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The “White Dialect” of young Arabic speakers from Qassim (Saudi Arabia)

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This book is about the speech habits of young people from the Qassim region in central Saudi Arabia. It focuses on the way they speak when addressing people who are not from their home region. This way of speaking is referred “White Dialect”. While this term is used more generally in Saudi Arabia, it may not always refer to the same type of entity. In this book, the term “White Dialect” is used exclusively in the way it is used by the young Qassimi speakers that participated in this research.

This book investigates the “White Dialect” used by the young Qassimi Arabic speakers and answers three main questions: what is the “White Dialect”? when it is used and why it is used. Besides the “White Dialect”, this book also highlights some of the differences between old and young Qassimi Arabic.

The “White dialect” is not a dialect in the common linguistic sense, with relatively stable forms and a clear grounding in one or another group. However, the term “White Dialect” is retained in this book, because it is the term used by the speakers themselves, and thus implies a certain awareness of it as a variety different from other varieties. Results show that the “White Dialect” is a linguistic strategy for Arabic speakers to adopt linguistic features from the range of different Arabic varieties available to them, to produce a spontaneous and fluid form of Arabic that serves their desired communicative motives.

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