family and whoever takes part in the welcoming feast must bring something. They don't bring anything on the wedding day, though. 71. Some strangers happen to bring some presents on the wedding day, but we don't have enough room, so we say: 'Where shall we put them, now?'. 72. It is easier with no presents, it makes things more bearable, you know ... 500 people! 73. I remember once somebody told me: 'Hanan, why do you invite all these people, give them food and dismiss them? I mean, there's nothing. They come over, they eat for free and then they leave.'

74. It is common decency to attend people's weddings: if they attend yours, it becomes a mutual spontaneous duty. 75. 'No, it's a shame, what a shame! They came to our wedding, so aren't we going to theirs?'

76. Sometimes it is the other way round: we attend their wedding, but they don't return the favour. So, my mother says: 'Why didn't they come? We participated in their daughter's wedding, their son's, their second daughter's and they didn't show up at our son's wedding!'. 77. The wedding date is also an important issue. Most of the people choose to marry at weekends, or on holidays, even though people normally travel, or leave for a while. 78. Some people stay; anyway, people prefer to marry during weekdays, 79. I mean working days ... during working seasons but during weekends, weekend's holiday.

Text 4: *Ṣādāt il-Ṣid* 'Eid traditions'

1. *bitkallam Ṣan awwal yōm Ṣid: awwal yōm Ṣid, naḥna awwal mā nnišš*³⁹ *awwal ṣay nsawwī-h nisallim Ṣa-l-wālid, 2. nisallim Ṣa-l-wālda Ṣugub nisallim Ṣala yiddo, nisallim Ṣala li-ḥrīm li-kbār, Ṣa-l-aḥālīn il-kbār, 3. baṣd-ha nikšaxx: nilbis it-tōb il-imārāti aw illi ysammūn-ah il-muxawwar*⁴⁰, 4. *ida fī aksiswārāt turāṭiyya miṭl il-murtaṣṣa, yaṣni... marriyya*⁴¹, *ḥāy is-suwālif. 5. niddaxxan duxūn, Ṣūd, daxn Ṣūd u Ṣugub xalaṣ niṭlaṣ ziyārāt, niṭlaṣ maṭalan naḥin il-banāt iṣ-ḡār maṣ baṣḍ, 6. nzūr ṣadiqāt-na maṭalan fī byūthum, bēt, bēt, bēt, lēn mā yixalliṣ il-yōm! 7. ningaḍḍi-h yaṣni kill-ah ziyārāt, xalaṣ.*

1. I'm going to talk about the first day of the Eid (feast). On the first day of Eid as soon as we get up, we say hi to the father in the first place, 2. then we say hi to the mother, to the grandparents, and then we greet the old women, the old relatives. 3. Then we get ready: we put on the traditional Emirati dress, which is called the *mukhawwar*, 4. and if we have them, we also wear traditional accessories like the *murtaṣṣa* meaning the *marriyya*, things like that. 5. We put some perfume on the clothes, the sandalwood smoke, and that's it, we go to pay visits, for example young ladies like us go out together, 6. we go to pay visits to some friends' houses, from door to door, until the day is over. 7. We basically spend the feast just paying visits to people, that's it.

³⁹ The verb *našš ynišš* means 'to get up', while if it is followed by the particle *min* it means 'to leave' (Qafisheh 1997: 589).

⁴⁰ The *muxawwar* is a traditional dress for Emirati women: it is a gown of different colours and could have embroidery details.

⁴¹ The *marriyya* is a long gold necklace used as traditional jewellery in the Gulf area.

Text 5: *waṣfāt imārātiyya* 'Emirati recipes'

1. *agūl ism-i? ana ḡālya u* [inaudible] *tlātīn sana, bitkallim ṣan aklit lugēmāt,*
2. *hiyya*⁴² *ṣibāra ṣan ṣaḡīn yistaxdim fi-h iṭ-ṭahīn, ṣaḡīn yihuttūn fi-h xamīra mā*⁴³ *yitxammar taqrīban niṣṣ sāṣa, 3. ṣugub yiṭbuxūn-ah ṣala zēt nafs dawāʔir yaṣni biyītlaṣ, 4. ṣugub xalaṣ yḥuttūn fi-h ṣasal ya dibis, id-dibis yikūn ṣasal it-tamar amma l-ṣasal iṭ-ṭāni illi hū yikūn ṣasal in-naḥīl, u bass... b-il-ṣāfyā!*

5. *fi ṣind-na maṭalan il-harīs, waḡbit il-harīs, yiṭbuxūn-ah b-ḥabb il-harīs,*
6. *ṣād kif iṭ-tariqa ana mū*⁴⁴ *aṣarf, okkēh? 7. bass atwaqqaṣ ʔanni yḥuttūn, yaṣni yingāṣūn ḥabb il-harīs fi may, mā adri mumkin sāṣa, niṣṣ sāṣa, mā aṣarf, 8. ṣugub yiṭbuxūn-ah wiyyā-h diyāy, šū yḥuttūn fih? milḥ... 9. mā adri... yihuttūn ṣann-ah, bass mā adri ṭ-tariqa b-iḍ-ḍabt.*

1. Shall I say my name? I'm Ghalya, I'm 30 years old and I'm going to talk about the *lughemat*, a food. 2. It is sort of a flour dough that has to leaven for about half an hour 3. and then to be fried: it comes in little balls, 4. then that's it, it is served with honey on top or *dibis* which is date syrup while the other topping I mean the bee honey. That's it, enjoy!

5. We also have for example the *harees*, *harees* meal, cooked with grains of *harees* 6. but I don't know exactly how it's made, alright? 7. I think they soak grains of *harees* in the water, I don't know maybe for an hour or half an hour, I don't know, 8. then they bake them with chicken. What else do they put? Salt. 9. I don't know... They add things but I don't know what, precisely.

Text 6: *il-ṣuṭūr* 'Essences'

1. *inti tisʔalīni walla ana lāzim...? 2. fi haḍēla mxammariyāt li-l-ṣaṣr yistaxdim-ha ṣugub mā tiṣabbihīn u ṣaṣr-iḥ mballal iṭḥuttīn-ha ṣala aṭrāf iṣ-ṣaṣr, in-zēn? 3. ṣugb il-buxūr iṭḥuttīn, tiṣlig fi-r-rīḥa yaṣni, timrič yōm kāmīl, tamām? 4. fi ṣind-iḥ hāḍa, misk iṭ-ṭahāra, ṣugub is-subūḥ u ḡism-iḥ imballal iṭḥuttīn-ah ṣa-l-baṭṭ u ṣ-ṣadr iḥiḍi.*

1. Are you going to ask me a question or should I ...? 2. Among these are hair products which are used after a shower or a bath when your hair is wet and you can apply them on hair tips, alright? 3. Then the incense smoke: you apply it on the hair and the scent lasts a lot, like a whole day, alright? 4. Then there is also this, it is a musk called *tahara* (musk of puri-

⁴² In the texts only two occurrences of *hiyya* as variant of *hī* were observed.

⁴³ This particle is here used as *lēn* 'until'.

⁴⁴ The verb is negated here by *mū*.

ty) which you can apply it on wet skin after a shower or a bath, under our armpits or on our chest so.

Text 7: *iğ-ğaww fi-l-imārāt* ‘UAE weather’

1. *agūl is-salām šalē-kum? okkēh, is-salām šalē-kum, ism-i ilṣunūd, mi-l-im-ārāt, ṣumr-i wāḥid u fiṣrīn*. 2. *il-yōm birammis-kum*⁴⁵ *ṣan il-ğaww. il-ğaww fi-l-imārāt akṭar šay yaṣni yikūn ḥārr, akṭar šay ḥārr u ruṭūba bas fi-š-šita l-ḥamdulillah yikūn il-ğaww zēn*. 3. *fi-l-ḥārr wāyid nās yigdirūn yisīrūn il-baḥr aw muṣḍam in-nās yisāfrūn yaṣni fi-š-šēf. bas fi-š-šita ṣan-na*⁴⁶ *wāyid activities, 4. maṭalan ṣan-na lli yisīrūn il-barr wa yixaymūn barra, ṣārfa? yaṣni ṣan-na activities, fanādiq maṭalan fi rās il-xēma u abu ḍabi... 5. u fi-l-ḥārr baṣad tigdirūn tisawwūn water sports u ḥāḍa... bass. ḥāḍi ṭalaṣū-li! 6. okkēh, fi-š-šēf baṣad nigdir insīr mōlāt, ṣan-na wāyid mōlāt fi-l-imārāt u amākin siyāḥiyya, maṭalan ṣan-na GPR, ṣan-na City Walk, ṣan-na wāyid amākin u ṣan-na wāyid maṭāṣim ḥilwa, 7. nigdir insīr maṭalan Dubai Mall which is... okkēh mā lāzim agūl... mā irmis English, 8. inzēn, illi hū akbar mōl fi-š-šarq il-awsaṭ, fi wāyid maḥallāt yaṣni fi wāyid aṣyā? tarfihiyya nigdir nistamtaṣ fi-ha fi-š-šēf u baṣad... 9. iṣ-šēf illi ṭāf*⁴⁷ *maṭalan mā kint fi-li-blād, sāfart, sirt ṭlāt amākin illi hum*⁴⁸ *Salzburg, Vienna u Munich, 10. akṭar makān aṣyab-ni hū Vienna, aṣyab-ni wāyid iṭ-ṭabiṣa u ḥatta Salzburg kān il-ğaww wāyid ḥilu 11. bass Munich mā aṣyab-ni wāyid lianna kān wāyid ḥārr, fa-kaʔn-ni mā ṭalṣit min li-blād, nafs iṣ-šay. 12. il-muḥimm, fa-aḥla šay fi-s-safar yaṣyabni aḥibb azūr il-amākin is-siyāḥiyya u aḥibb ataṣarraḡ ṣa-maṣālim li-blād u aḥibb sir il-matāḥif illi ṣand-hum 13. u šūf šū ṣand-hum min taqāfāt u maṣālim u aḥabb asīr il-mōlāt illi ṣand-hum, aḥibb atsawwag ṣand-hum 14. u aḥibb aḡarrib aklāt-hum, aḥibb aḡarrib aklāt ydida, aḥibb aḡarrib šū ṣand-hum, aḥibb yaṣni asōlif wi-n-nās illi hnāk. 15. il-ḥin ana ṣala abwāb it-taxarruḡ min il-ḡāmṣa, ḡarib inṣāllah atxarraḡ mi-l-ḡāmṣa, baṣad-i mā afakkir ni*⁴⁹ *twaddaf wa-la-ni afakkir anna akammil Master’s, 16. ḥāliyan aba āxuḍ iḡāza awwāl šay u baṣadēn afakkir inṣāllah yā akammil master’s aw atwaddaf aw asawwī-hum li-ṭnēn fi nafs il-wagt, 17. bass li-l-ḥin maḥtāra yaṣni wēn akammil Master’s aw wēn aṣtaḡil b-iḍ-ḍabt, 18. aba makān yihtimm wāyid fi-l-sci-ence u l-technology u mā yikūn šuḡl yaṣni routine, mumill.*

⁴⁵ The imperfective marker *b-* here expresses volition.

⁴⁶ In the variety of Sharjah, to express possession for the 1st pl. person the informants use *ṣan-na* ‘we have’ while in Dubai and Ajman varieties it is used the variant *ṣind-na* ‘we have’.

⁴⁷ To express ‘last’ in EA it is used ‘that passed’ *illi ṭāf* while to express ‘next’ it is common *al-yāy*, for example *iṣ-šahr il-yāy* ‘next month’.

⁴⁸ The agreement with inanimate pl. referred to the cities as *hum* is here pl. m.

⁴⁹ *ni* as abbreviation of *ʔan-ni* ‘that I’.

1. Shall I say hi? Ok. Hi everyone, my name is Elounoud I'm from the Emirates, I'm 21 and 2. today I'm going to talk to you about the weather. It's almost hot in the Emirates, it is mostly sunny and humid but in winter, thank God, it's nice. 3. In summer people can go to the beach, or travel, most people leave in summer, but in winter we can do a lot of activities: 4. for example trips so you can camp in the desert, do you know? We have activities, for example there are hotels in Ras al-Khaimah and in Abu Dhabi ... 5. In summer you can also practise water sports, and that's it. This is what I can think of. 6. Ok, in summer we can also go to the malls; there are many in the Emirates and we have many tourist sites, for example GPR, City Walk, we actually have many beautiful places and beautiful restaurants. 7. we can visit the Dubai Mall *which is*, oops sorry I shouldn't say ... speak in English ... 8. well, that's the largest Middle Eastern shopping centre: there are so many shops, attractions, so much leisure, and we can have fun in summer. 9. Last summer, for example, I didn't stay in my country; I visited 3 places: Vienna, Salzburg and Munich. 10. I liked Vienna the most, for its natural surroundings, and Salzburg. The weather was nice. 11. I didn't like Munich much, because it was too hot, it felt like not having left my country at all, same thing! 12. What I love doing the most during trips is visiting sightseeing places, watching the monuments of the country, and going to museums. 13. I like getting to know the culture, and monuments, but I also like going shopping in their malls, 14. I like trying their food, tasting new food and what they have, speaking with the locals. 15. I'm about to graduate, *inshallah* I will graduate soon, I don't think I'll start working soon, or complete a master's degree: 16. I want to take a break first, and then, *inshallah*, I'll finish my studies and find a job, or maybe both at the same time. 17. I still don't know where to get my Master's degree or where to work. 18. I would like it to be in an interesting position which deals with science and technology, and it shouldn't be a routine or boring work.

Text 8: *aklāt imārātiyya* 'Emirati food'

1. *is-salām šalē-kum, ana ism-i Sāra, ſumr-i wāḥid u ſiṣrīn. bgūt⁵⁰ itkallam ſan il-ḡāmſa*: 2. *taxaṣṣus-i taqniyyāt ḥayawiyya, istuwa-li⁵¹ arbaſ snīn fi-l-ḡāmſa*, 3. *awwal sina ṭabſan kānat ſaſba u kānat general, yaſni basics, aſyā? yaſni ſāmm, yaſni ſan kil ſī, maṭalan id-dīn, il-aſyā? il-ſādiyya yaſni* 4. *u baſadēn ibdēna nitxaṣṣaſ fi-l-maḡālāt illi hū maḡāl taxaṣṣus-na u bass, hā ſan il-ḡāmſa.*

⁵⁰ This is the only occurrence of the verb *baḡa yabḡi* 'to want' in the whole texts. In fact, the verb *aba yabi* prevails in the Dubai texts, while informants do not use it in Ajman texts.

⁵¹ The verb *istuwa* 'to become'.

5. u bitkallim *ʕan aklāt-i l-mufaḍḍala*. 6. fī wāyid aklāt *ʕan-na fi-l-imārāt*, *ʕan-na*⁵² *l-briyāni*, *ʕan-na l-mačbūs*, *ʕanna l-harīs*, *ʕan-na l-maḍrūba*, *ʕan-na l-ʕursiyya*, *ʕan-na l-ğišid*, kill akla ġera: 7. iğ-ğāšid hū yikūn či nafs simač bass powder u ġ-ğāšif⁵³ yikūn nafs il-ğāšid bass yikūn yābis, ʕala šikil yābis, inzēn? 8. u il-maḍrūba... maḍrūba, ʕursiyya u hrīs, tlatit-hum. il-maḍrūba tikūn di yāy wiyyā-ha qamiḥ, 9. il-ʕursiyya tikūn diyāy maf il-ʕēš u l-hrīs yikūn qamiḥ wiyyā-h laḥam, 10. hāy min abraz il-aklāt illi *ʕan-na fi-l-imārāt*. 11. u ṭabʕan *ʕan-na l-briyāni* u *l-mačbūs*: 12. *l-briyāni* u *l-mačbūs* tninaṭ-hum taqriban nafs iš-šay bass id-diyāy yintabax wi-l-ʕēš u it-tāni id-diyāy yintabax rūḥ-ah, u il-ʕēš yintabax rūḥ-ah. 13. inzēn, wa šū baʕad... šū baʕad? *ʕan-na l-mšāwā*, hū min il-aklāt it-turāṭiyya *ʕan-na yāklūn wiyyā-h xibz* 14. hū tikūn či tašriba bass ysawwūn-ha b-is-simač, yaʕni hē... 15. actually b-is-simič ysawwūn-ha u yāklūn-ha wiyyā-l-xibz u či u tkūn yaʕni ḥilwa.

16. aw min il-aklāt il-ḥilwa lli *ʕan-na*, maṭalan, ḥagg wagt il-fuṭūr yāklūn tamar u harda lli hī ṭaḥiniyya aw yāklūn tamar rūḥ-ah aw... šū baʕad? 17. *ʕanna l-xamiṛ*, il-xamiṛ hū yikūn xubz, yaʕni nafs il-xubz il-ʕādi bas wiyyā-h tamar. 18. u min il-aklāt il-wāyid mašhūra *ʕan-na baḷālīt* illi tikūn či nafs noodles bass sweet, inzēn? 19. u šū baʕad *ʕan-na*? hāy min aḡlab il-aklāt illi aʕrif-ha mōḡūda *ʕan-na l-ḥin*, u šū baʕad... 20. u šū baʕad... hāy hī aḡlab il-aklāt illi aʕrif-ha u... bass, hā hū, šukran.

1. Hi, my name is Sara, I'm 21 and I like to talk about university. 2. I have a specialisation in biotechnology. I am attending university for four years. 3. My first year at university was certainly hard: it was a general year, 'basics', let's say 'general topics', like religion and so on, common topics. 4. Then we started our specialisation in the field, meaning the field of our specialisation. And that's all about my study.

5. Now I'm going to talk to you about my favourite foods. 6. We have lots of typical dishes here in the Emirates, we have *biryani*, *majboos*, *harees*, *madhrooba*, *ursiyya*, *jasheed*. Each food is different. 7. The *jasheed* is like fish but in powder. The other one is just like the *jasheed* but it's dry, it has been dried out, alright? 8. Then the *madhrooba*: the *madhrooba*, the *ursiyya* and the *harees*. Those three. The *madhrooba* is chicken with wheat, 9. the *ursiyya* is chicken with rice, and the *harees* is wheat with meat: 10. those are among the well-known foods we have in the Emirates. 11. Then of course we have the *biryani* and the *majboos*. They are quite the same thing. 12. The *biryani* is chicken is cooked with rice, while in the latter chicken and rice are cooked separately. 13. Well, what else ... what else do we have ... so we have the *mshawwa* which is one of the traditional

⁵² Speaker 5 from Sharjah always says *ʕan-na* 'we have', like speaker 4.

⁵³ The *ğāšif* is small dried fish.

foods served with bread: 14. it's like broth but made out of fish. 15. Yes, it is so: with fish, and it's served with bread and it's somehow sweet.

16. We have some nice desserts, for example, for breakfast, like dates with *harda*, which is a creamy dessert. Dates can also be eaten plain. What else? 17. We have the *khameer* which is just like common bread, but with dates inside. 18. Among the most famous desserts the *balaleet* is very popular, that is just like noodle, but sweet. Alright? 19. What else have we got? Aw, yes, those are the foods we have today. 20. What else? Let me think ... yeah those are the foods I know best. That's all, thank you.

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