“Gulf Pidgin Arabic”:

Individual strategies or a structured variety?

A study of some features of the linguistic behaviour of Asian migrants in the Gulf countries

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Chapter 1: Introduction

1.1 The project

During my stay in Riyadh as an intern at the Norwegian Embassy in the autumn of 2006, I noticed a distinctive form of Arabic in use between the Asian foreign workers and their Saudi clients and customers. Travelling throughout the country, as well as to neighbouring Bahrain, left me with the same impression, namely that some form of contact language was in daily use in this area between the substantial migrant population and the local citizens. Back home I started researching and found out that while the variety had been registered and a few articles were written, there had been done very little by way of collecting field data and trying to determine whether this should actually be considered a pidgin variety. I decided to do this as an M.A. project by getting such data and analysing its grammatical features to see whether it had enough in the way of unity and common divergence from Gulf Arabic to be considered a separate variety.

My research question for this thesis was: "Can Gulf Pidgin Arabic be considered a separate variety with its own grammatical norms, different from the lexifier Gulf Arabic and with its own structural unity?"

In the interest of brevity I will be referring to the language usage in my material as "GPA" throughout the paper. This should not be interpreted as a premature answer to the research question.

1.2 The fieldwork

1.2.1 Location

My fieldwork was conducted in the Omani border town of Buraimi over a five-week period from March 10th until April 15th 2008. Because of visa practicalities, one interview was conducted in the neighbouring Emirati city of al-Ain, where I was staying the last four days after the expiry of my Omani visa.

1.2.2 Consultants

In order to get access to data on the structure of Gulf Pidgin Arabic, I have relied on interviews with consultants who are themselves Asian migrant workers living in the Gulf. Although spontaneous speech between Arabs and migrant workers would have been the

best source for a description of the variety, I decided to make use of myself as a conversation partner. As a non-native speaker of Levantine Arabic, initially unfamiliar with Gulf Arabic dialect, my speech might have influenced my consultants. For a majority of these, though not for all, English would have been the natural mode of communication with an English-speaking foreigner. All the participating consultants, however, agreed to speak to me in Arabic in their work place setting, some after an explanation and agreement in Arabic, and some, especially the ones with higher education, agreed to participate after an initial explanation in English.

The selection of my consultants was based on the goal of equal gender distribution as well as the aim to obtain data from people in different types of jobs and with different substrate languages. Originally I intended to focus on Southeast Asian rather than South Asian workers, but the large majority of South Asians in the area made this unnatural as well as impractical. The women interviewed in my study are largely house workers to whom I was personally introduced. However, two women are professionals working outside of the house setting. The men were selected randomly by approaching different work places and asking the employees if they would like to participate in the project by speaking to me in Arabic and being recorded. I did not, however, select the work places completely at random. Rather, I went to places where it is culturally acceptable for a woman to be seen, so as to ease potential discomfort in the conversational situation for both them and me. The places I chose were a women's clothing store, Buraimi's souvenir market, several pharmacies, and two offices: the accountant office in a hardware store and the reception of a language school.

The following table shows a list of the participating consultants with information on their gender, first language, length of stay and occupation. Note that several factors are often concurrent, thus making it harder to single out causes for specific linguistic behaviour:

Consultant code	Gender	First language	Length of stay	Occupation
A1	M	Urdu	10 years	Sales clerk

A2	M	Urdu	5 years	Sales clerk
A3	M	Urdu	2 years	Sales clerk
B1	F	Sinhala	14 years	Cleaner
B2	F	Sinhala	5 years	Cleaner
B3	F	Sinhala	22 years	Cleaner
C1	M	Bengali	7 years	Sales clerk
C2	F	Malayalam	8 years	Pharmacist
C3	M	Malayalam	5 years	Pharmacist
C4	M	Malayalam	7 years	Pharmacist
C5	M	Malayalam	7 years	Pharmacist
D1	F	Javanese	4 years	Maid
D2	F	Tamil	12 years	Maid
D4	F	Tagalog	9 months	Maid
E1	M	Malayalam	17 years	Accountant
E2	F	Chavacano	17 years	Secretary

When examples are given, the speaker code listed in this table is given with the contextual information, thus enabling the reader to refer to this table for more information on individual speakers.

I aimed to keep the fieldwork as much as possible in the private sphere by getting personal introduction to consultants. This was because of my impression that migrant workers often worry about contact with host country authorities and want to have as little to do with them as possible in order not to get into any trouble that would jeopardize their visas. By keeping my interviews as private as possible I was hoping to get access to more consultants, including women, than I otherwise would have.

Those of my consultants that I did contact at work without prior introductions were largely lone shopkeepers who had time to spare for me. In fact, many were poignantly underworked, and gratefully accepted my presence as a diversion from waiting around for customers. I also made it a point to arrive at low times in business such as the hour just before lunch break, when morning shoppers have gone home and most people are still at work. As long as I protected my consultants' identities, there was no reason to inform their sponsors of my project. That being said, all the Omani supervisors and customers that I was in touch with during the fieldwork were helpful and generous, eagerly assisting me in explaining the project to the migrant workers, as it was naturally often easier for me to explain my research to native Arabic speakers. None of them ever expressed dislike for the project or for me interviewing their employees; on the contrary, several, especially the women employing maids, went out of their way to help me, arranging interviews and even participating so as to provide me with samples of native Arab GPA. I never concealed my intentions or project from anyone asking. It is interesting to note that while my consultants struggled with metalinguistic questions and concepts in their non-native tongue, all the Arabs immediately knew and recognized the existence of what I referred to as *luġa ḫāṣṣa lil-ʿummāl il-ʾasiyawiyyīn* – a separate or special language variety for Asian workers. That Asians speak Arabic differently from the Arabs was a well-known phenomenon – for the Arabs.

1.2.3 Interviews

I went to Oman with an interview guide in which I had prepared a set of questions to pose to my consultants in order to get some information about them, their backgrounds and their linguistic abilities and attitudes, as well as a list of conversational topics to try to get

speech samples about approximately the same themes. I had discarded elicitation as a suitable working method for me as I was warned that the consultants might not be able to converse in English, or else be so much more comfortable in English that they would opt out of Arabic if given the chance.

When I started working with my consultants, I quickly found that a simple, everyday conversation about their work and families naturally ensued once I had explained that I just wanted to record how they spoke Arabic. I spoke to them in colloquial Levantine Arabic, the Arabic vernacular which I speak best, attempting to embed the Gulf expressions that I picked up during the stay, as well as, towards the end of the fieldwork, trying to approach what I understood as being the Gulf Pidgin Arabic variety. The metalinguistic questions which I had planned did not work out as I had imagined, as the questions were simply not understood by my consultants. One question about the possible existence of foreigner talk was even interpreted as being on the verge of offensive by one consultant, who sharply told me that it was not our place as non-native speakers of Arabic to judge how Arabs use their own language. I ended up discarding this line of questioning altogether.

I tried to structure or steer the interviews only so that my consultants did most of the talking, regardless of the topic. Whenever a consultant started slipping into English, I tried giving feedback or asking questions in Arabic, something which normally got him or her back on track in GPA. I let my consultants talk about whatever they felt like, although work was often the subject, since the interviews were conducted in a work setting.

1.2.4 The ethical aspect

When making contact with potential consultants, I informed them of the aim of my project and in what way they could help me by participating in an interview. In sociolinguistic research, it is common not to inform the consultants of the real aims of the research so as to not make them self-conscious about their speech, but working on the assumption that the consultants' access to the regular Gulf Arabic register was limited, I felt that being honest with them would be unproblematic as well as ethically sound.

My attempt to suggest the signing of a statement of informed consent in English or Arabic, languages that most of my speakers cannot read, initially led to awkward situations with clear discomfort on behalf of my consultants, and I quickly gave up on this. Instead I tried to

switch on the recording device once I was sure that the consultants had the general idea, and record my explanation of the recording as well as their consent to being taped. I found this it to be a generally functional and satisfactory way of obtaining consultant consent without intimidating the speakers while preserving the informal and oral nature of my interviews, which I believe is important to their linguistic nature as well.

After consultations with my local supervisor and facilitator, Dr. Persson, I decided to offer my consultants economical compensation equivalent to the going rate of privately arranged house-cleaning services in Buraimi, which at the time was 10 AED/1 OMR (slightly less than 15 NOK or slightly less than 2 Euro) an hour. I also decided to make 10 AED my minimum payment for any interview regardless of whether or not it lasted one full hour, and to offer compensation only to the consultants that I interviewed during their spare time. Employees in shops that agreed to let me interview them during their paid work hours were not offered compensation, both because they were already being paid for the time that the interviews lasted, as well as because of the potential conflict with their employers that could arise from them receiving money on the side while at work. However, I chose their shops to make some purchases. The same went for the domestic workers who were interviewed in between their duties in the presence and with the participation of their employers. One of the domestic workers that I interviewed on her day off was offered and accepted compensation. Some other consultants adamantly refused to accept money for "just talking", but accepted gifts of fruit and drinks of approximately the same value.

1.3 The material

1.3.1 The transcripts

I base my analysis on my interview transcripts, in total 330 pages representing the nearly 6 hours of recorded speech I was able to gather during my fieldwork. After each interview I immediately sat down to do a draft transcription, thus hopefully adding to the unambiguousness of my translations by making sure that I still remembered all the contextual information to help me interpret blurred or unclear words or passages. In order to give the reader the same basis on which to judge the examples as I had, I present the examples with a brief statement of relevant contextual information to help analysing and contextualising the glossing. This is especially important for my material, given that a reduced variety presumably depends more on reference and context to express meaning.

1.3.2 Translations

When providing translations for the interview excerpts there are often several interpretations possible for the same sentence, especially for the reader who sees them out of their conversational context. My translations are based on my understanding in the conversation setting as well as the consultants' tone of voice, stress and other signals as to how they meant for their utterances to be interpreted. Where I still feel that several interpretations are possible this is clearly listed.

It is imperative to keep in mind that while GPA is dependent on and closely related to Gulf Arabic, the two are not necessarily the same, and the meaning of a word in my material is thus sometimes slightly different from the "original" meaning of this word in Gulf Arabic. Whenever I make assumptions about the meaning of a word or a grammatical function, it is always intended to describe the variety occurring in my data unless explicitly stated otherwise.

1.4 The thesis

In order to answer my research question, I have studied three grammatical features in GPA which in the lexifier language Gulf Arabic conform to a complex pattern, trying to determine whether GPA displays systematically simplified versions of these, which would imply that a diverging, pidginised grammar has developed.

After having addressed pidgin and pidginisation theory (chapter 2), I give a sketch of the GPA phonological inventory and how it differs from that of Gulf Arabic (chapter 3). Then, I look at the grammatical features possessive marking (chapter 4), negation (chapter 5) and the verbal system (chapter 6), in order to define the GPA structures and compare it to Gulf Arabic. I have also included brief comparisons to other Arabic-based pidgins and creoles at the end of each chapter, as a starting point for comparative research. In chapter 7, I give a summary of the findings as well as some indicators on points which require further research and discussion.

Examples are numbered from 1 and up within each chapter. If no source is given for an example, it is found in my recorded material. I have kept the original transliteration in examples from other sources, even when it differs from my own transliterations in the text.

1.5 Glossing

In the glossing of examples I have followed the commonly recognised Leipzig glossing rules (http://www.eva.mpg.de/lingua/resources/glossing-rules.php). A complete list of the glossing abbreviations used in this paper follows:

1 – first person

2 – second person

3 – third person

COP – copula

DEP – dependent form of pronoun

DEM - demonstrative

EXPL – syntactic expletive

F – feminine

FUT – future

IMP - imperative

INT – intensifier

IPF - imperfect

LV – light verb

M – masculine

NEG – negation

Q – question word

PRF - perfect

PL – plural

POSS – possessive

PREP - preposition

SG - singular

TAM – tense, aspect, mode marker

TR – transitive marker

Chapter 2: Theoretical framework

2.1 Pidgin theory

2.1.1 Defining a pidgin

The genesis of contact languages, such as pidgins and creoles, has in recent years been the object of much research within the fields of linguistics and sociolinguistics. Since my primary research question is to determine whether or not Gulf Pidgin Arabic should be classified as a pidgin, I will give a brief discussion of the most common traits ascribed to these linguistic varieties.

I find it useful to see pidgins as creations, products of human creativity and interaction as well as conscious strategies to promote human interaction. These are languages that "result from the communicative strategies of adults" (Sebba 1997:14), usually as a practical solution to immediate needs. Once created, however, if it takes on a relatively unified form, the pidgin itself becomes a "target language for later arrivals on the scene" (Winford 2003:279), if the sociological situation that necessitated its creation is upheld.

There is no agreed upon definition of what exactly constitutes a pidgin, and different definitions are used by different authors (Winford 2003:269). A useful definition to take as a starting point is that of Mark Sebba, who states that a pidgin is a stable language variety which, although allowing for individual variation as with any language variety, is conventionalized and has a somewhat unified vocabulary and grammar, but is used for a limited number of functions as compared with a natural language (Sebba 1997:79). The conventionalization is what separates the pidgin from various interlanguage varieties, such as "imperfect learning" of a second language (ibid.). Another take on this same aspect is to state that pidgins are social strategies, not individual, such as Kaye & Tosco (2003:28) and Mühlhäusler (1986:5) do. Interestingly, there also seems to be some similarities between most languages that we call pidgins, such as a pronounced lack of inflectional morphology with strong preference for analytic structures, reduced verbal, nominal and pronominal paradigms compared to substrate and superstrate languages, commonly one single preposition and a tendency towards SVO word order (Romaine 1988:25-31). These processes, normally constituting simplification compared to the super- and substrate languages, can be divided into groups placed under four subheadings, namely reduction, increased regularity, greater transparency and lack of markedness (Foley 2006:3).

However, although it seems that pidgins are in certain ways structurally similar, the main distinguishing trait for a pidgin is its genesis as a first generation contact language. There seems to be a scholarly consensus that a pidgin does not have native speakers, since the classic definition of a creole is a pidgin that has acquired native speakers, although some linguists prefer to refer to this as "expanded pidgins" (Winford 2003:306). On other points regarding the pidgin genesis there is much disagreement. Firstly, many argue that a "true pidgin" can only come into being in an environment where speakers of at least three languages are compelled to communicate (e.g. Kaye & Tosco 2003:28; Romaine 1988:24-25). Romaine in particular extends this criterion to establish a clear distinction between pidgins and other interlanguage varieties such as foreigner talk (see 2.1.3). However, there is no absolute agreement on this (Sebba 1997:105), and especially scholars who prefer to focus on the process of pidginisation rather than on the resulting pidgins seem to accept a two-language contact situation as a possible environment for this process (Schumann 1978, ref. in Romaine 1988:24). A two-language pidgin genesis is for example claimed for the Arabic immigrant pidgin of "Pidgin Madam" in Lebanon (see 2.2.2).

2.1.2 The social gap

There has also been much scholarly discussion about the social conditions that cause pidgins to come into being. The most relevant for my discussion revolves around the concepts of dominance and intimacy. It seems that in all cases of pidgin genesis, the contact situation between non-homoglot speakers is characterised by either contact of a fleeting nature to serve a specific purpose, such as trade, or else by a social distance between the groups of speakers (Foley 2006:7) The language of the socioeconomically dominant group, as a rule, seems to function as the superstrate language, whereas the language(s) of the non-dominant group(s) are substrates (ibid.:2). In fact, one might go as far as to claim that pidgins only arise in environments where there is a distinctive wish for continued non-intimacy between the groups of people in contact (Mühlhäusler 1981:110).

The transition from unstable collection of idiolects to a stable pidgin is not clear-cut nor agreed upon, but the main turning point is when the pidgin develops its own norms of grammar, lexicon and phonology so as to become a target language in its own right. Another aspect, which might be a prerequisite for this development, is when an unstable jargon starts to be used between groups of people who do not speak the original lexifier language (Sebba 1997:105).

Although contact combined with a wish of non-intimacy may be common to the origins of all pidgins, a note on the possible differences in this process is also warranted. Mark Sebba presents a typology of pidgins classified by the social and historical context in which they came into being, which consists of 1) military and police pidgins, 2) seafaring and trade pidgins and creoles, 3) plantation pidgins and creoles, 4) mine and construction pidgins, 5) immigrants' pidgin, 6) tourist pidgins and 7) urban contact vernaculars (Sebba 1997:26). While the most thoroughly documented Arabic-based pidgin, Juba Arabic, is mentioned as an example of a military pidgin, it is less obvious where a newer contact language would fit in this largely historical classification. If we were to assume that GPA should in fact be classified as a pidgin, we might call it an "immigrant pidgin" (type 5). However, the variety's source contact situation also seems to have much in common with the historical types of plantation pidgins (type 3) and mine and construction pidgins (type 4); the salient difference between the two apparently being simply the specific workplace where they originated. Naturally, today's immigrant workers in the Gulf are not forced labour in the plantation sense, but the contact situation otherwise seems quite analogous. Perhaps the two could successfully be merged under the heading "mixed work environment pidgins" or the like, under which we would also have to consider separating seafaring pidgins from trade pidgins and placing them in the new category. While this new classification would be less useful for a historical overview of the contact situations where people have created pidgins, it would show the historical continuity of these situations in a way where an emerging pidgin could find its place, not as some new and hard to classify phenomenon, but rather as a contemporary example of a typical mixed work environment contact language.

If we accept that pidgins arise in environments characterised by a social gap, we can also assume that the dominant group does not want to admit the speakers of the non-dominant groups fully into their language community. In this case, they might purposefully employ a simpler register when addressing members of the out-group, in order for them to mimic this rather than being exposed to a full-fledged variety of their language. Bizri 2005:58 provides examples of the phenomenon of so-called "mimicking" in the speech of Sri Lankan maids in Lebanon, who for example characteristically use only the feminine imperative of all verbs when speaking Arabic. But the non-dominant groups may also shun cultural integration with the dominant group, while still needing to communicate with them for economic reasons. As a result, they might not make an effort to learn the dominant language perfectly, but rather settle for a simplified version. The importance placed on

belonging to a particular ethnic group in the Gulf society (Longva 1994:111) makes it impossible for a foreign Asian worker ever to cross into the category of "Arab", no matter how well he or she speaks Arabic. Thus, motivation for perfecting the language might be lacking. This could then, theoretically, be reinforced by exposure mainly to simplified "foreigner talk", resulting in the creation of a pidgin.

Both the conditions considered necessary by Foley for the creation of a pidgin mentioned above, then, the fleeting nature of the contact situation and the social distance between the groups of speakers, are in place in the Arab Gulf states today. Even if the contact situation is often quite permanent, as many foreign workers in fact stay in their host countries for years, their stay is still perceived as being limited both by themselves and by the host community (Longva 1994:155). The social distance is present in the most fundamental way and is indeed a salient feature of society in all Gulf countries, built as they are on what Longva (1994:41) calls "the politics of exclusion". The implementation of the system of sponsorship for foreign workers has made the workers dependent on locals in such a way that they are unable to freely move up the social ladder (ibid.:108), not only in Kuwait, but in all the oil-rich Gulf states. The life of the migrant worker is one on the margins of society, inferior in rights and power to the local population and with socialising with other migrants, normally their own ethnic group, as the only accessible arena for a social life. Integration into society is explicitly restricted by law, custom and conventions. However, the migrant worker population is very large in all the GCC countries, numbering over 80 percent in the UAE in 2004 (Kapiszewski 2006:4) of a population of an estimated 4,6 million. In the UAE, 13 percent of the non-nationals are Arabs from other Arab countries (ibid.:9), whereas the rest have various, mainly Asian backgrounds, the largest groups being the Indians (1,2 million in 2002) and the Pakistanis (450 000 in 2002) (ibid.:10). Additionally, the Bangladeshi and the Sri Lankan groups are very large, making the migrant workers from the Indian subcontinent the clearly numerically dominant group in the country. The Southeast Asians are much fewer, with an estimate of 120 000 Filipinos present in 2002 (ibid.) and no figure given for Indonesians. This imbalance in the ethnic origins and thus in the mother tongues of the migrant workers matters when we look at substrata for GPA, as it seems more likely that an observed phenomenon is derived from a similar grammatical structure in for example Urdu than from one in Indonesian.

2.1.3 Foreigner talk

Charles Ferguson, who introduced the term foreigner talk (FT) in a 1971 article, has argued that the ability to simplify one's mother tongue in order to talk to someone who is perceived as somewhat lacking in linguistic competence is one that everyone possesses. He also claims that this simplification possibly should be considered a conventionalized register resistant to change within each language community where native speakers recurrently come into contact with non-native speakers (Ferguson 1971:143; 1981:9-10). That such a simplified input has resulted in learners mistaking foreigner talk for their target language has been suggested as a possible factor contributing to pidgin genesis. Ferguson himself has argued that in the right context, a foreigner talk register may become an incipient pidgin that later takes on more functions for more groups of speakers (Ferguson 1971:144). However, according to Peter Mühlhäusler, "[t]he linguistic impact of FT is restricted to the very early stages of pidgin development; once a pidgin has developed its own stable grammatical structures, FT (because of its very instability and lack of linguistic sophistication) cannot contribute anything to the further growth of a pidgin."(Mühlhäusler 1981:94).

The aim of using foreigner talk is generally thought to be to maintain social distance to the foreigners. As Albert Valdman puts it, "the use of FT signals to foreigners that they are unwanted guests whose acculturation to the host community is not desired" (Valdman 1981:43). The British colonialists in Papua New Guinea, who are Mühlhäusler's "foreign talkers", had specific interests in, for example, not allowing native servants to eavesdrop on the family's "private affairs" (Mühlhäusler 1981:111). The similarity to the social situation in the Arab Gulf states today is striking. The presence of the migrant workers is tolerated, but they are still somewhat unwanted guests who are denied the opportunity to blend into the host community (Longva 1994:142).

Arabic foreigner talk was as early as in 1909 used in Egyptian plays (al-Far 1993:75), and characterised by phonetic changes of /ʿ/ to /ʾ/ or the loss of /ʿ/ altogether as well as the change of /ḥ/ to /ḫ/, incorrect gendering of words, lack of the determining article *il-*, reduction of the verbal system where only the imperative or only the 3rd person singular masculine verb forms are used regardless of person, as well as replacement of affixed possessive pronouns with their independent counterparts (ibid.:76-78). In an analysis of Egyptian movies almost 100 years later, Muhammad al-Sharkawi finds that several of these

traits are still in active use in the speech of foreign characters (al-Sharkawi 2004). When eliciting foreigner talk by letting non-native speakers interview native speakers, however, al-Sharkawi does not register the characteristic phonological changes mentioned above. What distinguishes the Arabic foreigner talk in his corpus appears instead to be increased redundancy, as well as a preference for analytic structures such as the analytic possessive (see also 4.1.4).

Although scarcely documented, it appears that native Arabic speakers in the Gulf commonly use foreigner talk as a strategy when communicating with non-native migrant workers. The main part of the corpus used in the article on GPA written by J.R. Smart (see 2.2.2) should perhaps be seen as foreigner talk. There are also some examples of what appears to be foreigner talk by native Arabs in my recordings, although I have omitted it from the analysis at the present time due to constraints of time and space. It indicates, however, that the phenomenon should be taken into consideration when considering the circumstances surrounding the genesis and maintenance of GPA.

2.1.4 Interlanguage

If my material indicates that GPA should not be considered a pidgin variety, it would be reasonable to regard it as a collection of interlanguages, a term which has been defined as "systematic linguistic behaviour of second language learners" (Sharwood Smith quoted in Berggren & Tennfjord 1999:18). An interlanguage is considered a separate linguistic system distinct from both the speaker's mother tongue and the target language in question. Interlanguages are described as simple, unstable, variable languages (ibid.:29), traits which are quite similar to those of the incipient pidgin. The social setting which is the basis in interlanguage studies and theory, however, appears to be the second language learner's integration into a new society through perfecting the language, rather than the characteristic social gap of the pidgin genesis environment described under 2.1.2. The criterion set by Winford mentioned under 2.1.1, that a pidgin becomes the "target language for later arrivals on the scene" (Winford 2003:279), is also relevant here, as this would not be the case for individual interlanguages. If this appears to be the case for my speakers, then GPA would sociologically resemble a pidgin more than an interlanguage. Structurally and intralinguistically it might be difficult to discern a basic variety of an interlanguage from an incipient pidgin, but if social criteria such as those mentioned by Foley and Winford are considered, a classification might be possible even in such a case.

In the intersection between pidgins and interlanguages it is interesting to consider those interlanguage varieties that are sometimes called "immigrant talk", the most described variety being the so-called "Gästarbeiterdeutsch" (Lipski 2005:8). This reduced variety of German definitely seems to be partly foreigner talk, as native German speakers use it to address people thought to be less linguistically competent (ibid.:9-10). Others have dismissed its being a pidgin because of its mainly bilingual parentage, but are reluctant to call it foreigner talk as they perceive it as a "continuum of interlanguages", that is, a common name for individual versions of German second language acquisition (Sebba 1997:80). This variety is interesting as its genesis and presumed position in between categories are reminiscent of that of GPA.

2.2 The linguistic situation in the Gulf

2.2.1 The study of Gulf Arabic

The area where "Gulf Arabic" is spoken is not clearly defined by national borders. In his *Encyclopedia of Arabic Language and Linguistics*' (EALL) article on Gulf Arabic, Clive Holes limits the geographical scope to the costal area from Kuwait down to and including Oman (Holes 2007a:212; 215). In the 1990 grammar *Gulf Arabic* by the same author, however, he includes Basra in southern Iraq, excludes Oman and defines the area covered within Saudi Arabia as "the eastern region (al Hasa)" (Holes 1990:xi). In the Kuwait-specific EALL article, Holes mentions that this dialect is different from the other Gulf dialects in that it contains "some distinctive local features which ally it with the dialects of nearby southern Iraq" (Holes 2007b:609). The core area of Gulf Arabic seems to be, then, eastern costal Saudi Arabia, Bahrain, Qatar and the UAE. Buraimi, although within the borders of present-day Oman, has traditionally been seen as a Gulf dialect rather than an Omani dialect, as is clear from its inclusion in Johnstone's dialect study from 1967 under the "Trucial Coast" (Emirati) dialects.

This area is vast, and there are traditionally many differences between local varieties, even though many of these dialects are not studied or described nearly as well as would be desirable. It is thus perhaps more accurate to think of "Gulf Arabic" as a dialect continuum with some core similarities rather than as one dialect.

The studies on Gulf Arabic which are available and that I have made use of are primarily Clive Holes' 1990 grammar *Gulf Arabic* mentioned above and Hamdi Qafisheh's *A short*

reference grammar of Gulf Arabic from 1977. Johnstone's 1967 study *Eastern Arabian Dialect Studies* is a valuable source to more localised forms, if slightly outdated. I have also benefited from Maria Persson's forthcoming article on aspect marking in Gulf Arabic. In addition to this, Qafisheh's *Gulf Arabic-English dictionary* and Clive Holes' *Glossary* to the *Dialect, Culture and Society in Eastern Arabia* have been useful resources for lexical meanings of local words.

2.2.2 The study of Gulf Pidgin Arabic (GPA)

The research which is available on Arabic-based pidgins focus on the African pidgins, primarily Juba Arabic and the creole of (Ki-)Nubi in Southern Sudan, Uganda and Kenya, but also varieties spoken in Chad and Nigeria (Owens 1997:125). The term "Gulf Pidgin" was coined by J. R. Smart, who in 1990 described what he perceived as an emergent pidgin in the interaction between foreign workers and the local population in the Gulf countries. Smart (1990:83) estimated this variety to be prevalent along the Gulf coastline from Oman to Kuwait as well as in inland Saudi Arabia. The small elicitation corpus collected by Wiswall (2002:7) documents diverging linguistic behaviour among migrant workers in Kuwait, the UAE, Qatar and Eastern Saudi Arabia. I have personally heard what resembles the usage in my material in use as a means of communication between South Asian waiters and Saudi customers at a restaurant in the city of ʾAbhā in the southwestern ʿAsīr region of Saudi Arabia in 2006, which indicates that Smart's assertion of geographical spread may have been accurate.

Smart's description is mainly based on jocular cartoon captions in Emirati newspapers, where native Arab journalists imitate the language of the workers. Additionally, he draws on personal experience as an Arabic teacher for foreign oil workers in the Gulf. He does not, however, present any specific corpus except the cartoons, which are written by native Arabic speakers, thus reflecting what is perceived as the migrant workers' language. As such, it seems to be an example of foreigner talk, as discussed under 2.1.3 (Valdman 1981:42). The parallel to the Papuan foreigner talk register documented by Mühlhäusler, Tok Masta, is interesting since this register had jokes, caricatures and anecdotes as one of its primary fields of use (Mühlhäusler 1981:108).

In an unpublished 2002 response to Smart's article, Abdul-Qadir Wiswall criticises Smart's failure to acknowledge that his corpus should be analysed as foreigner talk. He points out

that the newspaper cartoons should not necessarily be seen as reliable information on the speech of migrant workers. Additionally, he provides further examples of actual GPA usage from his elicitation material, thus enlarging the material available for comparison.

The third article that deals specifically with contact varieties of Arabic produced by non-Arabs is Fida Bizri's 2005 article on what she calls "le pidgin madam", describing the language of female Asian domestic workers in Lebanon. This article examines an important link between linguistics and sociology in its description of what Bizri calls "the grammar of servitude" (Bizri 2005:54) where the social conditions and the power relations between the speakers are taken into consideration when describing their language. In fact, Bizri claims that these structures are directly reflected in the linguistic structures, and as a consequence leaves the substratum (here Sinhala) less influence on the resulting contact language than one would normally expect of a pidgin. She suggests that this leads to a sociolinguistic bricolage construed by reproducing the most frequently heard fragments of the lexifier, assimilating any grammatical endings as an integral part of the fragment itself (ibid.:58). Examples include the following (Bizri 2005:59):

(1)	pi	wahed	sirlanka	**s-usm-o**	candra
	EXPL	one	Sri_Lanka	what-name-his	candra

"There is a Sri Lankan [woman] who is called Chandra".

This example is, interestingly, mirrored almost word-by-word in my material by a Javanese-speaking live-in maid, D1. The term *šismik*, which she uses to mean "name", is in fact derived from the Gulf Arabic *š-ism-ik*, literally "what-name-your":

(2)	ey,	**šismik**	Cahyantuk,	kabīr,	alhamdulillah	kabīr
	yes	name	Cahyantuk	big	thank.god	big

"Yes, his name is Cahyantuk, he is an adult, praise God, all grown up".

Context: D1 expresses her gratitude that her second-born child has reached maturity.

On the assimilation of grammatical endings, see also 4.2.2.2.

While the contact situation between Sri Lankan maids and their Lebanese madams might represent a clear-cut example of an asymmetrical power relation in a pidginisation process, all pidgin geneses are characterised by a power asymmetry where the superstrate language

is also the mother tongue of the socioeconomically dominant group, as I have pointed out under 2.1.2 above. As such, Pigdin Madam is not exceptional in this sense.

A last contribution has been made by Andrei A. Avram, who has described what he calls a "Romanian Arabic prepidgin", used by Romanian and Arab oil workers in Iraq in the 1980s (Avram 2007:1). Avram groups this variety as a "workforce pidgin". The social situation of the 1980s Iraqi oil field seems to be parallel to the first description of GPA from 1990 where it is said to have been common "on the rigs" in Oman as early as the 1960s and 70s (Smart 1990:83).

2.2.3 The GPA lexicon

The vast majority of the lexicon in my material consists of words of Gulf Arabic origin; I would estimate more than 95 percent. Even the Persian and Urdu origin words that are common largely appear to be borrowed through Gulf Arabic, such as Persian *jinjāl* "fighting" or Urdu *sālōna* "curry" which are both listed as loanwords as early as in Johnstone's (1967:56-57) study. The rest of the vocabulary is mainly from English. However, parts of my recordings with English-proficient speakers should probably be considered English proper, thus indicating the occurrence of English/GPA code-switching.

The word *bečā*, which is used by a Javanese and a Tagalog native speaker to mean "child", appears to be derived from Urdu *bačča* "child". This is not given as a loanword in use in 1967 by Johnstone, nor is it mentioned in Smart's article. Interestingly, none of the native Urdu speakers in my material use this, and the two speakers that do are the stay-at-home maids, who one must assume has had minimal contact with native Urdu speakers. This can serve as an indication that foreigner talk to non-Arabs, even within the home, is quite common among the Gulf Arab employers.

Chapter 3: Phonology

3.1 Phonology in Gulf Arabic

3.1.1 Consonants

The 29 consonant phonemes in Gulf Arabic are shown in the following table (standard IPA symbols in brackets):

		Bilabial	Labiodental	Interdental	Pharyngealized[1]	Dental	Alveolar Pharyngealized	Alveolar	Alveo-Palatal	Velar	Uvular	Pharyngeal	Glottal
Stops	VL VD	b [b]				t [t̪] d [d̪]	ṭ [ɬ]			k [k] g [g]	q [q]		ʾ [ʔ]
Fricatives	VL VD		f [f]	t [θ] d̲ [ð]		s [s] z [z]	ṣ [ʂ]		š [ʃ]	ḫ [x] ġ [ɣ]		ḥ [ħ] ʿ [ʕ]	h [h]
Affricates	VL VD				ẓ [ðˁ]			č [tʃ] j[dʒ]					
Nasals	VD	m [m]						n [n]					
Tap	VD							r [r]					
Approximants	VD							l [l]	y [j]	w[w]			

(Table based on Holes 1990:260 and Qafisheh 1977:2).

Additionally, Qafisheh lists a voiceless bilabial stop, [p], not listed in Holes, but given by Johnstone 1967:xix in brackets. This sound is, as far as I understand, somewhat of a rarity that occurs in certain loanwords, mainly from Persian. There are 18 listings in Qafisheh's 1997 dictionary under this consonant, and several seem as though they also alternate with /b/ for some speakers. Holes also lists a pharygealized dental stop ḍ [dˁ], which is not given

[1] The pharyngealised consonants are also called velarised by many scholars.

in Qafisheh's table. I have chosen to omit both in the table, but they should probably be considered as part of the larger and more flexible Gulf Arabic phonological inventory.

I have, however, included the unvoiced uvular stop /q/, as it is listed by both Qafisheh and Holes. This consonant has 18 separate root listings in Qafisheh's dictionary, although half of these refer the reader to a listing under either /g/ or /ġ/, and out of the rest 8 are listed with variants pronounced with /g/, leaving only the root /q-h-r/ as being pronounced exclusively with the unvoiced uvular stop (Qafisheh 1997:492-493).

The Bedouin group of dialects, to which Gulf Arabic belongs, have a voiced velar stop /g/ as their reflex of the Classical Arabic /q/ in all positions (Fischer 1980:52), though some words, most of them classicisms or loans from Standard Arabic, are pronounced with /q/ (Qafisheh 1977:7). However, a /j/ realisation traditionally occurs in some dialects, including those of Buraimi, Abu Dhabi and Dubai (Johnstone 1967:38).

As a Bedouin dialect, the Gulf dialect has the phoneme /ẓ/ as the merger of Classical Arabic /ḍ/ and /ẓ/, and thus no /ḍ/ phoneme (Fischer 1980:50).

In this area of the Gulf, the Standard Arabic sound /j/ is frequently realised as /y/ (Johnstone 1967:39). In Oman, this is the common realisation in the Beduin dialects, whereas the settled dialects, including that of Muscat, have a /g/ pronunciation of this phoneme[2].

3.1.2 Vowels

According to Holes (1990:264), there are eight vowels in Gulf Arabic, as listed in the table below. Vowel length is phonemic. Qafisheh (1977:15) lists nine vowels, adding to the table a short mid back vowel /o/. Although he lists this as being present in only a few words as an alternative pronunciation of the diphthong /aw/, a minimal pair is presented in opposition to / ō/. Thus it should potentially be considered a separate phoneme. Johnstone (1967:xix) lists ten vowels with a short counterpart to each long vowel.

[2] The phonological information on Omani dialects was generously provided by doctoral candidate Leila Kaplan and Dr. Domenyk Eades.

		Front	Central	Back
High	Short Long	i ī		u ū
Mid	Short Long	 ē		 ō
Low	Short Long		a ā	

3.2 Phonology of GPA

3.2.1 Recordings

For practical reasons, most of my field recordings are made in my consultants' work environments, something which reduced the extent of my control over background noise. My choice of recording equipment, an iPod nano with iTalk without external microphone, made it possible to create an informal interview situation, but did not render phonetically perfect recordings. As such, my material should not be taken as a basis for studying the phonetic qualities of individual Gulf Pidgin Arabic sounds. It is, however, a starting point for reviewing the phonology of the variety as compared to Gulf Arabic.

3.2.2 Stops

The Gulf Arabic sounds that occur in the speech of all the consultants are the stops /b/, /t/, /d/, /k/ and /g/. Stops are the only consonants that exist in the phoneme inventory of *all* languages (Ladefoged & Maddieson 1996:47), and thus it is not surprising that these sounds are preserved and pronounced with ease by speakers with different substrate languages.

In word-final position, one consultant replaces the stop /d/ with the dental fricative /š/, as in the word normally given as *mawjūd* "existent" in example 1 below:

(1)	ʾašrīn	wala	talāta	wa	ʾašrīn	saydaliya	**mawjūš**	dāḫel
	twenty	or	three	and	twenty	pharmacy	exist	in
	buraimi							
	Buraimi							

"There are twenty or twenty-three pharmacies in Buraimi".

Context: C2 explains that in all these pharmacies, there are only three female pharmacists.

Interestingly, in my material some consultants use an unvoiced velar stop /k/ in syllable-final positions in words that have /q/ in Standard Arabic, like in the rendering of the Gulf Arabic word *ṭalāg* "divorce" in example 2:

(2)	alhīn	fi	**talāk**
	now	TAM	divorce

"I'm divorced now".

Context: D2 answers the question "Where is your husband?"

The use of the unvoiced velar stop in word-final position in words where Gulf Arabic has the voiced stop is also registered by Smart (1990:89). The development of a /k/pronunciation of this phoneme is attested in one Gulf dialect, namely the Baḥarnā Shiʿi dialect of villages in Bahrain (Holes 2005:xxxviii). In other Gulf dialects there are documented trends of devoicing, such as of final /d/ and /j/ in Qatari (Johnstone 1967:35) and a /č/ pronunciation of Standard Arabic /q/ in Abu Dhabi (ibid.), so the influence of an undocumented dialect form is one possible explanation for this phenomenon.

Neutralisation of the voiced/unvoiced contrast in word-final position is a common typological phenomenon, and this development having taken place in GPA is thus not unlikely. Similar changes have taken place in the African Arabic-based contact languages Juba Arabic and Nubi (see 3.4). Alternatively, this development could also be an extension of the replacement of /g/ with /k/ that occurs with etymological /ġ/ in GPA (see 3.2.3.4).

The unvoiced bilabial stop /p/, which as discussed under 3.1.1 is rare in Gulf Arabic, occurs frequently in my GPA material, mainly as a variant of /f/ (see under 3.2.3.1). The common Arabic variation of /b/ and /p/ in foreign words is not displayed in my material.

The glottal stop /ʾ/ is rare in GPA. It occurs most often as a replacement for /ʿ/ as in the rendering of the word *sittaʿaš* "sixteen" in example 3:

(3) walad **sittata'as** sana, wāhid kabīr

son sixteen year one big

"My son is sixteen years old, [that's] the older one".

Context: D1 lists her children and their ages.

3.2.3 Fricatives

3.2.3.1 Labiodental fricative

The speakers of Sinhala, Tagalog, Javanese and Chavacano all to a certain extent replace the Arabic /f/ sound not found in the phonological inventory of their respective native languages with the unvoiced labial stop /p/, a sound which does not exist in Arabic. However, this phenomenon does not seem to be consistent in any one speaker. D1, whose native tongue is Javanese, a language without an /f/ phoneme, says the following, with one /f/ and one /p/, both in syllable-final position:

(4a) mhn, sēn, bas ana ma **araf** bādēn **keyp** hāda

ok good but 1SG NEG know after how DEM

"Very well, but I can't vouch for how it will turn out"

Context: D1 is being explained the research project by her employer, and expresses some reluctance as to her qualifications for speaking Arabic.

Lexical conditioning, where one word is learned with one specific sound, does not seem to be applicable here, as D1 also uses the forms *arap* "know"and *kēf* "how" in her interview, as in examples 4b and 4c:

(4b) **kēf** hasal **araf**?

how get know

"How I learned?"

Context: D1 clarifies a question as to how she learned Arabic.

(4c) bas asān sawwi... mersalla, bas **arap** swey

only so LV correspondence only know little

"Just so I can correspond, I just know a little"

D1 answers the question of whether she knows how to read and write.

Seeing that there is no /f/ phoneme in her native language, D1 does not perceive the sound as any different from /p/, and what to her are two allophones appear to alternate freely in her pronunciation. This type of alternation is common for several speakers.

3.2.3.2 Interdental fricatives

The Gulf Arabic interdentals /θ/ and /ḏ/ are replaced in GPA by dentals /t/ and /d/ by almost all speakers. This development is interesting as it is parallel to the reduction present in the so-called sedentary Arabic dialects from Standard Arabic interdentals to the characteristic dentals of those dialects today (Versteegh 2001:99).

An example of the /θ/ to /t/ shift can be seen in example 5, in the pronunciation of Gulf Arabic *θānī* "another":

(5) ey dukān **tāni**

yes shop other

"Yes, [in] another shop".

Context: A3 asserts that his friend F also sells clothes, but in another shop.

The demonstrative in GPA is commonly *hāda*[3] "this, that, these, those" from Gulf Arabic *hāḏa* "this" (Johnstone 1967:67), as shown in example 6:

(6) irāni **hāda** kullu dubay sāja kullu **hāda** mapi arabi

Iranian DEM all Dubai Sharjah all DEM NEG Arab

"Those are Iranians... In all of Dubai and Sharjah, [the people] are not Arabs".

Context: B1 talks about the ethnic composition of the Emirates.

The Gulf Arabic emphatic interdental /ẓ/ in GPA is replaced by the dental /d/, as in the word *naẓīf* "clean" in example 7:

(7) bas siyāra masbūt, **nadīf**, zēn yimši ey makān

but car ok clean good go any place

"But the car is OK, clean, good enough to go anywhere" (alternatively "goes anywhere without problems" i.e. *zēn* as an adverb "well").

[3] A variant *hāḏa* with the interdental preserved is also found with some speakers.

Context: C5 makes excuses for his ten-year old car.

3.2.3.3 Dental fricatives

Replacing of /š/ with /s/ occurs in the speech of several consultants with different mother tongues. In examples 8a and 8b, note the reflexes of the Gulf Arabic verb *šāf* "to see":

(8a) **sūp** tabīb zeyn aksan

see doctor good better[4]

"It's better to see the doctor"

Context: C4 tries to convince a customer to go see the doctor before purchasing medicine.

(8b) ana čiko **sūp**, yiji kamsa sana ma **yesūp**[5]

1SG child see, come five year NEG see

"I will see my children, when I come. I haven't seen them for five years"

Context: B2 talks about her upcoming trip to Sri Lanka.

Note that B2 keeps the affricate consonant /č/ in *čiko* "child" in example 8b.

The voiced dental fricative /z/ loses its voicing in the speech of several consultants, as in the rendering of the word *zēn* "good" in example 9:

(9) yestagal yerīd **sēn**

work want well

"They want us to work well"

Context: B2 talks about Arab employers, that wants the work to be done well, but without paying the cleaners on time.

Some consultants also alternate /z/ and the affricate /j/. In examples 10a and 10b below, alternative pronunciations of Gulf Arabic *zēn* "good" and *jamal* "camel" are shown:

(10a) bādēn imārat mafi **jēn** ana yerīd riji maktab

then Emirates NEG good 1SG want return agency

"Then, [work in] the Emirates wasn't good, so I wanted to return to the agency".

Context: D1 tells the story of how she ended up in Buraimi after having asked her agency for another job than the one she was given in the Emirates.

[4] *aksan* here might be interpreted as a grammatical word turning *zeyn* into a comparative.
[5] See 6.2.2 for a discussion on the verbal prefix *y-*.

(10b)	dākel	fi	šay	min	saman,	māyy,	akel,	kulliš	hini	rakab,	**zamal**
	inside	EXPL	thing	of	necessities	water	food	all	here	ride	camel
	fōk										
	upon										

"Inside, there were some necessities like water, food; everything was carried here, on top of the camel".

Context: C1 shows me some camel saddle bags and explain their use.

3.2.3.4 Velar fricatives

The velar fricatives[6] in Gulf Arabic /ġ/ and /ḫ/ (IPA /x/ and /ɣ/) have for the most part shifted to their velar stop counterparts, /k/ and /g/, in GPA. Sometimes both the sounds, more commonly /ḫ/, are replaced by /h/, and for some speakers, they have merged to /k/ in certain words. In example 11, note D1's rendering of etymological *štiġal* "to work" and *dāḫil* "inside":

(11)	bādēn	ana	sīr	**yistokol**	hāda	**dākel**	kuwēt	isnēn	sana
	then	1SG	go	work	DEM	in	Kuwait	two	year

"Then I went to do that work, in Kuwait, for two years".

Context: D1 explains her previous jobs.

It is worth noting here that though the Javanese, Tagalog and Sinhala speakers sometimes (but not always, see example 9) merge these stops when speaking GPA, all these languages do have /g/ and /k/ as separate phonemes. Thus this development can be seen as a characteristic inherent to GPA.

The reason why these speakers, who in their own mother tongues treat /k/ and /g/ as separate phonemes, shift /ġ/ to /k/ might be aspiration. Aspired [gʰ] is relatively rare in the languages of the world, while [kʰ] is a common pronunciation for a /k/ phoneme. More generally, voice versus aspiration seems to be a fundamental polarization principle for stops (Ladefoged & Maddieson 1996:45-46). When reducing /ġ/ to a stop, a focus on the voiced feature of the sound will result in a /g/, whereas a focus on the fricative feature will potentially for speakers of languages without the phoneme /ġ/ end up being analyzed as

[6] Refer to Holes 1990:262 for the classification of these sounds as velar in Gulf Arabic. In Classical Arabic as described by the first grammarians these were the uvular sounds /χ/ and /ɣ/ (Watson 2002:13), and are still so in some dialects, although they have shifted to velars in several modern varieties (ibid.:17).

aspiration, as both a fricative and an aspirated stop are characterized by release of air. Thus a /ġ/ can be perceived as a [k^h] and pronounced as voiceless accordingly.

The tendency to preserve aspiration over voicing is also supported by the evidence of shifts of /ġ/ to /h/, like in the word *sahīr* in example 12, derived from Gulf Arabic *ṣaġīr*:

(12)	ey,	bādēn	gul	ana	šūf	wajh	**sahīr**
	yes	then	say	1SG	look	face	little

"Then he said to me: 'Look at that baby face!'"

Context: D2 is retelling the story of how a Saudi official mocked her when she was caught with a passport showing her age as 31 while she was actually 17.

3.2.3.5 Glottal fricative

The glottal fricative /h/ is used as in Gulf Arabic, as well as a replacement for the Gulf Arabic unvoiced pharyngeal fricative /ḥ/, as in the rendering of the word *ḥārr* "hot" in following example:

(13)	minnāk	**hār**.	mafi	ziyāda	**hār**	minni
	there	hot	NEG	too_much	hot	here

"There it's hot, it's not too hot here".

Context: C2 explains that her home in southern India is hotter than Buraimi because of the high humidity there.

See also 3.2.8 on the development of the pharyngealised consonants in general.

Note the reduction of the geminated /r/ in this example. Gemination does not appear to be phonemic in GPA.

3.2.4 Affricates

The affricate /č/, the most common affricate in the world which occurs in around 45 % of all languages (Ladefoged & Maddieson 1996:90), is preserved in GPA, although rare. It is predominantly used in loan words from English, as well as in the common GPA word *čiko* "child" (Smart 1990:114), as in example 14a:

(14a)	bādēn	**čiko**	yiji	marīd
	then	child	come	ill

"Then when the baby comes, it's ill".

Context: B2 explains the potential consequences of intermarriage within families.

The Gulf pronunciation of the second person singular feminine suffix pronoun as /-č/ (Fischer 1980:114) occurs with two speakers in set phrases. Both are women, and it is likely that they have heard these words and adopted them as single morphological units (see 4.2.2.2 for a thorough discussion of this). This analysis is in this case in concurrence with Bizri's (2005:58) observations on the language of housemaids in Lebanon, where feminine forms often are reanalysed as neutrals. Note, however, that C2 is not a house worker, but employed in a pharmacy:

(14b)	kam	sana	gabl	**and-ič**?	
	how.many	year	before	with-2SG?	

"How many years have you been here?"

Context: C2 makes conversation.

(14c)	bādēn	gūl	inti	**ʿumr- ič**	wāhid	wa	talātīn	walla	mama	inti
	then	say	2SG	age-2SG	one	and	thirty	by.god	mother	2SG

"Then he said: "So you're 31, indeed, a mother already!""

Context: D2 retells the mocking of the Saudi police when she was caught with a fake passport at age 17.

Two speakers, also two women, use the form *čidi* "like this" with an initial affricate in the Gulf Arabic manner (Fischer 1980:106):

(14d)	lēs	sawwi	**čidi**,	enti	muss[7]	sahīr,	enti	alhīn	kabīr
	why	do	this	2SG	NEG	little	2SG	now	big

"Why do you do this, you're not young, you are older now".

Context: E2 imagines how her sponsor would scold her if she went out drinking or meeting men.

The common word *kēf* "how" is only pronounced in the Gulf way with initial /č/ when A1 imitates Emiratis in example 14e:

(14e)	minni	dāhel	umān	gul	"kēf hālek"	yirūh	imārāt	wa	gul	**čayf**
	here	in	Oman	say	"kēf hālek"	go	Emirates	and	say	"čayf

[7] This nominal negation is uncommon in the Gulf where *mu* or *mub* tends to be used, and without parallel in my material, the common GPA negation here would be *mafi*.

hālek

hālek”

“Here in Oman, they say *kēf hālek* (“how are you”). If you go to the Emirates, they say *čayf hālek”.*

Context: A1 explains dialectal differences.

The affricate /j/ is common in my material, but frequently alternates with the Gulf pronunciation of /y/ (see 3.1 and Fischer 1980:105). As such, there are for instance several examples of both *wājid* and *wāyid* “much” in my material, with *wājid* occuring 29 times and *wāyid* a total of 40. There are also alternations with the settled Omani /g/ pronunciation in some words, as in example 15:

(15) **al-kalīg** **yigi** minni šugl bas

the-Gulf come here work only

“I only came to the Gulf for work”.

Context: C4 answers the question “Why did you come to the Gulf?”

3.2.5 Nasals

The nasals /m/ and /n/ in Gulf Arabic are preserved with all speakers of GPA represented in my material.

3.2.6 Tap

The tap /r/ in Gulf Arabic is preserved with all speakers of GPA represented in my material.

3.2.7 Approximants

The semivowels or glides /w/ and /y/ are preserved with all speakers of GPA. /y/ is used both in words with etymological /y/ and etymological /j/ as in the surrounding Gulf dialects, see 3.1.1.

The labiodental approximant /ʋ/ occurs in the speech of some consultants as a variation of the bilabial approximant (semivowel) /w/. The substrate languages of the speakers that display this feature, Urdu, Sinhala, Malayalam and Tamil, all contain a /ʋ/, but not a /w/ phoneme. Thus, this variation is probably directly influenced by the substrate languages. In example 16, an Urdu speaker pronounces the Gulf Arabic word *wēn* “where”:

(16) aleyn sākin **vēn** Buraimi?

now live where Buraimi

"Where in Buraimi do you stay?"

Context: A2 makes conversation.

The lateral approximant /l/ in Gulf Arabic is preserved with all speakers of GPA represented in my material.

3.2.8 Development of Gulf Arabic pharyngeal and pharyngealised sounds

3.2.8.1 Stop, affricate and fricatives

The pharyngeal and pharyngealised consonants (the so-called emphatic consonants) have consistently lost their pharyngeal traits, and some of them have also been subject to other processes. In GPA /ṣ/ becomes /s/, /ẓ/ becomes /d/, /ṭ/ becomes /t/ and /ḥ/ becomes /h/. I will deal separately with the voiced pharyngeal fricative /ʿ/ under 3.2.8.2.

The notable exception to this development in my material is speaker A1, a Muslim Pakistani well-versed in the Quran who has spent ten years in the Gulf:

(17) minni hindi, bangali, bākistāni, misri, kullu duniya, yāni, **itḥād**

here Indian Bangladeshi Pakistani Egyptian all world that.is unity

"Here, there are Indians, Bangladeshis, Pakistanis, Egyptians, people from everywhere, that is, together"

Context: A1 stresses the social and character-building aspect of a working stay for young Asians in a Gulf country.

Clearly, A1 has a sophisticated vocabulary, and the choice of Gulf Arabic *ittiḥād* "unity" for the stock GPA phrase *same-same*, which may be used in the meaning of "together", can be seen as an upgrade to the semi-formal situation that any interview necessarily will constitute.

On some occasions, the voiceless pharyngeal fricative /ḥ/ is pronounced as /k/, as in the rendering of the Gulf Arabic word *ʾaḥsan*[8] in example 18:

(18) hāda **aksan** šey mišān čiko, la?

DEM best thing for child Q

[8] Twice, by speaker A1, this word is pronounced *aɦsan* as in the Arabic foreigner talk discussed under 2.1.3.

"This is the best for children, you know"

Context: C4 recommends a brand of medicine to a customer at the pharmacy.

3.2.8.2 The voiced pharyngeal fricative

An interesting development is the reduction of the voiced pharyngeal fricative /ʿ/. Apart from some idiosyncratic pronunciations as /ʾ/ or even retaining the sound as /ʿ/, most speakers do not pronounce this as a consonant. But the presence of /ʿ/ in the word from which the GPA term is derived often affects the vowel environment, leading to a lengthening of the vowel immediately before or after /ʿ/, as in example 19a:

(19a) kalām araf, kitāb mafi **mālūm**

speech know writing NEG known

"I know the speaking part, but I don't know the script."

Context: C4 explains that while he has picked up oral Arabic, he does not know the script.

We see that the Gulf Arabic passive participle *maʿlūm* "known" is transformed to GPA *mālūm* by a lengthening of the vowel /a/ immediately before /ʿ/. This is found in numerous examples in my material, especially in the commonly occurring words *mālūm* "informed", *tālīm* "education", *yāni* "that is; well" and *bādēn* "then", the three last words being derived from Gulf Arabic *taʿlīm*, *yaʿnī* and *baʿdēn.*

In the cases where /ʿ/ comes immediately before a vowel it seems to be deleted without influencing the vowels, as in example 19b:

(19b) arabi hāda sekl, bādēn yisūp, bādēn **sara-sara** kallam

Arabic DEM way then see then fast~INT speak

"Arabic [was written], like that, then you look at it and can speak quickly".

Context: B1 is explaining how her sister-in-law, B2, learned Arabic by keeping a bilingual notebook of Arabic with Sinhala translations, written in the Sinhalese script.

sara in example 19b is derived from Gulf Arabic *surʿa* "fast", and the /ʿ/ preceding the /a/ is not preserved in the GPA pronunciation.

In example 19b we also see the very common tendency that word-initial /ʿ/ is deleted, as is the case with B1's rendering of the word *ʿarabī* "Arabic".

Sometimes /ʿ/ is deleted, but influences the quality of the adjoining vowels:

(19c)	zamān	**bād**	fi,	aleyn	**bād**	fi,	aleyn	ziyāda	nafar,	inte	**šāra**
	before	also	EXPL	now	also	EXPL	now	much	person.SG	2SG	street
	šūf	yigdar									
	see	can									

"They were here before, and they're here now as well. Now there are loads of them, you can see them on the street".

Context: C1 assures me that there are still many traditional nomadic Bedu, wearing the *ḫanjar* dagger, living in the Buraimi area.

šāra in example 19c is derived from Gulf Arabic *šāriʿ* "street". /ʿ/ is deleted, but apparently changes the preceding /i/ into an /a/ sound. Note also that Gulf Arabic *baʿad* "too, also" is rendered *bād*.

If /ʿ/ is between two identical vowels, the entire VCV-cluster is sometimes reduced to one long vowel, like in the reflex of the Gulf Arabic word *musāʿada* "help" in example 19d:

(19d)	mumkin	hiya	tābān,	asān	yerīd	**masāda**
	maybe	3SG.F	tired	so	want	help

"Maybe she's tired and so wants help".

Context: B1 ponders the reason why after learning that a 65-year old woman recently got married.

This pronunciation is not consistent, and in fact this intervocalic position seems to favour a /ʾ/-pronunciation to a larger degree than other positions, as in the rendering of the Arabic word *maʿāš* "salary" below:

(19e)	šugl	tamām,	**maʾāš**	tamām	dāhil	hind
	work	great	salary	great	in	India

"There's good work with good salaries in India".

Context: E1 justifies his wish that his children work in India, not in the Gulf, when they grow up.

Such a pronunciation is also common where /ʿ/ originally occurred between two different vowels, as in the Arabic word *arbaʿīn* "forty" below:

(19f)	alhēn	forty-two	years	ana	umri	itnēn	w	**arabaʾīn**	fōk

now forty-two years 1SG age two and forty above

"Now, I am 42 years old... more than 42 years old".

Context: B3 dismisses the idea of her remarrying.

The reduction of /ʿ/ in GPA is similar to the development in Maltese, where the original Arabic /ʿ/ has been reduced in the same way, but remains in writing as *għ*. In Maltese, this "serves to lengthen the preceding and/or following vowel in any position" (Aquilina 1965:14), and thus shows an even more consistent development than in GPA. The original Arabic word *buʿd* "distance", for instance, which has a short vowel /u/ in front of the voiced pharyngeal fricative, is rendered in Maltese orthography as *bogħod* and pronounced /bōt/ with a loss of the pharyngeal and its replacement by a long vowel /ō/ (ibid.). Note also the loss of final voicing, cf. 3.2.2 above.

The weakening of /ʿ/ also resembles that which the glottal stop /ʾ/ has gone through in the development from Standard Arabic to the modern Arabic dialects. In pre-consonantal position, the glottal stop has in most dialects been deleted and replaced by a lengthening of the preceding vowel, as in e.g. Gulf Arabic *bīr* "well" which is derived from Standard Arabic *biʾr* "well" (Watson 2002:18).

3.2.9 Vowels

Vowel length does not seem to be phonemic in GPA, as words with the same meanings are pronounced with both short and long vowels. Look at the reflexes of *gāl* "to say" used by the same speaker in the following examples:

(20a) **gul** hāda kūb, hāda milāga

say DEM cup DEM spoon

"She said: 'This is a cup, and this is a spoon".

Context: D2 explains how the little daughter in her first Gulf host family taught her basic vocabulary.

(20b) baba **gūl** lēš inte kīda hādi

father say why 2SG DEM DEM

"My father said: 'Why do you do this?'"

Context: D2 retells how her father reacted when she told him she would go work in the Gulf.

3.3 Overview of the GPA phonology

The following table presents the basic consonant inventory of GPA. Where a sound frequently alternates with another, both are listed with the alternative in parenthesis:

		Bilabial	Labiodental	Dental	Alveolar	Alveo-palatal	Velar	Glottal
Stops	VL	p (f)		t			k	ʾ
	VD	b		d			g	
Fricatives	VL		f (p)	s				h
	VD			z (s)				
Affricates	VL				č	š		
	VD				j			
Nasals	VD	m			n			
Tap	VD				r			
Approximants	VD		ʊ (w)	l		y	w (ʊ)	

The basic GPA phonetic inventory is reduced compared to that of Gulf Arabic. Of the 29 consonant phonemes in Gulf Arabic, GPA speakers in my material use 18, two of which sometimes merge with /s/, namely /z/ and /š/. In addition to these, a /ʊ/ sound is common enough among certain speakers to belong in the GPA inventory as an innovation. If we accept that length distinction in the vowel system has been neutralized, this leaves GPA with five vowels compared to the nine vowels of Gulf Arabic, where vowel length is phonemic.

Even though some GPA speakers use only 16/29 (55 per cent) of the consonant phonemes and half of the vowel ones, they succeed in making themselves understood. This might be because

the linguistic contexts in which this language is used are limited, something which in turn probably limits the lexical range. Then, as there are simply not that many different words that occur regularly, the listener will know approximately what words to expect in a given conversation, and so idiosyncratic or divergent pronunciations do not generally get in the way of conveying meaning.

3.4 Comparison to other Arabic-based pidgins and creoles

The development described under 3.2.3.4, of the velar fricatives to stops, has also taken place in the Arabic-based African creole language of Nubi, where /ḫ/ and /ġ/ as in some GPA words has merged and become /k/ (Versteegh 2001:219). In Juba Arabic, /ḫ/ is always replaced by /k/, whereas /ġ/ has merged with either /k/ or /g/, apparently optional in some words (Watson 1989:98-99).

As for the devoicing of final voiced consonants which is discussed under 3.2.2, it appears that the same processes have taken place in some words in Juba Arabic (Watson 1989:99) and Nubi (Wellens 2005:291). Like Gulf Arabic, Sudanese Colloquial Arabic has a /g/ realisation of the Arabic /q/ phoneme (Persson 1984:2). Also in the Chadian creole of Turku devoiced final stops appear common (Wellens 2005:304).

Traits described as common features of the Sudanese pidgins and creoles which also exist in GPA are lack of phonemic geminates (see 3.2.3.5,) lack of pharyngeal consonants (see 3.2.8) and alternation between /s/ and /š/ (see 3.2.3.3) (Owens 1997:155).

4: Possession

4.1: Possession in Gulf Arabic

4.1.1 The pronominal system

Gulf Arabic distinguishes between first, second and third person pronouns, singular and plural, and masculine and feminine for the second and third person singular pronouns. There are separate forms for the independent pronouns and the affixed pronouns, which can be either possessive or object pronouns.

Independent pronouns (Holes 1990:159):

		Singular	Plural
1		ana	iḥna
2	m f	inta inti	intu “
3	m f	huwa hiya	hum “

Affixed/possessive pronouns (Holes 1990:171):

		Singular	Plural
1		-i	-na
2	m f	-ik -ič	-kum “
3	m f	-ah -ha	-hum “

4.1.2: The synthetic and the analytic possessive

In the same way as in the majority of Arabic dialects, Gulf Arabic has two ways of expressing possession, the synthetic and the analytic possessive (Harning 1980:11).

4.1.3 The synthetic possessive

The synthetic possessive is structured in one of two ways, either by juxtaposing two nouns in the order [possessed – possessor] or by affixing a bound pronoun to the possessed noun (Naïm 2008:671).

The Gulf Arabic dialects make extensive use of the synthetic possessive, which occurs 25 times more frequently than the analytic possessive (Harning 1980:158). Only this possessive construction is used to denote intimate and mutual kinship relations, mutual relationships such as friends or neighbours, possession of body parts and partitive relations[9] (ibid.:76-77).

[9] Harning also includes “relations in which the noun is a pseudoexponent” and “a period of time” (Harning 1980:77)

The synthetic possessive is used freely with both nouns and pronouns as possessors in Gulf Arabic. Examples 1a and 1b are taken from Holes 1990:96:

Juxtaposition of nouns, noun as possessor:

(1a)	**sayyārat**	**il-mudīr**	mwaggafa	minnāk
	car	**the-boss**	parked	there

"The boss's car is parked over there".

Affixed pronoun as possessor:

(1b)	hāḏa	**kitāb-i**
	this	**book-1SG.DEP**

"This is my book".

4.1.4 The analytic possessive

The analytic possessive is constructed by use of a particle, which in Gulf Arabic is *māl*, in order to make noun phrases along the pattern of [possessed – *māl* – possessor]. In the literature on the phenomenon, a common term for the particle is the "genitive exponent" (i.e. Harning 1980). Regarding the first part of this term, I find the use of the word genitive inaccurate and potentially confusing, since the spoken Arabic dialects do not inflect nouns for case. One of the most recent articles on the topic of the analytic possessive, Naim 2008, uses the term possessive exponent, which instead highlights the actual function of the particle, to express possession. The other part of the term, "exponent", is not a commonly used linguistic term in this meaning. Alternatively, Johnstone (1967:68) chooses to call the particle a preposition. A preposition is defined as an item usually preceding a noun phrase in order to form a single structure known as a prepositional phrase (Crystal 1997:305). Semantically, the prepositional phrase usually expresses a relation, such as possession, direction or spacial or temporal place (ibid.). In Gulf Arabic, *māl* occurs immediately before a noun phrase and expresses possession, and so it appears to fulfil both the formal and the functional criteria for a preposition, directly translatable to for example the English preposition "of". However, in keeping with the traditional nomenclature I will refer to *māl* in the following as a possessive exponent, following Naim 2008.

The analytic possessive is less frequent in Gulf Arabic than the synthetic possessive, and the types of possession for which it is used are limited. Mainly, this construction is used for expressing concrete possession of belongings or constant hierarchic relations between two concrete objects (Harning 1980:75):

(2) **l-'ibrīg** **ḥagg** **al-ḥammām**
the-tap **POSS** **the-bathroom**
"The tap of the bathroom"

In the same way as the synthetic possessive, the analytic possessive can be constructed with both nominal and pronominal possessors. Example 3a shows an analytic possessive with a nominal possessor (from Holes 1990:96):

(3a) is-sayyāra **māl** **il-mudīr** ihni
the-car POSS the-boss here
"The boss' car is here".

In the case of pronominal possessors, the pronoun is affixed directly to the possessive exponent as in example 3b (from Harning 1980:70):

(3b) hāḏā il-kirsi **māl-i**
this the-chair POSS-1SG.DEP
"This is my chair".

4.1.5: The possessive exponent *māl*

The word *māl* has several meanings and functions in Gulf Arabic. The glossary to Clive Holes' *Dialect, Culture and Society in Eastern Arabia* lists two lexical and a total of 14 grammatical functions for the entry *māl* under the root m-w-l (Holes 2001:508). The lexical meanings are "wealth, property" and "livestock", respectively.

The first grammatical function listed is that of indicating possession[10], as shown in examples 3a and 3b. The remainder are given as marking purpose, type, material constituency, source, genitive relationship, partitive relation, concomitance, tendency or inclination, association, capacity, direction towards, location in and object of action (Holes 2001:508). However, despite the large number of implications and potential translations, all the

[10] Holes lists this as "possession, alienable or inalienable". I will discuss alienability under 4.1.6.

grammatical functions attributed to *māl* are semantically close, as they all indicate association between two objects or concepts.

In her monograph on the analytic possessive in the modern Arabic dialects, Harning (1980:70) claims that both *māl* and *ḥagg* are possessive exponents in the Gulf dialects, and that *ḥagg* is the more commonly used. This claim is refuted by Johnstone in a review of Harning's book (Johnstone 1982:584), where he points out that *ḥagg* in the Gulf countries, as a contrast to other dialect areas in the Arabian Peninsula, is a preposition meaning "for", not a possessive exponent. There is only one single occurence of *ḥagg* used in a possessive context in my material, in a statement by consultant D1, who may well have learned it in her previous employer's house in Kuwait (where *ḥagg* is used in this way according to Holes 2007b:614)):

(4)	mafi	**dikān**	**hegg**	**ana**	**huwa**,	nafar-āt	tāni
	NEG	**shop**	**POSS**	**1SG**	**3SG**	people-PL	other

"It's not our own shop, it belongs to someone else".

Context: D1 explains that her husband works in a shop owned by someone else.

Two other speakers use *ḥagg* as a preposition in the material.

According to Holes, *māl* is normally gender conjugated in agreement with the noun being possessed. This is not the case in the examples listed in Qafisheh (1977:180), nor is it mentioned or used in the examples in his dictionary.[11] Johnstone (1967:91) remarks under his notes on the Kuwaiti dialect that gender agreement here is optional, but less common than non-agreement. Example 5a is from Holes (1990:116):

(5a)	ha-š-šanṭa	**māl-t**	**il-mudīr**
	this-the-briefcase	**POSS-F**	the-boss

"This briefcase is the boss's".

The word order of the possessive exponent phrase in Gulf is normally restricted to [possessed – *māl* – possessor], as in examples 3a, 3b and 5a. However, an exception is made

[11] Presumably, the differences between Holes 1990 and Qafisheh 1977 can be explained to a large degree by actual dialect differences within the Gulf area, seeing that Holes' data are mainly from Bahrain and Qafisheh's are almost exclusively from Abu Dhabi. This can serve as a reminder that many of the dialects of the area are pitifully understudied, and there may well be considerable differences within the dialect group known as "Gulf Arabic".

for questions, where a word order [*māl* – possessor – possessed] seems acceptable when inquiring about the nature of the possessive relation, as in example 5b (from Johnstone 1967:91):

(5b) **māl** **ʿabdalla** hāḍa?

POSS ʿabdalla this

"Is that Abdallah's?"

4.1.6: Alienability and possession in Gulf Arabic

A functional divide based on semantic criteria has come into being in most of the Arabic dialects between the two co-existing ways to express possession, the construct state or the synthetic possessive on one hand, and the analytic possessive expressed by a possessive exponent on the other (Versteegh 2001:133). This divide seems largely to follow the notion of alienability, that is, whether the possessions are of a nature which allows for them to be removed from the possessor. Versteegh writes: "In most dialects, the two possessive constructions have come to mark the opposition between alienable and inalienable possession (for instance, *laḥmi* 'my flesh'/ *il-laḥm bitaʿi* 'my meat')" (ibid.).[12]

Saima Naïm claims that the semantic domain of inalienable things is not the same in all dialects, but that "[c]ertain domains, however, appear to be inalienable in the majority of dialects, specifically those concerning partitive, parental or neighbourly relations, and body parts" (Naïm 2008:672).

This domain to a large degree overlaps with the exclusive domain of the synthetic possessive outlined under 4.1.2, and as such it seems clear that alienability influences the choice of possessive structure in Gulf Arabic.

4.1.7: Other functions of analytic possessives

Focusing on and emphasising the possessor is mentioned by Brustad (2000:76) as a main semantic function of the possessive exponent. She also discusses the use of the exponents to classify generic nouns, a function found in Kuwaiti, which is the Gulf dialect included in her analysis. An example of the use of the possessive exponent for this purpose from her

[12] The example is from Egyptian Arabic, where the possessive exponent is *bitāʿ*.

Kuwaiti corpus follows, here classifying (or perhaps specifying) "inventions" as being "women's inventions" (Brustad 2000:81, see also 4.2.1.3):

(6)	ʾawwal	mā	mīš	daḏātra,	ʿala	zumān-na,	ʿayāyiz,	**ḫtarāʿ-āt**
	first	NEG	EXPL	doctor\PL	on	time-1PL.DEP	old_woman\PL	**invention-PL**
	māl	**il-ḥarīm**		**il-kubār**				
	POSS	**the-women\PL**		**the-old\PL**				

"In the old days there were no doctors, in our time, [just] old women, the inventions of old women".

Harning (1980:70) also mentions that the possessive exponent in the Gulf countries is used to express what she refers to as qualification.

4.1.8: Structural reasons for analytic possessives

According to Qafisheh, there is a marked tendency that the *māl*-construction is likely to be chosen over a synthetic possessive whenever the possessed object is a borrowed word of non-Arabic origin (Qafisheh 1977:179). This can be illustrated by example 7, which is from a Bahraini corpus (Johnstone 1967:106):

(7)	**il-lēt-āt**	māl	iš-šāriʿ
	the-light-PL	POSS	the-street

"the street lights"

Brustad agrees with Qafisheh that common reasons for speakers to choose an analytic possessive include the use of foreign words that seem awkward when integrated into Arabic morphosyntax (Brustad 2000:74). She also mentions multi-term annexations, the presence of attributive adjectives and parallel phrases with more than one head noun as important morphosyntactic motivations for the choice of the analytic possessive (ibid.:74-75).

Johnstone (1967:91; 106), who operates on a more localised dialect level than the generic "Gulf" label, discusses the use of *māl* only when dealing with the Kuwaiti and Bahraini dialects. He comments that the analytic possessive in both these dialects is rare compared to the use of the synthetic possessive, and remarks that *māl* seems to be more common in phrases where the object owned is referred to by a demonstrative, having already been mentioned or understood, as in example 8 from the Kuwaiti corpus (ibid.:91):

(8) **hāḏa** māl ʿabdalla

this POSS ʿabdalla

"That is Abdallah's".

4.2 Possession in Gulf Pidgin Arabic

4.2.1 The pronominal system in GPA

In my GPA material, the only personal pronouns in use are reflexes of the Gulf Arabic independent pronouns. No separate possessive or dependent forms are in use. The most common pronoun is *ana* "I", followed by *inte* "you" and phonetic variants, without a functional gender distinction. For the third person, both *huwa* and *hiya* are in use, however, only a few speakers appear to differentiate between the two on basis of gender. Rather, it appears that some female speakers have *hiya* as their default third person pronoun, whereas the rest employ the more *huwa* as their default pronoun. Only two female speakers with the longest stays in the Gulf out of all consultants (B3 and E2) appear to use *huwa* and *hiya* with a gender contrast parallel to that of Gulf Arabic. In addition to this, a reflex of the Gulf Arabic demonstrative, *hāda*, is commonly used with a third person pronominal reference.

Plural personal pronouns occur very rarely. What appears to be a reflex the first person pronoun *ihna* occurs 3 times, although the usage is restricted to one speaker (C2). The second person plural *intu* occurs twice, and a third person plural pronoun *hum* occurs 6 times.

The common way of expressing non-specific "they" is the noun *nafarāt* "people", which is also the only word in my material to occur with any regularity in both a singular (*nafar*) and a plural form. Otherwise, plural pronouns, especially the first person, can be expressed by juxtaposing two singular pronouns, such as *ana huwa* "we (two)" (literally "I he"), as in the following example:

(9) **ana** **huwa** same~same

1SG **3SG** same~INT

"We have been here for the same [time]"

Context: C5 establishes that he and C4 have been in the Gulf for seven years each.

However, reference to several persons is normally made by repetition of entire structures, as in example 10:

(10) **bilād māl enti** **bilād māl ana**, ma pi same~same banāt hāda

country POSS 2SG **country POSS 1SG** NEG EXPL same~INT girl\PL DEM

sah?

Q

"In our countries, the girls aren't [dressed] like that, right?"

Context: B1 talks about Saudi Arabia and mimes putting on a face veil.

4.2.2 Synthetic possessives in GPA?

4.2.2.1 Asyndetic possession with a nominal possessor

The system of two parallel constructions to express possession does not seem to be productive in GPA, where possession is generally expressed by a construct with *māl* similar to the analytic possessive in Gulf Arabic. However, I will go through my GPA data in the same order as Gulf Arabic to try to see whether the same structures or restrictions can be found.

Thus I will start by considering the possibility of a synthetic possessive as a grammatical feature of GPA occurring in my material, both as constructs with nominal and pronominal possessors, starting with nouns.

The Arabic conjunction *wa* "and" is in use in GPA, but is much less frequently used than one would expect for an Arabic text, as is also noted by Smart (1990:111). It is mainly used as a temporal marker "then", and very rarely has the function of binding two or more nouns together. In these cases, a conjunction is mostly simply omitted and parataxis is used to express that the two words belong together. Thus, there are many cases of juxtaposition of two nouns in my material, but normally they follow each other without any indication of possession, as in example 11:

(11) lāzim šūf **māma bāba** dāḫel jidda

must see **mother father** in Jeddah

"You have to see your **mother and father** in Jeddah".

Context: Due to a misunderstanding, B3 thinks that M's parents live in Jeddah and suggests that she visit them.

There are, however, a few examples of asyndetic possessive constructs with two nouns:

(12a)	garīb	māl	ana	hāda	**bint**	**ukti**	**māl**	**māma**
	relative	POSS	1SG	DEM	daughter	sister	POSS	mother

"That relative of mine is my mother's sister's daughter"

Context: E2 has previously mentioned that she has a relative living in al-Ain, and is now explaining the exact nature of their relation.

In example 12a, the word order is fundamental for our understanding of the family relationship E2 describes. The construct "sister's daughter" is constructed with the same word order as the Arabic synthetic possessive construct. It is very possible that E2 has borrowed the phrase as a vocabulary item meaning "niece", thus rendering it a lexical compound borrowing rather than a grammatical possessive structure. This explanation is made likely by the fact that E2 generally opts for *māl* constructs along the line of the second possessive relation in example 12a, *ukti māl māma* "mother's sister".

Example 12b displays the opposite word order of that which is the norm in Gulf Arabic (see 4.1.3):

(12b)	ana	**ukti**	**binti**	sawwi	arūs	laʾ
	1SG	**sister**	**daughter**	LV	marriage	no

"[But] my sister's daughter marrying [him], that's not possible".

Context: B1 explains the Sinhalese's rules for cousin intermarriage, which allow cross-cousin but not parallel cousin marriages.

The word order of the first sequence in example 12b, *ana ukti* "my sister", is [personal pronoun – possessed], a word order which is quite common among the Sinhala speakers in my material. This might indicate that this linguistic group have a preference for possessor-first constructions. The same word order is displayed in the noun-noun sequence *ukti binti* "sister's daughter". The explanation of the different types of family relationships here (cross-cousin versus parallel cousin) was rather complex and it is clear from my transcript that at the time of speaking I did not understand B1's intended meaning with this statement. I believe that B1 simply tried to break down this family relation into its components and that the word order, which is unique in my material for this type of construction, should be considered an exception, potentially influenced by her native tongue, rather than an expression of an underlying rule in GPA.

Both example 12a and 12b contain a string of two consecutive possessives, which may influence the way the consultants express themselves.

4.2.2.2 Asyndetic possession with affixed pronouns

In order to deal with the possible synthetic possessives involving personal pronouns, I will first look at the possible use of affixed pronouns. Then I will take a closer look at asyndetic structures with the actual GPA independent pronouns.

The forms *ukti* "sister" and *binti* "daughter" are the most commonly occurring forms that outwardly appear to have Gulf Arabic dependent pronouns suffixed to them. However, I believe that these forms, despite their likeness in form to Arabic, should not be analysed as a noun-pronoun-construction with an affixed first person singular pronoun, which is the case of Gulf Arabic *uḫt-i* "my sister" and *bint-i* "my daughter". In frequently occurring examples in my material it is clear that most of my consultants consider these words to be unaffixed and independent forms:

(13a)	wāhed	**binti**	kabīr	sawwi	arūs	walad	māl	ana
	one	**daughter**	old	LV	marriage	son	POSS	1SG

"The older daughter married my son"

Context: B1 explains that her sister-in-law has two daughters, and that the older one is married to B1's son.

(13b)	bādēn	hāda	**ukti**	māl	ana	bāba
	then	DEM	**sister**	POSS	1SG	boss

"Then [there was] my boss' sister"

Context: D4 lists the inhabitants in her old boss' home.

I believe that the form *binti* in example 13a should simply be considered a phonological variant of the GPA word *bint*. These two forms occur in my material 39 and 32 times respectively, both apparently with the lexical meaning "daughter". The word *ukti* occur 47 times in my material, without a phonological counterpart **ukt*, and as such seems to be the most common GPA word for "sister"; but there is also a phonological variant *uḫti* with the velar fricative of the Arabic word preserved, which occur 12 times. This supposed reanalysis of the suffix *–i* from a grammatical component in the superstratum to the last sound in the stem of an independent word is in accordance with one of the definitions given for a pidgin

explained in the theory chapter, that a pidgin is a language characterized by pronounced lack of inflectional morphology and has a strong preference for analytic structures (Romaine 1988:25-31).

The main reason for these forms' prevalence in GPA is, I believe, simply that kinship terms in normal discourse have relational referents. Thus, the unaffixed Gulf Arabic equivalents are rarely heard by the language learner, and the more common, affixed forms therefore become the main input. These forms are then reanalysed as simple unaffixed stems and in turn used as the basis in the creation of GPA.

Another possible reason for the prevalence of some of these forms, including *binti* and *ukti*, could be some speakers' difficulty of pronouncing final consonant clusters, for example due to restrictions on these in their mother tongues. If this is the case, then it is likely that the selection of the presumed prosthetic vowel *-i* has its basis in the frequent occurrence of forms with a final *–i,* that is the first person singular affixed pronoun, in the superstrate language.

A similar example, though not a possessive, illustrates that such reanalysis seems to have taken place with several GPA words. It occurs in the interview with A1, who appears to have reanalysed Gulf Arabic *ʿiṭa* "to give" plus affixed dependent case second person singular masculine pronoun *–k* as a simple verb meaning "to give":

(14) minni rijāl **yātik** mišān hurma
here man **give** to woman
"Here, the man gives to the woman"
Context: A1 explains different dowry customs.

Smart lists affixed personal pronouns as a part of GPA grammatical inventory, attesting it in his material, and claims that it is most commonly used as suffixed to *māl*, giving the following example (Smart 1990:94):

(15) ḥurma **māl-ak**
woman POSS-2SG.M.DEP
"your wife"

If I had found similar usage to that in example 15 in my material, it would weaken the hypothesis that the words similar in form to Gulf Arabic words with affixed pronouns have been reanalysed as simple stems in GPA, as this example clearly shows a grammatical analysis on part of the speaker of *–ak* as a separate semantic component, since *māl* is also being used frequently without a suffix. It would also weaken my hypothesis that only reflexes of the Gulf Arabic independent pronouns are functional as pronouns in GPA. However, I have not found a single instance of this usage in my transcripts and it is tempting to attribute Smart's findings to his material being written by native Arabs as a parody of GPA speakers.

The one example that would appear to an Arabic speaker to conform to this pattern is speaker E2, who commonly uses *māl hu* "of him/her" rather than the common GPA pronoun *māl huwa* "of him/her":

(16)	pi	hināk	bēt	baʾad	māl	arbāb	**māl**	**hu**
	EXPL	there	house	also	POSS	boss	**POSS**	**3SG**

"Her boss's house is also there".

Context: E2 explains that her relative works and lives in al-Hayar, close to her sponsor.

However, E2 has been married to a local for several years, and is probably more susceptible to actual local dialect input than other GPA speakers. The form *hū*[13] is in fact a common third person singular independent pronoun (masculine as Gulf Arabic has gender distinctions) in this area (Johnstone 1967:66). With the first and second person she uses *māl ana* "of me" and *māl inte* "of you", thus placing her within the common GPA usage, only with a rarer reflex of the third person singular pronoun.

Smart himself acknowledges that some of his other recordings of affixed personal pronouns are probably not "true GP[A] usages" (Smart 1990:94), but either meant as jokes or adopted as an expression without analysing the suffix pronoun as a semantic element. As an example of the latter type he mentions *b-rūḥ-ah* "by himself". This example is interesting, as my material contains three examples of this expression, correctly used with a different affixed personal pronoun:

[13] The affixed pronoun is *–ah* or *–ih* (Johnstone 1967:66).

(17a) **berūhi** lāzim sawwi

(my)self must do

"I have to do it myself".

Context: A1 explains that as he is a bachelor, he cooks and cleans for himself.

And:

(17b) ana yerīd **brūhi**

1SG want **(my)self**

"I want one alone"

Context: E2 explains that she's saving to build a house just for herself and her two kids in the Philippines so as to avoid living with her family.

The word *berūhi/brūhi* here is clearly adapted from Gulf Arabi *b-rūḥ-i* "by myself", with a preposition *b-* "by" and an affixed pronoun *-i*"my" affixed to the noun *rūḥ* "self". This is the common way to express "myself" in Gulf Arabic. Just as with the relational terms *binti* and *ukti,* these usages do not necessarily mean that the speakers have analyzed the expression as referring grammatically to the first person singular. Since neither A1 nor E2 use the same form with another suffix or unaffixed, this cannot be determined.

Speaker D1 also uses a form of this word, *rūha*, which appears to be a shortening of the Gulf Arabic *b-rūḥ-ah* "by himself". She uses this to refer to both her husband, in example 17c, and to her daughter in example 17d, where the Gulf Arabic form would be *b-rūḥ-ha* "by herself" (Johnstone 1967:66):

(17c) ey yerīd sokol gēr, sokol wa[14] **rūha**

yes want work other work and/by (him)self

"Yes, he wants another job, to work by himself".

Context: D1 explains that her husband is trying to find some way to become self-employed.

(17d) huwa amsi~amsi, bādēn sīr dikān araf, bādēn ati pulūs sīr dikān amsi, **rūha**

3SG go~INT then go shop know then give money go shop walk self

[14] I am not sure whether D1 intends *wa* in the Gulf Arabic meaning "and" here, if she uses it as an independent preposition with the meaning "by" or if it is actually a phonological variation b<w here.

"She walks and walks. Also, she knows how to go to the store, you give her money and she walks to the store by herself".

Context: D1 explains that her 15 month old daughter has started walking while she has been away from her.

Technically, the two homonymous forms in 17c and 17d could be derived from *b-rūḥah* and *b-rūḥ-ha* respectively, as the latter with a loss of *b-* and reduction of pharyngealised /ḥ/ to /h/ would be *rūh-ha*, from which a merging of the two consecutive /h/ sounds would make the form *rūha*. In either case, grammatical gender does not seem to be marked in the speech of D1, and in all likelihood she considers *rūha* to be a set vocabulary item meaning "(him/her)self" rather than perceiving it as a form with an affixed pronoun.

Speaker B3 once repeats the word *brūḥā* as a confirmation directly after a Gulf Arabic speaker utters the word, which I believe could be simply imitation of the first speaker:

(17e)	wa	bint,	bint	waḥda,	**bi-**	**rūḥ**	**-a**[15],	ma	ʿind
	and	girl,	girl	alone	by-	self	-3SG.F.DEP,	NEG	with
	-ha			ḥad					
	-3SG.F.DEP			anyone					
	"So the girl is all alone, by herself, without anyone".								
	brūḥa[16],		ey						
	(her)self		yes						
	"By herself, yes".								

Again there is no contrastive use of an unaffixed form.

There are also other examples of isolated words which appear to have suffixed pronouns, i.e. example 18e in this chapter. I think that all these forms in all likelihood should be attributed to lexical borrowing as explained above.

4.2.2.3 Asyndetic possession with GPA pronouns

Asyndetic possessives constructions with GPA independent personal pronouns are found in my material, though not very commonly. These structures mostly occur in with kinship

[15] The first speaker is fluent in Gulf Arabic, but I cannot hear any /ha/ suffix after /ḥ/ here, which is probably due to the difficulty of a consonant sequence ḥ-h.
[16] Note also the approximation to a pharyngealised consonant /ḥ/.

terms and the word *bilād* "country, homeland", and so these usages may very well reflect the preference for synthetic possessive structures with inalienable nouns in Gulf Arabic. Note, however, that D4 in examples 18b and 18c refers to her former boss, not to her biological father:

(18a)	**ana**	**bilād**	pi	hāda	muskila	akel,	ma	pi	akel
	1SG	**country**	EXPL	DEM	problem	food	NEG	EXPL	food

"In my country there's this problem with food, there's no food".

Context: B2 explains her motivation for moving to the Gulf.

(18b)	bādēn,	**ana**	**bāba**	kell yōm-kell yōm	kalām	arabic	bādēn	ana	wājid	kalām
	then	1SG	father	all day~[17]	speech	Arabic	then	1SG	much	speak

"So then, **my boss** spoke Arabic to me every day so that I [learned to] speak a lot".

Context: D4 explains how she learned Arabic.

But D4 also uses the *māl*-construction for the same concept:

(18c)	bādēn	pi	muskila,	dāḫel	**bēt**	**māl**	**bāba**	**māl**	**ana**
	then	EXPL	problem	in	house	POSS	boss	POSS	1SG

"Then there was a problem in **my boss's house**".

Context: D4 explains why she quit her job in Sharjah.

The asyndetic pronominal constructions are more common with the first person singular pronoun *ana*, but the usage is not restricted to this:

(18d)	inte	hibbek	**inte**	**bilād**,	sah?
	2SG	love	**2SG**	**country**	true

"You love your country, right?"

Context: B1 explains that she would rather live in Sri Lanka, if it were economically feasible.

Friendship relations are, as mentioned under 4.1.3, within the domain of the synthetic possessive in Gulf Arabic, and my material has one example of this:

[17] Since GPA does not have a productive definite article, I see this as a potential example of productive reduplication, where this means "every day" parallel to Gulf Arabic *kill yōm* "every day", where as a simple *kill yōm*, though not used by this speaker, is used by others to mean "all day", that is, parallel to Gulf Arabic *kill il-yōm*.

(18e) awwal fi ḫalli wahad **ana** **sadīki**[18] bēt

before TAM leave one 1SG friend house

"Before, I left [them] at one of my friends' house".

Context: C2 explains what she did for childcare before her daughter was old enough to take care of her son.

Although this asyndetic usage may be influenced by an alienable/inalienable distinction in Gulf Arabic, the distinction is not applicable as a grammatical rule for GPA given the much more numerous counter-examples. If one were to accept the explanation of the idiosyncratic pronoun systems given for the *māl ana sadīg* type structures discussed under 4.2.3.2, then these usages could be seem as simplified variants of this.

These usages are also typically connected to individual speakers, such as D4 who uses the phrase *ana bāba* 17 times out of the 18 times it occurs in my material[19]. Interestingly, they seem to be used exclusively by women.

4.2.3 Possessive use of *māl* in Gulf Pidgin Arabic

4.2.3.1 Possessives with nouns as possessors

The extensive use of *māl* to mark possessions is a GPA feature that is noted by both Smart and other foreigner talk renderings of GPA. The possessives with *māl* function in a similar way to the analytic possessive construction in Gulf Arabic discussed above.

As in Gulf Arabic, the construction can be used to indicate a possessive relation between two nouns or that of a noun and a pronoun. When the possessor is a noun, the word order of Gulf Arabic is normally retained, as in example 19a:

(19a) yimkin sohār rūh, sadīk, **bēt** **māl** **sadīk**, kullu sadīk yigi[20]

maybe Ṣoḥār go friend **house** **POSS** **friend,** all friend come

"Sometimes we go to a friend's house in Ṣoḥār, all our friends come [there]"

Context: C4 explains what he does on his days off.

[18] Note also the remnant of the suffix pronoun in the word *sadīki*.
[19] The remaining one is used by D1. *ana bilād*, on the other hand, is used three times, twice by B2 and once by D1.
[20] Both the settled Omani pronunciation of /g/ for /j/ and the beduin /y/ for /j/ seem quite common in Buraimi GPA.

This type of construction with a primarily possessive meaning is rare in my material, accounting for only 14 out of the 234 usages of *māl* (6 %).

Example 19b seems to indicate that the internal word order in the noun phrase is not necessarily fixed, as it displays a [*māl* – possessed – possessor] structure, unlike any of the pronominal examples:

(19b)	**māl**	**ukti**	**hāda**	**riyāl**	āti	halīb
	POSS	**sister**	**this**	**man**	give	milk

"My husband's sister breastfeeds [her]"

Context: D1 explains who takes care of her little daughter while she works in the Gulf.

Here as well, the head of the phrase must necessarily be *ukti* "sister", as a man cannot be expected to breastfeed. As the context is unambiguous, this might allow for a freer word order, which might be used by the consultant here to put emphasis on the sister.

4.2.3.2 Possessives with pronouns as possessors

The GPA possessive constructions with personal pronoun possessors, on the other hand, are very common, and account for 127 out of the 234 occurences of *māl* in the material, which equals 54 % of all usages. These constructions may look unfamiliar to the eye of the Arabic speaker because of the reflex of the Arabic independent pronouns placed after *māl* (see 4.2.1). The word order of this structure is, however, most commonly identical to that of Gulf Arabic. An example of such a construction can be seen in example 20a:

(20a)	kēf	**bilād**	**māl**	**inte**	arūs	ġāli	hināk?
	how	country	POSS	2SG	wedding	expensive	there

"Is it expensive to get married in your country?"

Context: A1 and I discuss wedding customs.

This type of construction also frequently occurs in representations of Gulf Arabic foreigner talk, or what I have also called native Arab speakers' version of GPA, as Wiswall (2002:13)

points out. Example 19b is from the popular Emirati animation series "Freej"[21] ("The Neighbourhood"), season 1, episode 4, where the Indian shopkeeper character exclaims:

(20b) **hurma** **māl** **ana** mōt!

woman POSS 1SG dead

"My wife is dead!"

In Gulf Arabic, the sequence in a similar possessive construction is invariably [possessed object – possessive exponent – possessor] as mentioned under 4.1.3. Although this is the most common word order in my GPA material, it appears that the phrase-internal word order is flexible. The word order [*māl* – possessor – possessed] occurs ten times in the material, half of which are produced by a single speaker, A3:

(21) salīm **māl** **ana** **sadīg** la[22]

Salīm **POSS** **1SG** **friend** Q

"Salīm is my friend, right?"

Context: A3 clarifies his relationships with A2, who is his brother, and A1, who is his friend.

In examples 22a and 22b, the word order is the opposite of the normal Gulf Arabic structure, which is [possessor – *māl* – possessed]. This structure is very rare in my material and only occurs with terms of kinship:

(22a) hāda **huwa** **māl** **hurma**

this **3SG** **POSS** **woman**

"This is his wife".

Context: B2's husband, who is also B1's brother, shows up outside the door and peers inside to say hello. B1 introduces him to us by indicating her sister-in-law B2 that sits on the floor beside her and saying this.

(22b) alhīn **ana** **māl** **bint** tālīm arabi

now **1SG** **POSS** **daughter** learning Arabic

"Now my daughter is learning Arabic"

Context: C2 talks about her own language learning process, and explains that since her daughter learns Arabic at school, she benefits by being able to ask her about it and learn from her.

[21] For the interested reader, this series provides numerous easily accessible examples of oral Gulf Arabic foreigner talk.

[22] The name in this example has been changed to protect the consultant's anonymity.

However, word order is apparently not completely free within the noun phrase, as the possessive exponent *māl* does not appear at the end of any such phrase. This could be so as not to create potential confusion of phrase limits within the sentence.

A possible explanation of the alternating word order is that these relatively infrequently occurring structures are in fact individual speakers employing an alternative pronoun system where, for instance, *ana māl* or *māl ana* are grammaticalised as separate possessive pronouns in the same way as for example "my" in English, and that this is to be placed before the possessed item analogous to, say, English (or Nubi, see 4.4). The argument is also supported by the lack of examples in the material of *māl* in a phrase-final position. This seems to be a likely possibility regarding A3, who is consistent in using this word order in his possessive constructions. However, other speakers alternate their usage with the more common [possessed – *māl* – possessor] structure.

All in all, possessive usage of *māl* accounts for 60 % of its total usage in the material.

4.2.4 Semantic constraints on the use of *māl* in GPA?

The tendency in Arabic dialects to avoid using the possessive exponent with inalienable human relationships is not a valid constraint for GPA. On the contrary, these constructions are very frequently used to refer to the "possession" of parents, siblings and children, despite their presumed absence in the linguistic superstrate input. Example 22b above and example 23 illustrate this:

(23) **baba** **māl** **ana** fi mōt

father **POSS** **1SG** TAM dead

"My father is dead".

Context: E2 talks about her family.

The use of *māl* in GPA does not, as in Gulf Arabic, appear to vary with the etymological origin of the possessed object in the way that it is suggested that it does in Gulf Arabic. Look at example 24, in which the consultant is undecided whether to use the English-origin term *visa* "visa" or the Arabic-origin *taʾšira* "visa":

(24) olēn kayf hāda māl... **visa** **māl...** **taʾšira** **māl** **ʾumān,** la?

now how DEM POSS **visa** **POSS** **visa** **POSS** **Oman** Q

"Now how does it work with a visa for... a visa for Oman, right?"

Context: A2 is explaining the visa situation on the Buraimi/al-Ain border, and asks me this rhetorically before explaining how it does work.

4.2.5 Usage of *māl* to classify nouns

In addition to the use of *māl* as a possessive marker, the semantically extended function of classification of a less specific noun (Brustad 2000:80-81), which is found in Gulf Arabic (see 4.1.7), is quite common in my GPA material, occurring 43 times or 18 % of all usages. This is often used in a similar function as an adjective, as in example 25a, where the classification gives a further description of the type of visa being discussed. An alternative structure here would be to use the adjective "Omani", as I have done in the translation, rather than the literal "visa of Oman". The fundamental meaning of *māl* here is still one of association.

(25a)	**ta'šira**	**māl**	**umān**	nafar-āt	ma	yesīr	dubay
	visa	**POSS**	**Oman**	person-PL	NEG	go	Dubai

"People with Omani visas can't go to Dubai".

Context: A2 explains the visa rules for Indian nationals on the Buraimi/al-Ain border.

(25b)	ana	awwal	fi,	awwal	yijlis	andel	**sandūg**	**māl**	**cash**
	1SG	first	TAM	first	sit	PREP[23]	**box**	**POSS**	**cash**

"At first I was sitting at the cash register"

Context: E1 tells the story of his first days in Oman, starting out as a cashier in the store where he still works as an accountant.

The classification function is commonly used with what appears to be adjectives denoting nationality and religion, although it might be more correct to analyse them as nouns derived from Gulf Arabic adjectives. In either case, it is interesting to note that there seems to be a predominance of what might be seen as inalienable concepts such as in examples 25c and 25d:

(25c)	yāni	**isem**	**māl**	**hindi**	hāda
	well	**name**	**POSS**	**India**	DEM

"These are actually Indian names"

Context: After introducing themselves, I ask C4 whether their names are Christian, and this is his slightly dismissive reply.

[23] Possibly from Gulf Arabic → *ʿinda l-* "by the".

(25d) **nafar-āt** **māl** **muslim**

person-PL **POSS** **muslim**

"Muslim people"

Context: A2 explains that Urdu is spoken also in India by the Muslims there.

4.2.6 *māl* as a preposition

In addition to possession and classification, *māl* is commonly used by speakers in a more prepositional sense. I have classified 50 occurrences of *māl*, or 21 %, as prepositional, although it should be noted the distinction between this function and that of qualification is in some instances blurry. This function is not, however, parallel to any of the more prepositional meanings listed in Holes' glossary, where *māl* as discussed above has an associative meaning semantically close to the possessive exponent. Rather, I believe that the GPA preposition *māl* should be considered separately from the possessive marker, as the examples indicate that this might be simply a homonym. This word could possibly be derived from the Gulf Arabic preposition *maʿ* "with", and a remnant of the definite *ʾal* as the final "l"[24]. The word appears to cover a large semantic space within the prepositional domain, as illustrated in examples 26a, 26b, 26c and 26d, where it can be translated as "about", "to", "in" and "with" respectively:

(26a) bādēn bint araf ziyāda **māl** **bilād**

then daughter know much **PREP** **country**

"Thus my daughter knows a lot about her country".

Context: C2 explains that while her young son was born in the Gulf, her nine-year old daughter was born in India and lived there the first years of her life, and so feels more at home whenever they go back for holidays than does her son.

(26b) binti fi āti **māl** **walad**

daughter TAM give **PREP** **son**

"My daughter gives [it] to my son"

Context: C2 explains that in the mornings, she leaves food ready for her children so that her daughter can feed her young son while C2 herself is at work.

(26c) ana fi zeyn **māl** **hindi**

1SG COP good **PREP** **India**

"I'm well [when I'm] in India"

[24] The definitive article as a productive grammatical feature does not exist in my GPA material.

Context: C4 stresses that he is not compelled to live in the Gulf; he has chosen to do so and continues to do so out of his own free will.

(26d)	**māl**	**malābis**	ana	fi	šugl
	PREP	**clothes**	1SG	TAM	work

"I work with clothes"

Context: A2 answers the question of what he does for a living.

However, several of these usages are somehow related to the concept of belonging, and as such could alternatively represent functional extensions of the uses of *māl* discussed under 4.2.3 and 4.2.5.

4.3 The GPA possessive system – separate and simplified

The normal way of marking possession in GPA, whether of alienable or inalienable traits or relationships, is by use of the possessive marker *māl*, which is indeclinable for gender. If the word *ḥagg* is in fact a possessive exponent in the Gulf Arabic of this part of the Persian Gulf area, then it has not been borrowed into active use in GPA. More often than not, the possessive constructions follow the regular pattern of the Gulf Arabic analytic possessive, [possessed – *māl* – possessor]. However, it appears that GPA the phrase-internal word order may vary, and the listener relies on context and reference in order to determine who the possessor is and who or what is possessed.

In Gulf Arabic a pronoun in a possessive construction is always rendered as an affixed dependent case pronoun. The GPA pronominal system only has independent pronouns, and affixed personal pronouns as semantic units are not attested in my material. However, some affixed Gulf Arabic pronouns seem to have been reanalysed as part of word stems in GPA.

The *māl* construction in GPA is used for all possessive relations, including those indicating intimate and mutual inalienable kinship. In some cases, an asyndetic possessive similar, though not identical to the Gulf Arabic synthetic possessive structure, occurs, but it is not consistently used even by individual speakers. Thus, there is no such domain as Harning (1980:161) describes reserved for the synthetic possessive, something which is claimed to be the case in all Arabic dialects. As such, GPA seems to have developed a divergent, separate system which is grammatically simplified, having almost without exception only one type of possessive construction as compared to any Arabic dialect, which has two. The clearly dominant structure of Gulf Arabic, the synthetic possessive, is not in productive use. In the

case of the possessives, GPA thus resembles a separate language variety with a unified standard divergent from that of Gulf Arabic.

4.4 Possessives in other Arabic-based pidgins/creoles

The development in GPA described under 4.3 is parallel to the one having taken place in the Arabic-based creole Nubi which is spoken primarily in Kenya and Uganda, where an analytic possessive exponent *ta* is used for both alienable and inalienable possessions with nominal and pronominal possessors (Diem 1986: 241), although for inalienable relations *ta* can be omitted (Owens 1997:153), thus somewhat preserving the original Arabic division. In the Equatorial Sudanese pidgin[25] Juba Arabic, extensive use of the local possessive exponents *ta* and *bitā* is mentioned by Watson 1989:106 as a characteristic feature of the variety. Additionally, they are obligatory between a quantity marker and what is being quantified, as in *kilo ta laham* "a kilo of meat" (ibid.). This function is reminiscent, though not similar, to the "*māl* of qualification" which is so common in GPA.

Like GPA, Nubi does not differentiate between subject and object personal pronouns, having only a set of independent pronouns. However, in Nubi there is a separate set of possessive pronouns that are derived from the possessive exponent *ta* and a remnant of the dialectal Arabic affixed pronoun, i.e. *táki* "your (sg.)" where *-ki* originates from the dialectal Arabic *-ki* "2SG.F.DEP" (Owens 1997:153,156). This is also the case in the Western branch of the African Arabic based creoles, with the same form given in Turku as *anaki* "your.SG.POSS" from Chadian Arabic hanā-ki "of-2SG.F.DEP" (Owens 1997:156), as well as in Juba Arabic (Watson 1989:106). This development may be seen as a parallel to the usage of some GPA speakers that appear to employ a set of distinct possessive pronouns, as discussed under 4.2.1.2.

[25] It is common to refer to Juba Arabic as a pidgin as opposed to the creole of Nubi. However, Watson (1989:97) disagrees and contends that the variety should be considered a creole.

5: Negation

5.1 Negation in Gulf Arabic

5.1.1 General

The negation system in Gulf Arabic contains three separate classes, each with its own particle(s) of negation. These are perfect and imperfect verb as well as so-called pseudo-verb negation with *ma*, imperative verb negation with *la* and non-verbal predicate negation with *mū* or *mub* (Holes 1990:71-73).

5.1.2 Perfect and imperfect verb negation

Perfect and imperfect verbs are negated by placing the particle *ma* directly in front of the verb. Example 1a is from Qafisheh (1977:238):

(1a)	lēš	**ma**	**faham-t**	šayy?
	why	NEG	understand-2SG.M.PRF	thing
	"Why didn't you understand anything?"			

The next example, with an imperfect verb, is from Holes (1990:72):

(1b)	**ma**	**t-išrab**	ḥalīb
	NEG	2SG.M.IPF-drink	milk
	"You don't drink milk."		

5.1.3 Negation of pseudo-verbs

The so-called pseudo-verbs, the more common of which are the syntactic expletive *fīh* (see 6.1.1) as well as *ʿind* "with" which is used to express "to have", are etymologically prepositional phrases, but are negated by *ma* rather than the non-verbal negations *mu* or *mub.* Thus they are called pseudo-verbs, although they are not conjugated in person and number as are regular Gulf Arabic verbs. Example 2 is from Holes (2001:410):

(2)	**mā**	**fih**	šay[26]
	NEG	EXPL	thing
	"It's no trouble at all."		

[26] Holes transcribes *šay* "thing" with a single y whereas Qafisheh in example 1a uses –yy.

5.1.4 Imperative verb negation

The only verbal negation which is not constructed with the particle *ma* is the negated imperative, which is formed by placing the negative imperative particle *la* immediately before the verb. In contrast to other modern Arabic vernaculars, such as Cairene, *la* is the only particle used for indicating prohibition in Gulf Arabic (Brustad 2000:294), as in example 3 from Holes (1990:72):

(3)	**la**	**ta-ḥḍur-ī**	il-muḥāḍra
	NEG	2SG -attend-F.IMP	the-lecture
	"Don't attend the lecture".		

5.1.5 Negation of non-verbal predicates

Non-verbal negation (what Brustad 2000:281 calls "predicate negation") in Gulf Arabic is formed by placing the particle *mu, mū* or *mub*[27] in front of the word being negated. Example 4a is from Holes (1990:73):

(4a)	huwa	**mub**	**zēn**
	3SG	NEG	good
	"He's no good".		

Example 4b is from Qafisheh (1977:242):

(4b)	huwa	**mū**	**d-drēwil**
	3SG	NEG	the-driver
	"He is not the driver".		

5.1.6 Other negations

There are also other negation particles in Gulf Arabic, which originally belong to the repertoire of Standard Arabic, and as such gives dialectal speech a more formal quality when used. The most common one is the adjective negation *ġēr,* used to express the notion of "non-", as illustrated by example 5 from Holes 1990:74:

(5)	ḥaḍar-t	il-ijtimāʿ	bi	ṣifa	**ġēr**	**rasmiyya**
	attend-1SG.PRF	the-meeting	in	capacity	NEG	official

[27] Other regional varieties such as *mhub* are reported by Johnstone 1967:157. In some areas where *mu* is used it has a feminine form *mi* (Holes 1990:73).

"I attended the meeting in an unofficial capacity".

5.2 Negation in Gulf Pidgin Arabic

5.2.1 General

Smart (1990:108-109) claims that GPA has retained the Gulf Arabic divide of negating nouns and adjectives with *mū/mub* and *ma* with verbs and pseudo-verbs, as well as that the adjective negation *ġēr* is in very common use in the meaning of "non-".

Based on my data, it seems that the Gulf Arabic system of negation which is described under 5.1 has broken down in GPA. It appears to be in the process of being replaced by a system of two negations, *ma* in front of verbs as well as in front of the expletive *fi* (see 6.1.1), and a new negation particle *mafi* used for non-verbal negation as well as for imperative verbs. However, *mafi* is sometimes also used to negate verbs, and so the reduction process may potentially be in progress towards a system of one negation only. This is similar to the system in other Arabic-based pidgins and creoles which do not distinguish verbal and nominal negation (see 5.4).

Since I analyse *mafi* as a single morphological unit, I will transcribe it as one word in the cases where I interpret it as a new negation particle. However, in the case of the GPA negative expletive (5.2.3), which is the etymological origin of this particle, I retain the transcription *ma fi* and gloss it as a negation (NEG) followed by an expletive (EXPL) as in Gulf Arabic.

5.2.2 Negation of non-imperative verbs

Mostly, non-imperative verbs are negated by *ma* such as in Gulf Arabic. Out of 343 negated non-imperative verbs in my material, 289 are negated by *ma* as in the following examples, making it the chosen negation in 84 % of negative verbal structures:

(7a)	bādēn	ana	gūl	hāda	bāba,	ana	**ma**	**tibba**[28]	istogol
	then	1SG	say	DEM	boss	1SG	NEG	want	work

"Then I told my boss that I wanted to quit".

Context: D4 explains how she left her job in Ras al-Khayma.

[28] Note D4's preference of the second person form of the Gulf Arabic word *baġa/yaba* "to want" instead of the common GPA form *yerīd* "to want".

(7b)	**ma**	**araf**	ziyāda	kalām,	bas	hāda	šuġl	fi,	la
	NEG	know	too_much	speech	just	DEM	work	EXPL	Q

"I don't know how to speak all that much, I just know these work terms, right?"

Context: A3 makes excuses for what he sees as his poor command of Arabic.

However, a sufficient proportion of the verbs in the material are negated by the alternative negation *mafi* for us to be able to suggest that this also is a valid verbal negation for GPA. In total, 54 out of the 343 verbal negations, or 16 %, are negated by this particle, and it is used by several different speakers. A semantic pattern for the preference of this variant is not clear to me; however, it might to some extent be related to the possible TAM function of *fi* (see 6.2.4). Another option is that an alternative system of one negation particle for all uses is spreading, as a part of the assumed simplification of grammar taking place in a pidginisation process. In support of the last argument, I will present some examples where *mafi* is used with verbs that appear marked for aspect as well as with verbs that appear unmarked.

With a past tense meaning:

(8)	ah,	jamīl.	inta	**mafi**	**rūh**?
	yes	beautiful	2SG	NEG	go

"Yes, it's nice. You haven't been?"

Context: C2 seems a little surprised when I ask her what al-Ain is like.

With a hypothetical meaning:

(9)	ḫamsa	sana	nafar	**mafi**	**araf**	hāza,	mafi
	five	year	person.SG	NEG	know	DEM	NEG

"Even after five years a person wouldn't know this, oh no".

Context: A1 praises my linguistic skills, saying that it is impossible that I have learned my Arabic during my one month in Buraimi.

With a habitual meaning:

(10)	bādēn	alhamdulilla	kullu	jēn	kabbar	bādēn	ana	**mapi**	**pakkar**
	then	praise.be.to.God	all	well	tell	then	1SG	NEG	think

"Then, he tells me that 'praise God, everything is well', and I don't worry about it anymore".

Context: D1 explains that whenever she worries about her little daughter, she calls her husband for reassurance.

With a simple imperfect meaning:

(11a) arabi **mapi** **hebbi**, arabi gūl hāda šaytān

Arab NEG like Arab say DEM devil

"Arabs don't like [dogs], they say that they are [like] the devil".

Context: B3 complains that it is hard to keep a watchdog with Arab neighbours close by.

(11b) **mafi** **hebb** siyāda diyāy u laham, la, **mafi** **habb**

NEG like too-much chicken and meat no NEG like

"I don't really like chicken and meat, no, I don't like it".

Context: E2 explains that fish is her favourite food.

5.2.3 Negation of expletive *fi*

The syntactic expletive *fi* is commonly in use in GPA and is negated similarly in GPA as in the Gulf Arabic structure, with the negation *ma* immediately preceding the expletive as in example 12:

(12) ana mālūm, **ma** **fi** **muškila** ana

1SG known NEG EXPL problem 1SG

"I understand; I don't have a problem with that".

Context: C1 reassures his Omani supervisor that he understands why he is being interviewed.

This same structure is also very commonly used to express the idea of not having something, parallel to GA *ma ʿind* "not have". *ʿind* is only very sporadically in use in my material, and constructions with *fi* are preferred:

(13) ana **ma** **fi** **bēt**

1SG NEG EXPL house

"I don't have a house".

Context: B3 is disillusioned that after 22 years of working in the Gulf, she still hasn't been able to build a house at home in Sri Lanka.

5.2.4 Imperative verb negation

According to Smart, it appears that negative imperatives in GPA are negated consistently by *mafi*. In my material the negative imperative is hardly used, and I have only found it in one

example where it is presented as a rendering of the speech of another speaker. In this example, however, *mafi* is used:

(14)	alhīn	fi	bint	kalām	la	mama	**mafi**	**rūh**	šugl,	yiglis	bēt,
	now	TAM	daughter	say	no	mother	NEG	go.IMP	work	sit	house
	yiglis	bēt									
	sit	house									

"Now my daughter is saying: "No, Mama, don't go to work, stay home, stay home!"

Context: C2 ponders how long she will be able to keep working as her children are already starting to protest.

Interestingly, example 14 also provides examples of a *y*-prefixed imperative *yiglis* "to sit" (c.f. 6.2.3 for a discussion on this prefix).

Related to the imperative use, it seems that *mafi* is also often used as a verbal negation (see under 5.2.2) whenever the negation expresses inability:

(15)	ana	jaud	same~same	hāda	asān	bilād	yistokol.	**mafi**
	1SG	husband	same~INT	DEM	for	homeland	work	NEG
	ijlis!	yistokol bād						
	sit	work	more					

"My husband as well will work there. We can't rest! We must work more".

Context: D1 explains that after she returns to Indonesia, she will be working in the rice fields alongside her husband.

5.2.5 Negation of non-verbal predicates

These phrases are negated quite consistently with *mafi* in my material. The Gulf Arabic nominal negation *mū* is only used three times, once even negating a verb, which would require *ma* in Gulf Arabic, suggesting that this system has broken down in GPA:

(16)	ahel	māl	ana?	**mū**	**yāraf**	arabi	hum[29]
	family	POSS	1SG	NEG	know	Arabic	they

"My family? They don't know any Arabic".

Context: A1 misinterprets a question about his linguistic ability to be related to his family in Pakistan.

[29] Note the uncommon use of a plural personal pronoun *hum* here.

In my data, *mafi* is used to negate non-verbal predicates, but contrary to the claims of Smart (1990:100 and passim.), *fi* is not necessarily used in comparative positive constructions to mark the copula, as is clear from the following examples (cf 6.2.1):

(17a) ah, **mādam** **zēn**

yes madame good

"Yes, Madame is nice"

(17b) bas hāda... riyyāl **mafi** **zēn**

but DEM man NEG good

"But the husband is not nice"

Context: B1 describes the family with whom one of her friends works.

Below are some examples of the types of non-verbal negation which are found in my material sorted by lexical category:

5.2.5.1 Negation of adjectives

(18a) minni **mafi** tamām

here NEG nice

"This place isn't nice".

Context: B3 complains about life in Buraimi.

Example 18b is contrastive:

(18b) imārāt ġāli, šuy ġāli, ʾumān alhīn **mafi** **ġāli**

emirates expensive little expensive Oman now NEG expensive

"The Emirates are expensive, a little expensive. Oman nowadays isn't expensive".

Context: C5 explains why he can't be bothered with getting Emirati visit visas anymore.

5.2.5.2 Negation of adverbs

(19a) **mafi** **kull** **yōm**

NEG every day

"Not every day".

Context: C4 explains that the pharmacy is only open at night once every second week, as all the pharmacies in Buraimi take turns on night duty.

(19b) hāda.. "saba l-kēr", hāda wēn, hāda wēn? **mapi** **hini**

DEM morning the-goodness, DEM where, DEM where? NEG here

"This "sabah al-ẖēr" (good morning), where do they say that, where? Not here".

Context: B1 inquires about the geographical spread of this Arabic greeting, which she has heard among non-Omani Arabs.

(19c) fi sahīr dukān. sweyya pulūs, **mapi** **wājid**

EXPL small shop little money NEG much

"There was a small shop, [I spent] a little money, not much".

Context: D4 assures that though she doesn't shop much, she made some purchases when living in Ras al-Khayma.

5.2.5.3 Negation of nouns

Negated nouns are less common than negated adjectives and adverbs in my material. However, those constructions which are used are consistently negated by *mafi*, as in the following examples:

(20a) same-same avocado. **mapi** **avocado**, tāni. ma yaraf, hini pi

same~INT avocado NEG avocado other NEG know here EXPL

"It's like avocado, but it's not avocado, it's something else. I don't know; they have it here."

Context: B1 tries to explain which fruit she has made juice of, but cannot remember its name.

(20b) hāda fi riyāl bas **mapi...** **arūs**?

DEM EXPL man but NEG marriage

"Do you have a man, only that you're not married?"

Context: D1 inquires about my personal life.

5.2.5.4 Negation of participles

As participles I have counted words which etymologically are participles in Gulf Arabic, and which are used in a similar way in GPA[30]. With the notable exception of the frequent use of *mawjūd* "existent", used as in example 21b, these are quite rare.

(21a) hāda namūna aleyn hāda **mafi** **mustamil**, hāda gadīm

this type now DEM NEG used this old

"Nowadays these aren't used, this is old".

Context: C1 shows off an old-fashioned dagger in his souvenir shop.

[30] These words may also simply be analysed as adjectives in GPA.

(21b) **mafi** **mawjūd**

NEG existing

"They are not here"

Context: C3 denies that his parents are with him in the Gulf.

5.2.5.5 Negation of prepositions

One sentence in my material represents what may be interpreted as a negated prepositional phrase, although an alternative interpretation would be that it is in fact another adverb. The word in question is *alatūl*, from the Gulf Arabic prepositional phrase *ʿalā ṭūl* "directly", which D1 has doubtlessly learned as a set phrase:

(22) huwa bas madrasa kabīr **mapi** **alatūl,** ma yerīd

3SG just school big NEG directly NEG want

"He won't go straight to high school, he doesn't want that".

Context: D1 talks about her son who wants to quit school to help his parents and siblings financially.

5.2.6 Representation of the negation *ġēr* "non-"

Smart claims that *ġēr* in both its Gulf Arabic meanings of "other" and "non-" respectively, is a frequently occurring word in GPA. He gives this example (1990:109):

(23) **ġēr** **amrīkī**

NEG American

"non-American"

However, in my material *ġēr* does not occur in the meaning "non-". Instead, the consultants use the all-round GPA negation *mafi*. Example 24 is strikingly unlike a valid Gulf Arabic structure, with its separate use of the expletive *fi* which clearly shows that *mafi* has taken on its own meaning:

(24) fi muslim, fi **mafi** **muslim**

EXPL muslim EXPL NEG muslim

"There are Muslims and there are non-Muslims".

Context: D2 answers a question of whether there are many Muslims in her native Sri Lanka.

In the meaning of "other", however, *ġēr* and the phonetic variant *gēr* occur several times in the material:

(25) bas hāda balad pi, mapi inglīsi, pi **kalām.. gēr**, sa?

but DEM country EXPL NEG English EXPL speech other Q

"But in that country, there is, not English, there is another language, right?"

Context: B1 inquires about the linguistic situation in Sweden.

5.3 The GPA negations – a reduced system

In my material, then, the Gulf Arabic negations *mu* and *la* are not used. Instead, *ma* is used to negate finite verbs and the expletive *fi*, and *mafi* is used for non-verbal predicate negations, as well as for negative imperatives. Additionally, *mafi* can also be used to negate finite verbs, which may be a developing extension of the scope of this negation, and a step towards a system with only one negation.

5.4 Negation in other Arabic-based pidgins and creoles

In Juba Arabic, the negative marker is *ma* in preverbal position (Tusco 1995:425). In Ugandan Nubi, the negative marker is either *ma*, which may be placed in all positions, or *mafi*, which normally occurs in a sentence-final position. The system in Turku is essentially similar (Wellens 2005:369). In Kenyan Nubi the negation is *ma* (Owens 1997:153), which is apparently used preverbally (Wellens 2005:369). There does not appear to be a distinct nominal negation in any variety, thus indicating a similar development to that which I have described for GPA.

In both Ugandan Nubi (Wellens 2005:175) and Juba (Tusco 1995:428), the negative imperative requires a person marker *ta* (singular) and *takum* (plural) after the negation, as in this example from Nubi (Wellens 2005:175):

ma **ta** gi- fadul wara ma haya

NEG ADR.SG PROG- remain behind with shame

"Do not stay behind with shame!"

Turku marks the negative imperative by *mafi* placed after the verb (Wellens 2005:364).

6: The copula and the verb

6.1 Gulf Arabic

6.1.1 Existential *fīh*[31]

In Gulf Arabic, as in many modern Arabic dialects, existence is frequently expressed by use of the so-called existential *fīh*, etymologically a prepositional phrase *fī-h* with the literal meaning "in it" which in this context is translatable by "there is; there are" (Holes 1990:72), as in the following example (ibid.:116):

(1) **fīh** māy lo la?
EXPL water or no
"Is there any water or not?"

The word *fīh* here functions as a dummy element, not fulfilling a semantic role, but ensuring the grammaticality of the existential sentence by holding the place of the structural predicate. This type of element, fulfilling a syntactic, but not a semantic role, is often called an expletive (Crystal 1997:127). The most common analysis of this type of sentence is that the dummy place holder is in the subject position. However, the expletive is etymologically a prepositional phrase, which is not considered to be a valid subject in an Arabic sentence. Thus, Moro's (2006:222) alternative theory of the expletive as a place holder for the predicate might be a more accurate analysis.

In the thesis, I will refer to Gulf Arabic *fīh* as a syntactic expletive, since it is an expletive fulfilling a syntactic role.

6.1.2 The copula in Gulf Arabic

The term "copula" is generally used to refer to an auxiliary or supportive item for a non-verbal predicate. An overt item that fulfils this function is called a full copula, whereas juxtaposition of subject and predicate is referred to as a zero copula. A full copula is often, but not necessarily, expressed by a verb (Stassen 2003:62).

Gulf Arabic does not have a present tense copula in simple non-verbal sentences of either eternal or only time-of-utterance validity (Holes 1990:36). In Stassen's terms, Gulf Arabic

[31] Alternative spellings in the literature are *fī* and *fih*. I have kept source transliteration in my examples.

has a zero copula. The nominal negations *mū* or *mub* mentioned under 5.1.1 are used to form negative copular sentences in the present tense. If the sentence is in the past tense, however, a perfect copula *kān* is used (Holes 1990:36; 122). *kān* is a verb, and is as such negated by the verbal negation *ma*.

6.1.3 The verb in Gulf Arabic

The verbal system in Gulf Arabic is complex. Finite verbs are either perfect or imperfect, and are conjugated for person, gender and number by prefixes, suffixes and circumfixes. There is also marking for active and passive voice. The future tense marker *b-* also functions as an irrealis mode marker, in addition to several other particles which are used to mark aspect. The non-finite verbal forms are the imperative which is also marked for person and gender, the active and passive participle and the verbal noun. For a thorough discussion on the verbal system of Gulf Arabic, I refer to Holes 1990:181-226.

6.2 Gulf Pidgin Arabic

6.2.1: *fi* as copula?

The Gulf Arabic syntactic expletive and prepositional phrase *fīh* covers an extended semantic range in its GPA form *fi*. In his attempt to analyse the GPA usage, Smart claims that *fi* in GPA is being used as a copula, and that this disproves Charles Ferguson's hypothesis on the lack of copula in pidgins, saying that "[i]n GP[A], however, *fī* is used as a copula, the direct opposite of the process described by Ferguson (1971:145-147), who hypothesizes the tendency to drop the copula in languages that use copulas (type A languages) in simplified speech" (Smart 1990:100-101).

Some of the examples listed in Smart's article, however, do not belong under the heading of "copula" as defined under 6.1.2, such as "existential use of the copula" (ibid.:101), which is the syntactic expletive *fi* used in precisely the same way as Gulf Arabic *fīh*, "copula with verbs" (ibid.: 102), as well as the examples of pre-verbal use of *fi* (see 6.2.4). "Other uses of the copula" appears primarily to refer to the use of *fi* to mean "to have" parallel to the usage of the Gulf Arabic preposition *ʿind* (see remark under 5.2.3). It seems that Smart has decided a priori that *fi* equals copula rather than studying the grammatical functions that it fulfils, which is what I will try to do below.

Smart provides one example, 2a, which shows *fi* being used as an actual copula,[32] as in the definition under 6.1.2 (Smart 1990:96):

(2a)	inta	**fī**	**kaḏḏāb**
	2SG	COP	liar
	"You are a liar"		

The following examples, 2b and 2c, are analysed by Smart as containing a copula. However, both of the sentences have other qualities than simple nominal sentences, and it should be taken into consideration that these might influence the use of *fi*.

The first is a conditional sentence. In Gulf Arabic, there are different rules for conditional sentences according to whether they are hypothetical or not (Holes 1990:29). In this example, there is no way of knowing whether *fi* could, perhaps, be intended to mark a hypothetical sentence, since we are not provided with a context or even an apodosis (Smart 1990:101):

(2b)	iḏa	hāḏa	**fī**	**ṣaḥīḥ**
	if	this	COP	true
	"If this is true"			

The next example is in the past tense, a tense where nominal sentences actually have a copula in Gulf Arabic, that is, *kān* "to be":

(2c)	awwal	asʿār	**fi**	**wājid**	**ġālī**
	before	prices\PL	COP	much	expensive
	"before prices were very high"				

In my material, examples of unambiguous copula uses are rare, and the norm in GPA seems to be to omit the copula in the same way as in Gulf Arabic. However the type of sentences as illustrated in 3a, 3b and 3c, where *fi* does function as a copula, occasionally occurs:

(3a)	huwa	**fi**	**bakistāni**,	ana	**fi**	**hindi**

[32] Smart's transcription seems to describe a variety with a much more complex phonology than what he himself describes for GPA (Smart 1990:88-92). This disparity seems to be a result of his examples being taken from a written corpus (note for example the use of emphatics and the rendering of interdentals and the voiced pharyngeal fricative /ʿ/)).

3SG COP Pakistani 1SG COP Indian

"He is Pakistani, I am Indian".

Context: A2 talks about himself and his friend A1.

(3b) ana **fi** **miskin**

1SG COP poor

"Poor me!"

Context: D1 says this after telling the story about how she missed out on seeing her youngest daughter taking her first steps.

(3c) ana **fi** **zeyn** māl hindi

1SG COP good PREP India

"I'm well [when I'm] in India"

Context: C4 explains that he lives in the Gulf by his own free will and is not compelled to do so.

The more commonly occurring variant of the non-verbal sentence, without copula, is illustrated in examples 4a and 4b, both with the exact same phrasing as in example 3a above:

(4a) la, **ana** **hindi**, la?

no 1SG Indian Q

"No, I'm Indian, see?"

Context: I mistakenly refer to A3 as "Pakistani", and he corrects me.

And:

(4b) **ana** **hindi** mafi hāda sekl

1SG Indian NEG DEM manner

"I am Indian, [so] it's not like that"

Context: C4 has admired my stamped-in Emirati visa-on-arrival, and explains that he himself needs to apply for a visa beforehand.

Refer also to 5.2.5 for contrastive examples.

In order to get an impression of the overall ratio of copular versus non-copular non-verbal sentences in the material, I have counted the occurrences of sentences of the type [personal pronoun – (*fi*) – adjective or participle of nationality or religion], as exemplified in 3a, 4a

and 4b. Out of 20 such sentences in total, 15 are without a *fi* copula, as examples 4a and 4b, whereas only 5 display this feature, as example 3a. This distributional rate is, I believe, indicative of the distribution of copula versus zero copula in other types of non-verbal sentences in my material as well.

The occurrences I have registered in my material are most likely influenced by the grammar of major GPA substrate languages where a full copula is in use, such as Urdu (Schmidt 1999:92-95) and Malayalam (Asher & Kumari 1997:96-97). However, in example 3b, a native Javanese speaker produces a non-verbal copular sentence, although her mother tongue has zero copula in such sentences. This example may indicate that the use of *fi* as copula occurs frequently enough to be considered a valid structure in GPA by speakers regardless of the existence of parallel structures in their native languages.

The main structure of a GPA non-verbal sentence seems to be with a zero copula identical to the structure in Gulf Arabic, but with some variability, as demonstrated in examples 3a, 3b and 3c.

6.2.2 What is a verb in GPA?

In order to discuss the GPA verbal system, it is necessary to separate the verbs of the variety from the nouns, if such a separation is indeed possible. The GPA words which are derived from the Gulf Arabic verbal nouns are of particular interest here.

The vocabulary of my material is rather small, and generally restricted to only one derivation of each Gulf Arabic verbal stem. When more than one derivation occurs, there is usually strong preference to one form or the other. As an example, the more commonly used derivation of the Gulf Arabic root k-l-m is *kalām*, which is a verbal noun meaning "speech" in Gulf Arabic. This form occurs 132 times in my material, with a verbal meaning extended to mean "speak, talk, tell, say", as in the following example:

(5)	asān		hāda	mama	**kalām**	arabi,	ana	bādēn	fakkar	šwey~šwey
	because		DEM	madam	speak	Arabic	1SG	then	think	little~INT
	kull	yōm	fakkar							
	every	day	think							

"Because the madam [only] spoke Arabic, so then I [had to] think a little, every day I was thinking".

Context: D1 explains how she learned Arabic at her first job.

Some realisation of the form *kallam*, presumably from Gulf Arabic *itkallam* "speak", occurs 40 times, which amounts to 23 % of the total usage of words derived from the k-l-m root. As such, the verbal noun in a verbal meaning is the more common form, although it is not exclusively used.

The Gulf Arabic root ʿ-l-m most commonly occurs as the verbal noun *tālīm* (Gulf Arabic *taʿlīm*) "education", which occurs 41 times in my material. It often appears to be used in a verbal meaning in GPA with the semantic scope of "to study, learn", as in the following example:

(6) bādēn inte **tālīm** ziyāda arabi
then 2SG learn much Arabic
"Then [how] did you learn so much Arabic?"
Context: C2 expresses her surprise when I tell her I have only been in Oman for one month.

A derivation of the corresponding Gulf Arabic verb, *ʿallam* "to teach", occurs 15 times, which amounts to 27 % of the total usage of words derived from the ʿ-l-m root. 14 out of these usages are by two speakers, B1 and B3, who are close friends and who do not use *tālīm* at all. As such, this particular vocabulary item simply seems to represent a variation in the speech of individuals. The more widespread as well as more common form is *tālīm*.

To test the possible distinction between etymological verbal nouns and regular nouns in my material, I turned to the possessive constructions with *māl* discussed under 4.2.3. I assumed that only nouns and pronouns would be part of such a construction with a possessive meaning. I then counted the the occurrences of verbal nouns in these constructs to determine whether or not they behave like other nouns in my material.

Out of the 141 usages of *māl* as a possessive, only 7 (5 %) are constructed with etymological verbal nouns. Three of these are with the word *taʾšīra* "visa", which is etymologically a verbal noun, but has an unambiguously nominal meaning, as it signifies a concrete object. Three other usages are with the verbal noun *kalām* "speech", and there is one usage of the word *musāʾad* "help, assistance" derived from the Gulf Arabic verbal noun *musāʿada* "help". However, 95 % of the possessive constructions in the material are with regular nouns, thus

indicating that a separation of verbal nouns from regular nouns may be perceived by speakers of GPA.

Another indication of such a separation is found in the development of a light verb system in GPA (see 6.2.5). The presumed light verb *sawwi* occurs in this function a total of 135 times in my material. 105 of these, or 78 %, are used with etymological nouns and adjectives, whereas 30 are used with etymological verbal nouns. In 9 instances this verbal noun is derived from *musāʿada* "help, assistance", which may indicate that this particular word is analysed as a noun as it also appeared in a construct with *māl*. Two words, *tartīb* "tidying" (from Gulf Arabic *tartīb* "structuring") and *laʾab* "playing" (from Gulf Arabic *laʿab* "playing"), are used four times each, whereas the rest of the words occur only once each. In one case, *sawwi* might actually be used to make what is perceived as an intransitive verb into a transitive:

(7)	mumkin	hāda	**sawwi**	**mōt**	kelb
	maybe	3SG	TR	dead	dog

"Maybe he would have killed the dog".

Context: B1 explains that the women got rid of their dog out of fear that their neighbour, who repeatedly expressed his dislike for dogs, might hurt it.

Most etymological verbal nouns, then, appear to have more in common with verbs than with nouns in GPA.

6.2.3 The GPA verbal system

The GPA verbal system appears from my material to be rather unstructured. There is frequent use of both etymological Gulf Arabic verbs and verbal nouns, but unlike in Gulf Arabic there is no consistent verbal declension for person and number. Both verbal and non-verbal sentences can be marked for the past tense by the Gulf Arabic adverb *awwal* "before", whereas future tense may be marked by *bādēn* "then, later", although both usually retain their original adverbial meaning as well as marking tense[33]:

(8a)	**awwal**	ana	yistegel	wāhid	bēt
	before	1SG	work	one	house

[33] These words are also common with their basic adverbial meanings without marking tense, such as in example 10b.

"Before, I was working [only] in one house."

Context: B3 explains that she used to be a live-in maid.

(8b) yimkin šwey kamsa sana swey **bādēn** yiglis bēt

maybe little five year little then sit house

"Maybe a little longer, like five years, then I will stay at home."

Context: C2 ponders the future of her career as a mother of two.

In an attempt to classify GPA verbs, Smart chooses a three-way distinction based on the use of the verbal prefix *y-*, which derives from the Gulf Arabic imperfect 3rd person singular masculine prefix *yi-* or *ya-* (Smart 1990:98). This prefix sometimes occurs with verbs in what appears to be an arbitrary fashion. Smart writes that the prefixed type is slightly more common in his material, and suggests a statistical concurrence between the prefix and the use of verbs which has imperfect stems starting with consonant clusters (ibid.).

The one verb which always occur with a prefixed *y-*, both according to Smart 1990:100 as well as in my material, is *yerīd* "to want", as in example 9:

(9) yāni... kalām urdu **yerīd**, kalām arabi **yerīd**?

that.is speech Urdu want speech Arabic want

"Do you want me to speak in Urdu or in Arabic?"

Context: A1 is initially unsure of the aim of my recordings.

Apart from *yerīd*, all verbs which occur frequently in my material are represented in both prefixed and unprefixed form. The forms appear to be randomly distributed, although with preferences along the phonological principle indicated by Smart. To illustrate this I will choose four verbs which are common in my material; *šūf* "to see", *rūh* "to go", *yeštaġel* "to work"[34] and *yijlis* "to sit, stay".

The verb *šūf* occurs a total of 176 times in my material. 152 of these times (86 %) are unprefixed, as in example 10a, while 24 occurrences (14 %) have the prefix *y-*, as in example 10b.

(10a) hāda ana habbar lāsim **šūp** tabīb

[34] Phonetic varieties are common, refer to chapter 3.

this 1SG tell must see doctor

"I'm telling you, you should see the doctor".

Context: C4 is mildly exasperated that a customer insists on buying medicine without a proper diagnosis.

(10b) awwal ana ma **yešūp** huwa, ma arap

before 1SG NEG see 3SG NEG know

"I had never seen him before, I didn't know him".

Context: D1 tells the story of how she met her husband.

Another verb without an initial consonant cluster of the stem is *rūh* "to go", derived from the Gulf Arabic imperfect verb *yirūh*. This verb occurs a total of 152 times in my material, and 124 of these, which equal 82 % of the occurrences, are unprefixed.

The verb *yeštaġel* occurs a total of 62 times in my material in different phonological realisations (refer to chapter 3). Out of these, 31 occurrences (50 %) are prefixed with *y-*. However, 28 of the remaining (45 %) have an /i/-sound before the consonant cluster *št*/*st*, which may be regarded as either a non-prefixed form with a prosthetic vowel, or as a phonological variety of the prefixed form. Three instances (5 %) of an initial-consonant cluster form occur, interestingly all with an /s/ realisation of the Gulf Arabic /š/. As examples 11a and 11b show, then, both prefixed and unprefixed forms can be attested, although the first is more common:

(11a) ana mudīr ana ma yerīd **yistagel**

1SG manager 1SG NEG want work

"I'm the manager, I don't want to work"

Context: B3 makes a jocular remark as she terms herself the "boss" of the household.

(11b) ana jaud bādēn ysīr jakarta, **stokol**

1SG husband then go Jakarta work

"Then my husband went to work in Jakarta".

Context: D1 relives the early days of her marriage.

Another verb that has a stem-initial consonant cluster is *yijlis* "to sit, stay" from Gulf Arabic *jilas/yilas* "to sit". This verb occurs a total of 41 times in my material, whereof only two, or 5 %, are unprefixed.

It appears that all these verbs are what Smart calls unstable in regard to the *y*-prefix feature. However, the verbs without an initial stem consonant cluster appear to have a stronger tendency towards non-prefixing, while the ones with such a cluster appear to occur more often with a prefix, It is not unlikely that this phonological feature motivates the preferences, although such an interpretation necessitates that the common verb *yerīd* is analysed as an exception.

6.2.4 *fi* as a TAM marker in GPA?

In an article on the now extinct Russian-Norwegian trade pidgin Russenorsk, Jahr (2003:258) challenges the claim that pidgin languages lack markers for tense, aspect and/or mode (TAM markers), a claim which has been presented by various authors, including Mühlhäusler 1997. According to Jahr's analysis, the Russenorsk preposition *po* is sometimes placed in a preverbal position. The nature of the sentences in which it is used in this way seem to indicate that *po* had begun to be grammaticalised as a tense, aspect and modality marker (ibid.:264).

This phenomenon is also well-known in the Sudanese Arabic-based pidgin of Juba Arabic (see 6.3), which has two aspect markers, *ge* and *be*, most commonly used to mark respectively "continuity" (*ge*) and "future, eventuality and conditionality" (*be*) (Tusco 1995:429).

Opening up for the possibility of a pidgin TAM structure provides an interesting angle when looking at the use of *fi* in the preverbal[35] position in my material. Catherine Miller, who gives a brief mention of the verbal constructions with *fi* in a paper on Arabic-based pidgins and creoles, deduces from Smart's material that *fi*, among other functions, is used for " the expression of progressive – *ana fi sawm* "I am fasting"" (Miller 2002:21). This is, I think, also what Smart means by "copula with verbs" (Smart 1990:102), as the English verb "to be", which functions as a copula in non-verbal sentences, is used with the present participle of the main verb to form the progressive or perhaps rather the continuous aspect.

The continuous aspect appears to be a possible function of *fi* in my material. The origin of this construction may be derived from *fi*'s basic meaning "there is", as in "there is/was a

[35] As a consequence of my conclusion under 6.2.2, I will treat etymological verbs and verbal nouns together as GPA verbs in this subchapter.

state of (verbal action)" or something similar, and it is found in past, present as well as future meanings. In all cases, the possible aspect marking appears to be optional, and as such parallel examples without *fi* should be expected.

In example 12a and 12b, the verbal actions describe a past continuous action:

(12a)	allem	yāni	**fi**	**šūf**,	wāhed	**fi**	**šīl**	kūb	gul	hāda	kūb
	learn	that.is	TAM	see	one	TAM	take	cup	say	DEM	cup

"I learned from watching, someone would take a cup and say this is a cup."

Context: D2 answers the question of how she learned Arabic.

(12b)	ḫamsa	sana	**fi**	**tālīm**	dāhil	jāma
	five	year	TAM	study	in	university

"I studied at university for five years".

Context: E1 talks about his accountancy studies.

The following events taking place in the present tense also seem to fit the continuous aspect hypothesis:

(13a)	binti	**fi**	**āti**	māl	walad
	daughter	TAM	give	to	son

"My daughter is feeding my son."

Context: C2 explains that she leaves food out for her kids in the morning, and that her daughter feeds her young son.

(13b)	ana	**fi**	**kalām**	mišān	huwa,	huwa	**fi**	**kalām**	mišān	ana
	1SG	TAM	speech	PREP	3SG	3SG	TAM	speech	PREP	1SG

"I'm talking to him, he's talking to me".

Context: A2 mentions meeting and discussing with different people as an asset of his job.

Future continuous events are often marked by *fi:*

(14a)	bād	wahad	sagīr	talāta	sana,	sana	hāda	**fi**	**rūh**	madrasa
	then	one	little	three	year	year	DEM	TAM	go	school

"Then there is the little one who is three years old, in one year, he will be going to school".

Context: C2 talks about her children, describing her young son.

In example 14b, which both describe an event that will take place in the future, are used, but only the first one is preceded by *fi*. The translation I provide is based on the interpretation of *fi* as a continuous marker, which seems to be plausible in this case:

(14b)	tanēn	second	čiko	**fi**	**rūh**	bādēn	šwey	bād,	bād	sār	bād	rūh
	two	second	child	TAM	go	later	little	after	after	month	after	go
	madrasa											
	school											

"My second child will be going after a little while, after one more month he will go to school".

Context: C4 talks about his children.

There are, however, many examples of preverbal *fi* in my material which do not seem to mark continuous aspect. In some examples, *fi* appears to function as what might be termed a factual marker[36], denoting the certainty of the verbal action. As such, *fi* in these contexts retains its original meaning "there is", which serves to emphasize the factuality of the verb:

(15)	alhīn	fi	**talāk**
	now	TAM	divorce

"I'm divorced now".

Context: D2 answers the question "Where is your husband?"

It also appears that *fi* may have some function in conditional sentences, possibly to indicate hypothetical sentences:

(16a)	aleyn	**fi**	**sakkar**	mahal,	bādēn	yesīr	dubay...	ma	fi	fayda,	fulūs
	now	TAM	close	shop	then	go	Dubai	NEG	EXPL	use	money
	ma	fi									
	NEG	EXPL									

"If I close the shop and go to Dubai, there's no use in that, then I don't get paid".

Context: A2 explains why he has not been to Dubai.

But note example 16b, a counterfactual conditional, where *fi* is not used:

(16b)	awwal	kēp	rōh,	visa	ma	pi.	**ana**	**roh**	**polīs**	**catch**

[36] I owe this interpretation to Dr Maria Persson.

before how go visa NEG EXPL 1SG go police catch

"Before I couldn't go, I didn't have a visa. If I went, the police would have caught me."

Context: B2 explains why she hasn't been back home for five years.

As such, it it clear that if my hypothesis that *fi* marks continuous aspect is correct, there are still examples which are not explained by this and where *fi* either serves another grammatical purpose or else is inserted randomly by speakers unsure of how to use it. The preverbal use of *fi* is in any case one of the more intriguing features of GPA, and more research is needed in order to determine its precise function(s).

6.2.5 *sawwi* as a light verb in GPA

Smart mentions the frequent use in his material of *sawwi* "to do" as a "compound verb", providing the following examples (ibid.:103):

(17) ʿēb arbāb[37] **sawwi** **hāḏa** **sijn**

shame boss LV this prison

"(It is an) injustice that the masters imprison this (person)"

As in example 16, *sawwi* seems mostly, though not exclusively, to be used to give verbal force to Gulf Arabic nouns and adjectives in my material. Some of these constructions with *sawwi* are very common and seem to be understood as compound verbals with a set meaning, such as *sawwi arūs* "to marry", *sawwi nadīf* "to clean"and *sawwi suāl* "to ask", exemplified in 18a, 18b and 18c respectively:

(18a) bādēn šīl fulūs, bādēn **sawwi** **arūs**

then take money then LV bride

"Then take the money and get married".

Context: A2 tells me his plans for putting his Gulf wages to good use.

(18b) ana **sawwi** **nadīp**, **sawwi** **nadīp**, **sawwi** **ūti**

1SG LV clean LV clean LV ironing

"I clean; clean and iron".

Context: D4 describes her working day.

[37] Smart translates *arbāb* with the Arabic plural meaning of the word, "masters". However, in my material it appears to be used as a singular noun meaning "sponsor" as in the immigration-technical sense of the word.

(18c)	bādēn	nafar	sadīk	yiji,	ana	**sawwi**	**suāl**.	šu	hāda	aktub
	then	person.SG	friend	come	1SG	LV	question	what	DEM	write

"Then when my friend came, I asked him what it was that I had written".

Context: C5 explains how he learned Arabic vocabulary by writing down new words as he heard them and then asking a more knowledgeable friend what they meant.

sawwi is also commonly used to make verbs out of certain English-origin nouns, as in the following example:

(19)	hāda	kullu	**sawwi**	**tape**,	la
	DEM	all	LV	tape	Q

"This records everything, right?"

Context: B1 points to the iPod recording the conversation.

The usage of *sawwi* in my material indicates that the verb fits the criteria of a so-called "light verb", which is a verb that resemble a "verbal licenser for a noun" (Butt 2003:1). In order to be classified as a light verb, the verb must be derived from a main verb in the language, typically with a meaning such as "to do" (ibid.18). This makes *sawwi* a fairly typical candidate for this type of verb. These types of verbal constructions are very common in South Asian languages such as Urdu, one of the main substrate languages for GPA, and the structure may be borrowed into GPA from there.

As a possible light verb, *sawwi* may also be used meaning simply "to do" without a nominal component in the verbal phrase, although this is less frequent than its use to form compound verbs:

(20a)	beruhi	**lazim**	**sawwi**
	(my)self	must	do

"I must do it myself".

Context: A1 explains that as he is a bachelor, he must do the household chores by himself.

(20b)	asān	**šu**	**sawwi**,	allah	kerīm
	because	what	do	God	generous

"But what to do, God is generous"

Context: B3 muses ironically over her lack of money for a new house in Sri Lanka.

6.3 Summarising the GPA verbal system

The verbal system of GPA is much simplified compared to the one of Gulf Arabic. Tense is implicit or marked by adverbs. All proper verbs appear to be eligible for prefixation with *y-*, which seems to be distributed somewhat conditioned by phonological criteria. Words which are derived from Gulf Arabic verbal nouns function as proper verbs, although these are never prefixed with *y-*, a restriction which is probably derived from the absence of such forms in the superstrate input. When *fi* is used in front of a verb, it sometimes appear to function as a marker of continuous aspect, reminiscent of the Juba Arabic core aspect marker *ge* (see 6.4). However, many usages of fi in the preverbal position do not seem to be continuous, and more research is needed to determine its functions. A developing light verb, *sawwi*, is common in the variety, and can be used to form compound verbs with nouns and adjectives.

6.4 Copula and verbs in other Arabic-based pidgins and creoles

Juba Arabic has two core aspect markers, *bi*, which marks the future, the conditional and the general habitual, and *ge*, which marks continuative and actual habitual aspect (Tosco 1995:431-435). Additionally a whole array of non-core aspect markers is used. The word *kan* is used as an anterior marker whereas the combination *kan bi* marks counterfactual and future perfect (ibid: 438, 441). The combination particle *biga* marks the resultative, *gum* marks the inchoative and *bi ja* the uncertain future (ibid: 442-445).

Both Kenyan and Ugandan Nubi have a similar system of aspect markers, where *bi* marks the future, *gi* the progressive and *kan* is an anterior marker (Owens 1997:149; Wellens 2005:363). There is also a copula *kun* in sentences which describe a temporary situation and/or are marked for speaker subjectivity on the statement (Owens 1997:149). Plain nominal sentences are without an overt copula.

Turku displays a continuous or recurrent marker *gaed/gahed*, as well as *bi* as a future marker (Wellens 2005:363).

In comparison to GPA, it appears that these Arabic-based pidgins and creoles have a much more developed and stable TAM marking system. The verbal anterior marker *kan* in these varieties also contrast with the optional adverbial anterior marker *awwal* in GPA.

Chapter 7: Summary

I propose that what I in this paper have called Gulf Pidgin Arabic is a variety on the way to becoming conventionalised and unified as a first-generation contact language which has emerged in a situation of a social gap. Structurally, it resembles an early interlanguage variety, but the factors surrounding it place it within the sociological definition of a pidgin. As such, it seems reasonable to call it an incipient pidgin variety, although the possible likeness to immigrant talk varieties such as "Gästarbeiterdeutsch" deserves further study.

Two of the salient pidgin features mentioned in chapter 2, reduction and increased regularity, seem to be amply demonstrated in my material.

Reduction has taken place in the field of phonology (chapter 3), where 29 consonant phonemes have been reduced to 18, and the distinction between short and long vowels appears to have been neutralised. In this field in particular, it is easy to recognise the influence of the substrate languages on the speech of the consultants, such as the pronunciation of /w/ as /ʋ/ by speakers of languages which only have the latter sound in their phonological inventory.

As to increased regularity, the typical pidgin preference for analytic structures is demonstrated in the GPA possessive system as described in chapter 4. The Gulf Arabic analytic possessive, which is semantically constrained in that variety, has in GPA been generalised, and is used for all types of possession. Instead of two parallel systems, GPA employs one.

Reduction and increased regularity can also be seen in the negation system (chapter 5), where it even seems acceptable to employ only one negation, *mafi*, for all instances of forming negatives, whether negating nouns, finite verbs or imperatives, whereas Gulf Arabic requires different negators for each of these categories.

Another form of reduction can be seen in the emergence of a light verb system, where *sawwi* "to do" is used to create compound verbs from nouns and adjectives. This development represents a simplification of the Gulf Arabic system of deriving nouns and verbs with related meanings by applying different morphological patterns to the same consonant root, a system which is replaced by (generally) one lexicalised form which can be used as a noun

or adjective and turned into a verb by combining it with *sawwi*. An example is *arūs*, which in Gulf Arabic (*ʿarūs*) means "bride", but which in GPA is used in the nominal meanings "bride, husband, marriage". "To marry" then becomes *sawwi arūs*. Compare to the Gulf Arabic corresponding verb *ʿarras* "to get married", which is formed by using the root consonants ʿ-r-s in a transitive verbal pattern, a system not in use in GPA.

The verbal system, described in chapter 6, is perhaps reduced in the most striking manner of all the features I have studied, given the large complexity of the Gulf Arabic verb system and the apparent simplicity of the GPA one. Words which in Gulf Arabic are verbal nouns are treated as verbs rather than nouns in my material. As such, they do not form part of possessive constructs, and may be preceded by the presumed aspect marker *fi*, but not usually by the presumed light verb *sawwi*. Only etymologically declensionable verbs, however, may have a *y*-prefix, which appears to be distributed according to a phonological rather than a grammatical principle.

It appears that *fi* placed in front of a verb functions as a marker of continuous aspect in my material, but in order to determine its precise scope of functions, more research is needed. The use of *fi* as a copula in non-verbal sentences seems inconsistent, and a zero copula is more common than an overt one in otherwise identical sentences. More research is needed in order to study whether the use or non-use of *fi* in such sentences is perhaps primarily determined by the existence of an overt copula speakers' native languages, or whether other factors are at play.

The GPA speakers are clearly influenced by their respective mother tongues, its phonological inventory and grammatical structures when speaking the pidgin, but despite the continuous exchange of the migrant worker population, some stability of the grammatical structures of the variety seems achieved. This might be due to the input of the foreigner talk of Gulf Arabs, as well as inter-group interaction between the different ethnic and national groups of foreign workers. The reduction of the number of morphemes in one word and the preference for analytic structures documented in Arabic foreigner talk supports the hypothesis of this being an input source to the pidgin where these features are widespread. However, more studies on foreigner talk in the Gulf are needed. Some consultants report that they have received some language instruction prior to their departure to the Gulf, which is probably conducted by previous migrant workers. A study of

this process and what is actually taught to the incoming workers would be very interesting in order to be able to say something about the degree of standardisation of GPA. If what being taught is in fact GPA, then Winford's criterion of the pidgin becoming the target language for later arrivals (Winford 2003:279) must be said to have been fulfilled.

In comparison to other Arabic-bases pidgins and creoles, such as Juba, Nubi and Turku, GPA is much less standardised. This is to be expected given the longer time span as well as the relative stability of the speaker communities in the case of the African contact languages compared to GPA.

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Abstract

Gulf Pidgin Arabic (GPA) is a scarcely documented contact language in the Arabic-speaking Persian Gulf countries, which has been used as a communication tool between local citizens and the large Asian immigrant population in the area for at least 30 years. Based on a corpus made up of transcripts of my interviews with Asian immigrants in the Omani border town of Buraimi, I have attempted to verify its status as a separate language variety rather than as a collection of individual attempts of mastering Gulf Arabic. In this paper, I use the corpus to look at three grammatical features of this variety, possession, negation and the verbal system. By doing this, it has been possible to document systematic reductions and greater regularity in the grammar of GPA compared to that of Gulf Arabic, as well as the development of a light verb system unparalleled in Arabic, but similar to several of the main substrate languages of GPA such as Urdu.

GPA grammar and phonology also display several of the characteristic features of other well-documented Arabic-based pidgins and creoles such as Juba Arabic, Nubi and Turku in Arabic-speaking Africa, something which opens up for further comparative studies on these contact varieties.