The Use of Arabic in Media and the Internet by the Arabic-Speaking Melbournians

by

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Abstract

Internet communication has gone through rapid stages of development in the past two decades with dramatically growing numbers of users throughout the world. These communication tools have been overlooked as a significant domain of language use and maintenance over the past decade in spite of the major role that these tools would play in language maintenance, language shift, bilingualism, literacy, and cultural identity. This thesis explores the current state of the Arabic language among the members of the Arabic-speaking Australians living in the area of Melbourne and investigates the area where language and technology can be combined, examining 54 participants in these fields.

The survey was conducted through the administration of a questionnaire that was supported by a pre-survey interview with key informants in the community. The questions of the survey were a combination of closed, open-ended, and hypothetical questions that explored participants’ background, language use, Arabic use domains, literacy, and computer experience. The questionnaire was ultimately preferred only in paper form due to the lack of an available list of email addresses for the members of the community. Questions were coded and trends were classified for comments on language and technology preference, literacy, opinions of the importance of speaking Arabic, participation in group activities through Arabic organizations, exposure to Arabic-language media, and opinions about the viability of Internet communication in Arabic.

Participants ranged in age from 14 to 48; about half of them were under 30 years old. The results show that about two thirds of the participants spoke Arabic at home either “most” or “all the time”. Arabic was important to almost all of the respondents for religious purposes mostly, as well as academic and ethnic incentives. However, English was preferred by younger participants who would speak Arabic to parents insisting on maintaining the Arabic language. Many of the participants reported poor literacy skills, making the use of Internet written communication tools more difficult for them. Email in English was used by a larger number than in Arabic, although a large number of them
reported being able to read and write in Arabic. It was also found that participants with higher Arabic writing skills used Internet-based communication tools in Arabic more frequently than those with lesser skills.

The study concludes that Arabic remains spoken and well-understood by members of the Arabic-speaking community in Melbourne, although younger members speak English to each other while they are away from their parents. Parents should do more than just asking their children to speak Arabic by engaging them in more Arabic language situations and maintaining their Arabic literacy. That can be more enhanced by enrolling them in Arabic schools which on their part should extend their activities beyond the classroom walls by undertaking authentic and collaborative ways of learning online. Also, Arabic institutions are required to raise the awareness of community members about the viability of Internet as a medium to maintain language and culture, to make more efforts to get community members more acquainted with “Internet literacy” in Arabic and to make computer equipment and software that supports the Arabic language more available to the public at reasonable cost...
Declaration

This is to certify that

i. the thesis comprises only my original work;

ii. due acknowledgement has been made in the text to all other materials used;

iii. the thesis is following the university requirement regarding the number of words in minor theses.

____________________________________________
Abdul rahman A. Al-Asmari
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Chapter one: Background

My research investigates the current use of web-based communication technologies within the Arabic-speaking community in Melbourne in an attempt to discover useful implementations for language maintenance. It also looks into describing how members of the community make use of these technologies and in what situations it is advantageous to use them. Endeavoring to highlight this part in particular, I investigate the frequency of using the Arabic language in the daily life communication in traditional contexts (e.g. home, Arabic bazaars, community gatherings) which are referred to as ‘contextualized spheres of communication’ (Clyne, 1991: 54). The hypothesis is that considerable use of online communication in the Arabic language may bring about some positive results for the language maintenance.

Different attitudes toward these technologies and how they are used by the Arabic-speaking Melbournians are explicitly revealed through the administration of a self-completion questionnaire and pre-survey interviews with the key informants of the community. A review of relevant literature indicates that there is not much literature on the Arabic community in Australia, and in Melbourne in particular, let alone the question about their technology preferences or how they utilize technology to communicate in their language. A recently completed project in the area of language maintenance and Internet technologies has revealed the positive role of Internet resources in maintaining Polish as a minority language in Australia (Debski and Fitzgerald, in press). The present project draws on those results and applies similar methodologies to describe the role of technology for the Arabic community and the maintenance of their heritage language.

Many revolutionary developments in the field of computer technology have contributed significantly to the development of language learning and teaching. The availability of using the World Wide Web (WWW) and hyperspace channels has also enhanced the cross-cultural exchange amongst languages. Web-based communication or Computer-Mediated Communication (CMC) has become one of the main uses of the Internet in the new millennium with unique intercultural and interactional features (Kitade, 2000). People need no longer suffer from the high telephone call rates or the long waiting time for traditional surface mail to reach overseas recipients then to receive a possible reply back. Rather, all they have to do is access Internet, and communicate inexpensively via various tools of CMC such as email, chat, forums and bulletin boards. Internet communication technologies have made life easier and much less costly for people intending to communicate with their relatives and friends inhabiting dispersed spots around the globe. Extensive use of the Internet by Australians speaking languages other than English can be inferred from censuses made by the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS, 2001).
Almost all the statistics that have been conducted so far did not demonstrate useful information about the role of Internet technologies in language maintenance.

In sum, the present research investigates the problems of use of technology in Arabic by members of the Arabic-speaking community in Melbourne through web-based communication by surveying their familiarity with Internet access, utilities, and frequency of use. Thus, a conclusion might be drawn on the usefulness of Internet technologies for the maintenance of minority languages to the advantage of prospective generations whose mother languages will probably be languishing against mainstream ones.

Before my arrival to Australia in 2003, I was unaware of the community diversity or the issues of multiculturalism. Once I arrived, I was stunned by the widely diversified multiculturalism within the Melbournian society. Also, the large number of people with an Arabic background exceeded my expectations. According to the 1996 statistics, around 39,478 Arabic-speaking people lived in Melbourne only (ABS, 2001); and it is believed that this number has increased considerably since that time. Being a native speaker of Arabic, I started feeling like a member of the community and tried to dive into the depth of the structure of its environment and lifestyle, which has been influenced, to a varying extent by Australianization, linguistically and culturally.

As a part of my Master degree in Computer-Assisted Language Learning (CALL) at Melbourne University, I came across a large number of readings in the field of computer-based language learning and teaching whose concepts are founded on the theories of learning and second language acquisition. I was fascinated by some readings which were based on project findings that promoted the use of computer technologies to learn, teach and maintain languages. I was directly inspired by a study conducted by Debski and Fitzgerald (in press) tackling the use of the Internet by the Polish community in Melbourne and establishing a research agenda for the use of the Internet in maintaining minority languages. Increasingly, I became more motivated to conduct a research on the use of Internet communication by the Arabic-speaking community in Melbourne to catch hold of better ways of harnessing web-based communication to serve the purpose of maintaining minority languages which represent important ethnic resources in Australia.

The present investigation has used a pre-survey interview with key informants who occupied influential roles in the community, and a self-completion questionnaire as primary data collection instruments. Data in this study were analyzed through a combination of quantitative and qualitative methods. Questionnaire data were entered into SPSS 12 for analysis to discover central tendencies and correlations. The data supported and provided direction for the qualitative
data analysis. All questionnaires were read and coded for information on participants’ technology preferences, comments on literacy, language preferences, membership to Arabic organizations, use of the Arabic-language media, and use of Internet communications.

This thesis is divided into six chapters. Chapter Two reviews the literature and concepts which this study is based upon. The literature review includes information about the Arabic language speakers’ origins and affiliations, the Arabic-speaking community in Melbourne, language maintenance, core values and cultural identity, bilingualism, biliteracy, the sensitive period of language acquisition, media and Internet communication, and the role of Internet communication in the maintenance of language and culture. Chapter Three is a presentation of the research design that is used for the investigation. Chapter Four presents the results of the questionnaire by means of a quantitative and qualitative data analysis. Chapter Five includes discussions of the survey results and relates them to the current theory of research. Finally, Chapter Six presents conclusions from the data presented in the Discussion chapter.
Chapter Two: Literature Review

2.1 Introduction

The literature reviewed in this chapter is derived from the fields of language and culture maintenance, the Islamic culture and the Arabic language, bilingualism, and biliteracy. Currently, there is no information available on the use of technology by the Arabic-speaking community in Australia, or about initiatives toward the Arabic language maintenance. However, there is some literature on the Polish community in Melbourne and their use of technology (Fitzgerald, 2002), (Debski & Fitzgerald, in press). Moreover, a substantial body of literature exists on how technologies have been utilized to teach, maintain, and revitalize minority languages.

2.2 Who speaks the Arabic Language?

The Arabic Language is the language of written communication and most formal, oral communication in 22 countries represented by the League of Arab States. It is deemed as the main symbol of culture and unity among these 22 countries which include Algeria, Bahrain, Comoros, Djibouti, Egypt, Iraq, Jordan, Kuwait, Lebanon, Libya, Mauritania, Morocco, Oman, Qatar, Palestine, Saudi Arabia, Somalia, Sudan, Syria, Tunisia, United Arab Emirates, and Yemen (League of Arab States, 2004). There are more than 200 million Arabs living in these countries and speaking Arabic as their first language (Arabic German Consulting, 1999). There is another common bond for the majority of Arabs, which is the religion of Islam. Abd-el-Jawad (1992) holds that Arabs see themselves as part of a single Arab nation united by language and Islam though there is a significant number of Arabs representing Christianity or Judaism. According to the Holy Qur’an, the sacred scripture of Islam, language and religion are united. So there are huge numbers of non-Arabic Muslims who learn or acquire the Arabic language and pass it on to their children. Moreover, Arabic is considered sacred among Muslims since it is the language through which the Holy Qur’an is believed to have been revealed. It might also be taught officially in schools as a compulsory requirement in some non-Arabic countries such as Iran, Pakistan, Malaysia, or Indonesia. Therefore, it is believed that Arabic is not ipso facto a property of Arabs, but of Muslims from all ethnicities who learn or acquire Arabic in order to understand or study the religion of Islam more closely, or to perform certain religious rituals. Hence, it is preferred, in this study, to use the term ‘Arabic-speaking community’ to include speakers of Arabic from various backgrounds, rather than the term ‘Arabic Community’ which may give a clear reference to only people of Arabic origins even if they do not speak their home language.

The Arabic Language is classified as South or South-western Semitic language. It is related to the other members of the Semitic language-group like Hebrew, spoken in Israel, and Amharic, spoken in Ethiopia, as well as to the ancient Semitic languages (Whitton, 1981). Standard Arabic
is syntactically the same as the language of the Holy Qur’an which is also employed in writing and formal situations, and it is not expected to be used in everyday communication in any of the Arab nations (Abd-el-Jawad, 1992). Clyne and Kipp (1999: 4) reported that most Arabic speakers in Australia are from Lebanon or Egypt, and the majority of both groups of immigrants are Christians whose classical Arabic lacks the mystical quality that it has for Muslims. For their recent migrations in the late 90s, existing censuses did not refer to the large numbers of Somali and Eritrean migrants who also represent a significant number of the Arabic-speaking community in Australia.

2.3 The Arabic-speaking community in Melbourne

It is not an easy task to provide a precise estimation of the number of Arabic-speaking people anywhere due to the fact that there are unknown numbers of the Arabic language speakers who come from different ethnicities. Batrouney (2002) used the term ‘Australian-Arabs’ broadly to refer to a cultural group defined by a common language and cultural heritage. Thus, it encompasses people from the Arabic-speaking countries of the Middle East, including Lebanon, Egypt, Iraq, Jordan, Palestine, and Arabian Peninsula. However, he did not take into account some other Arabic-speaking countries from which migrants with large numbers have settled in Australia such as Morocco, Algeria (far West), Syria (Middle East), Somalia and Eritrea (East Africa).

On the other hand, the Arabs in Australia could be statistically analyzed using language as a distinctive feature. According to the Australian Bureau of Statistics ABS (2001), Arabic is the fourth-most spoken minority language in Australia with an estimated population of 177,599 people in 1996. This number would sound humble by now if we consider that the five-year period between (1991-1996) censuses has been marked by an increase of 9% in the number of Australian Arabs. Also, the large numbers of Somalis and Eritreans who migrated in the late 90’s have not been included in the existing censuses of language and culture. Clyne and Kipp (1999) reported that Arabic is a highly concentrated language as 69 percent of the Arabic-speaking population live in Sydney, 22 percent in Melbourne, and only 9 percent live outside these two capital cities. In Melbourne, Australian Arabs are estimated at 39,775 people with a noticeable increase of 14% since 1991, (ABS, 2001). Morsy (1998: 19) claims that the number of Arabs in Melbourne has been over 74,000 people, and the majority of early settlers were Lebanese. Her claim sounds reasonable if we view the census of Arabic Australians by the Australian Arabic Council (2001) which indicated that the Australian Arabs have approached one million settling in and contributing to Australia for 170 years. Morsy (1998), accounts for not having an accurate number of the community referring to the fact that the census depends on the country of birth as the origin of the subject. That is, the practice of counting population may deem Australian-born
Arabs as Australians and not as Lebanese or Egyptians, for example, who form the majority of Australian Arabs.

Furthermore, the number of people, who embrace the Islam Religion and are expected to be Arabic-speaking, is so large that it cannot easily be ignored. In this context, the view of ethnic identity (Smolicz, 1981; Smolicz & Secombe, 1988) can be aptly adopted. It views ethnic identity as based on a group’s common cultural heritage and anchored to its core values. This heritage can be ancestral, linguistic, religious or territorial which is exactly what can be observed through intimate relationships between the Arabic-speaking Muslims of non-Arabic background and Arabs in Melbourne.

2.4 Arabic language maintenance

In their study on the pluricentric languages in Australia, Clyne & Kipp (1999:139) reported that one of the determining factors in the language use of Australian Arabs is expected to be their religious affiliation with the centrality of the Holy Qur’an and classical Arabic to Muslims, and classical Arabic liturgy to Catholic and Maronite Christians who represent the majority of the Arabic religious composition. I have pointed out above that the Arabic language has a very strong link to Islam, as Qur’an was revealed in Arabic. For this reason, it was felt that the Islamic community has been more successful in teaching Arabic to their children (Clyne & Kipp, 1999:154), and subsequently, to maintain it effectively. In Whitton’s (1981: 180) study of the Arabic language and Muslim culture, he said “The Arabic language maintained and still maintains its position as the universal language of Islamic theology, philosophy, and science.” As for Christian Arabs, liturgy is mainly Arabic though English components may appear now and then in the worship service.

Fishman’s studies (1980, 1985, and 1991) demonstrated that language maintenance is fostered by a range of institutions set up by the ethnolinguistic communities themselves or established by the government and utilized by members of the communities. These institutions can solely be for language maintenance such as Saturday schools, libraries and media (e.g. radio, television, newspapers), or they can be for other functions but their activities are conducted in the community language such as religious congregations, social or sporting clubs, welfare societies, or ethnic groups. These institutions provide appropriate domains for language use and maintenance. Domains are contextualized spheres, or interactional contexts of communication (Cooper, 1967). Arabic has been taught and used in most of the Arabic institutions throughout Australia. Also, Arabic courses are offered by some Arabic-Catholic and Maronite churches besides most of the Islamic institutions (Clyne and Kipp, 1999:152-1550).
Clyne and Kipp (1997: 454) found out that many community languages in Australia have declined in recent years. Obviously, this is not the case with Arabic which is ranked the forthmost spoken language other than English (ABS, 2001). The same year census indicates that Arabic is the second minority language spoken at home in New South Wales (2.3 percent), and the fourth in Victoria. As it was mentioned above that Arabic is one of the most concentrated languages in Australia, so is it in certain suburbs of Victoria. According to the ABS (2001), a snapshot at the local areas statistics in Melbourne indicates that Arabic is the second spoken language other than English at home in Hume-Broadmeadows (8.1%) after Turkish ((12.9%), the third in Moreland-Brunswick (4.6%) after Italian (11.4%) and Greek (8.5%), the third in Moreland-Coburg (7.3%) after Italian (16.4%) and Greek (8.2%), the second in Hobsons Bay-Williamstown (3.2%) after Greek (3.3%), and the second in Moreland-North (6.5%) after Italian (15.2%). This sort of concentration might set the background for an intergenerational and demographically concentrated home-family-neighborhood based on language maintenance which was claimed to be a key to the success of language revitalization (Fishman, 1991).

2.5 Core values and cultural identity

Smolicz (1979, 1981) has developed the theory of “core values”, based on empirical research on language maintenance in Australia by means of a humanistic sociological approach. He contends that each group has particular cultural values that are fundamental to its continued existence as a group, and members rejecting these values run the risk of exclusion from the group. He also views language as a more crucial core value to some cultures and ethnic groups than to others. For example, in his study on a Polish group (1984), he made a distinction between language maintenance and cultural identity claiming that ethnic identity is stronger than ties to its language and its literature.

From a religious perspective, Clyne (1991) assumes an important symbolic function for language in both regional and social identity and in the construction of spiritual dimension for its speakers. Clyne (1992: 131-137) also referred to the relationship between religion and a specific language that may vary according to culture and religious ideology and tradition. Accordingly, the different religious affiliations for Arabic-speaking people may show a variety of attitudes towards the concept of belonging to a certain language. Interestingly, what appears to any observer is that there is an inseparable chain of relationships between Arabs of all groups. While Arabic Copts (mainly Egyptians) and Maronites (mainly Lebanese) may have traditionally claimed autonomous identity, they increasingly still see themselves as Arabs. Clyne and Kipp (1999:195) reported an overall support for the maintenance of ethnic identity among the Australian Lebanese and Egyptians of all age groups. This opinion was also based on the importance of the community language to ethnic identity though this enforcement appeared to be weaker in the younger
generation. Older Arabic settlers would see their identity more in terms of religion, shared history, and food. Arabic-speaking Muslims (including a significant number of Lebanese and Egyptians) seem to be eager to maintain the language for other factors than ethnic identity or cultural affairs. Their major motivations were to have an access to the Holy Qur'an, to communicate with family members, and to visit countries of origin (Clyne and Kipp, 1999: 155).

However, there is a common sense among Arabs of belonging to one cultural identity or what can be called “shared Arabness”. Clyne and Kipp (1999) assume that this sharing of one identity becomes stronger in the country of immigration. That can be fittingly justified by the exigencies of competition for multicultural resources such as the availability of funding for ethnic and multicultural radio, schools, and the opportunity for community language to be taught struggling to gain priority language status within the educational system. All of these demands need to be coordinated through committees involving a multiplicity of Arabic-speaking groups. Moreover, Clyne and Kipp (1999: 332) involved another important factor which has its links to the global political situations which is the common experience of global suspicion and prejudice against Arabs during the Gulf War that has had the Arabs join forces to rehabilitate the fuzzy image of the Arabic-speaking community. Consequently, the Arabic language is believed to be one unifying basis for Arabic-speaking people of all groups.

2.6 Bilingualism and mother tongue(s)

Bilingualism has been defined disparately ranging from wide to narrow. Bloomfield (1933) defined a bilingual as a person who has “native-like control of two languages.” Obviously, Bloomfield included only “perfect bilinguals” in his definition. However, speakers of two or more languages have “nonbalanced” levels of skills in even one language that might be developed more than those of the other language(s), and it would be rare to find a perfectly balanced bilingual (Grosjean, 1982:232). A bilingual can also be someone who would at all times pass as a native-speaker of both languages (Thiéry, 1976). Then again, McNamara (1976) defined a bilingual more generally by being a person, with at least, minimal one of the four language skills.

It has been difficult to precisely identify a mother tongue which depends on the perspective of the bilingual. Skuttnabb-Kangas (1981) offered four categories that can be used to define a person’s mother tongue. They are origin, competence, function and attitudes. According to origin, the mother tongue is the language first learned. Often it can be the language that a child begins communicating in with his or her parents. From the point of view of competence, a mother tongue is the language which a person knows best and in which a person communicate most easily, though this may depend on the situation. A mother tongue in a functional perspective is seen as the language which is most often used. Finally, a mother tongue from the point of view of
attitudes is the language with which one identifies most closely “internal identification” or the language with which others may identify that person “external identification” pointing out the notion that the individual may have more than one mother tongue.

2.7 Biliteracy

Biliteracy is the ability to read and write in more than one language. According to McNamara (1976), a bilingual can possibly be illiterate as long as he or she has other language skills, such as oral or aural proficiency. However, an individual who is illiterate in one of his or her languages would obviously be excluded from being a bilingual according to Bloomfield’s and Thiéry’s definitions. There are many children in Australia who are illiterate in their minority or community languages which can only be spoken at home most of the time or exclusively (Saunders, 1991). A study on the Arabic Egyptian and Lebanese groups demonstrated that over-35s were more confident in their language skills over all areas than under-35s (Clyne and Kipp, 1999: 216). Overall, both groups displayed more confidence in oracy than in literacy.

Biliteracy, which is a factor in developing literacy skills in two languages simultaneously, reinforces bilingualism by offering more domains for bilinguals to communicate in a language. It is argued that language projects that do not include literacy as a focus are “likely to fail” (Anonby, 1997: 19). Fishman (1980) thinks that minority ethnolinguistic groups need to be literate in their mother tongue the same way as in some language of wider communication. It has been noted that speaking a minority language alone does not offer enough support to its maintenance and children’s bilingualism (Saunders, 1988: 198). He also stated that children who begin entering school in the minority language must become literate in it. Again he emphasized the importance of building literacy skills in minority languages saying, “children tend to regard a language which they can speak but not read as not being equal to the language of the school which can be used for all functions” (1991: 109).

Beginning literacy in childhood leaves a question about what language to start with. Katsikis (1993) recommended beginning literacy with children in their stronger language. That is, the language of the parents spoken at home. As for bilingual children, it is the language that is expected to be less maintained in coming years; i.e., the Languages Other Than English (LOTE) in the Australian context. A study conducted by Abu-Rabia and Siegel (2002) on bilingual Arabic-English speaking Canadian children showed that bilingualism does not appear to have negative consequences for the development of language reading skills in both languages, Arabic and English, despite the different nature of the two orthographies. Nevertheless, confusion is highly potential between languages. For example, the Arabic script starts from the right to the left, just the opposite of English while they both display numerals in the same direction. In the Arabic
context, although Arabic is considered a transparent language with a predictable relationship between letters and sounds, there are still irregularities. Saunders (1988: 202) thinks that such problems can be overcome when the children, or even adult learners, accept gradually the differences between the different languages as they basically accepted the fact that each language has different names for things.

Many options for introducing children to literacy have been adopted by parents and educators. Recently, computer technology has become a great means of introducing language literacy to learners facilitated by up to date innovations in software programming. Furthermore, the Internet has offered plethora of language-learning resources and created more opportunities for interactions via web-based communication tools.

2.8 Critical period of language acquisition

According to the Critical Period Hypothesis (Lightbown and Spada, 1999), there is a period of time during which the brain is receptive to learning second languages the same way it was with the acquisition of the first. During this period, the brain is assumed to be more liable to language learning and it is deemed like a sensitive age for children to develop language skills in the second language and still attain a native-like level of proficiency, though not necessarily sound like a native speaker. Various studies in language acquisition indicate that the sensitive age of learning a language is before puberty and it may vary by individuals. For example, Patkowski’s (1980) study of 67 individuals showed that of 33 who began learning a language before the age of 15, 32 reached a native-like proficiency. The others who began later reached the higher intermediate level but not as high on average as those who began sooner. Moreover, individuals who start learning a language later in childhood but still before puberty often catch up with those who began learning earlier (Lightbown & Spada, 1999: 68).

On the other hand, individuals may experience a language loss during this critical age. Lightbown and Spada (1999:52) stated, “Early intensive exposure to the second language may entail the loss or incomplete development of the child’s first language.” The mother tongue development can be interrupted by some other language. Skutnabb-Kangas (1981:52) argues that the lesser-used language can be seriously threatened by beginning schooling in another language while the child’s mother tongue skills may not be well enough anchored. Therefore, as children using a minority language begin schooling in another language, the lesser-used language (often the home language) needs to be more maintained to complete its development.
2.9 Media and Computer-Mediated Communication (CMC)

Computer technologies are unique media for information and communication in many respects. The flexible availability of information is a feature that distinguishes the computer from any other medium. With television and radio, the user has relatively several choices of stations, but the user does not have a choice of when he or she hears or watches a certain item. As for language, television and radio also display fewer choices in some countries though Australia is known for the variety of language choices on television and radio. Australian SBS television and radio offer broadcasting in 68 languages in all states and territories (SBS, 2002). It might be advantageous over computer that television and radio can intrude into home, with no virtual barriers, bringing with them the language choice to the audience. Nevertheless, television and radio are confined to offering audience receptive forms of communication. That is, they only watch or listen with no actual engagement. On the other hand, the computer has become a common communication tool in the home. In a way, it can be used to combat the pervasive expansion of television and radio. Also, it can offer an effective medium for receptive and productive communication via the different cyberspace tools.

Herring (1996: 1) defines CMC as “communication that takes place between human beings via the instrumentality of computers.” CMC includes two main forms of systems which are synchronous and asynchronous. Synchronous communication comprises systems such as chat, video conferencing, and MOOs. Chat online or Internet Chat (IC) is relatively a new medium of CMC, which is distinguished by being of a synchronous feature. Since its emergence, IC has been used increasingly in L2 learning environments, and many researchers regard this type of communication as a promising tool of language learning (Toyoda and Harrison, 2002:82). Videoconferencing is another new synchronous medium of CMC which provides users/learners with audio and visual facilities allowing them to hear and see each other in real-time via TV screens and to conduct face-to-face conversations. Multi-User Domain Object Oriented (MOOs) have been considered as a new type of communication that enhances synchronous interaction (Weininger & Shield, 2003). MUDs (another acronym for MOOs) are text-based virtual worlds in which participants literally construct the world in which they live writing programs to describe the behaviors of objects in the online world (Resnick, 1996).

Asynchronous communication includes systems like email and bulletin boards. Email is an online tool that provides asynchronous text message exchanges, which can be harnessed to support social communication. Email is one of the CMC tools that have been used to perform intercultural language activities, to develop the writing/thinking connections that facilitate social learning (Greenfield, 2003). Warschauer (1996) asserts the functionality of email exchanges to improve writing skills. Bulletin boards and forums are asynchronous tools of CMC, which have
also been used widely in language learning. Web-based bulletin boards or discussion forums are available in a variety of formats. Web Crossing, which provides online collaboration tools and services, is currently one of the most popular which can offer the advantage of user-restricted access (Godwin-Jones, 2000).

2.10 Role of Internet communication in language and cultural maintenance

The recent explosion in technology, particularly in computer and digitizing systems, has many implications for heritage language maintenance and learning. Authentic language usage can be easily recorded and preserved for those goals (Villa, 2002: 92). From another point of view, Clyne (1991:116) argues that the second generation gains more opportunities of using heritage language when that language is put into a community context. That is, using the language with a group of friends, a youth group or a family creates suitable environments of restoring or acquiring knowledge of the language. It might be hard to interact in a heritage language in a context irrelevant to that language, but it is essential to find alternative contexts in which the heritage language is by far the preferable way of communication. Hence, computer technologies offer interesting uses for collaboration and socialization. The computer is arguably more entertaining and informative than the home television, stereo or the family’s book collection (Fitzgerald 2002) and that can be attributed to engaging the user in vigorous social interactions via CMC or simply performing activities through online surfing in the target language.

Computers have become an efficient medium of language preservation and communities’ socialization. For example, an experiment of revitalizing Hawaiian language via computer technologies proved successful (Warschauer, 1998). This study was conducted through the use of Leokī, a computer network enabling chat, data sharing, and project collaboration across Hawaii and amongst Hawaiian speakers worldwide. In such a program, students can improve their language in authentic context using CMC tools and also can create a corpus of the target language materials. He also observed that students had an excellent opportunity to invest and explore in their cultural identity by discussing issues of their culture online with other students near and far. Thereby, the deliberate and structured introduction of computer technology to indigenous language programs has proven effective in several minority language contexts, such as in Australia (e.g. Fryer, 1987; Czerniejewski, 1989) and in North America (e.g. Jancewicz, 2002; Villa, 2002). Computer technologies can play a substantial role in language documentation online making that information more accessible to indigenous language learners (Reyhner, 2002). Internet communication helps link members of the ethnic community and extends the opportunity of using the minority language through online authoring which enhances the cultural participation and create repositories of links to cultural information (Debski, 2004). That can also be presented in online resources such as language courses, dictionaries, and useful websites that facilitate
language learning and transmission due to their accessibility for learners seeking to learn or maintain their languages.

Previous research suggested that CMC provides a non-threatening environment for learners' experimentation with the target language (Pennington, 1996). Besides, intercultural collaboration via CMC promotes intercultural learning by the development of learners’ understanding of the other culture perspectives and worldviews (O’Dowd, 2000). Opportunely, socio-collaborative tasks are triggered shaping more cooperative learning that helps achieve optimal acquisition (Meskill, 1999). Debski (1997, 2003) noted that collaborative, project-based language learning in a rich electronic environment provides a sense of satisfaction among students, enables more understanding for the linguistic norms and customs in target language, and develops the learners’ skills of the use of electronic media in the target languages and cultures.

In online interactions, learners can decide when to contribute and prepare their text without pressure or fear of being interrupted; i.e., anxiety levels are dramatically reduced, and discussion is highly increased (Pratt & Sullivan, 1994). The risk of making mistakes in front of other learners and the consequent allocation of cognitive resources to the monitoring of one's linguistic accuracy and pronunciation also seem to be overcome in CMC (Strambi & Bovet, 2003). This idea was further investigated by Roed (2003) assuming that interaction via CMC results in the learner’s reduction of self-awareness and displaying less inhibition. The result would be more equality in learners’ participation and better learner engagement in activities involving collaboration (Kitade, 2000). In online interactions, Internet technologies support negotiation of meaning, the use of rhetorical structures, and the practice of literacy in the target culture when integrated to language learning, as suggested by Debski (2003).

2.11 Conclusion

Within the literature reviewed on minority and community language groups in Australia, there was no direct discussion linking the use of technology to language use and cultural maintenance, literacy, or identity. This research seeks to identify the viability of Internet as a means of communication for the Arabic-speaking community in Melbourne, and how community members feel about using new technologies as well as how they make use of the Arabic resources available online. In addition, we must investigate their language skills that will be needed to make use of computer technologies in the Arabic Language. This study might set a foundation for future studies examining language maintenance and shift and exploring how Internet-mediated communication is used to aid minority language maintenance.
Chapter Three: Research design

3.1 Introduction
This study aims at investigating the current situation of language and Internet use by the Arabic-speaking people living in Melbourne. It endeavors to uncover this community’s attitudes toward computer technologies and learn about their language choices, especially when using these technologies. Results of this study can be used in the future by researchers as a case study to draw useful conclusions on interactions within the Arabic-speaking community and other ethnic language communities. The results of this study can be compared with results of a similar study undertaken by Fitzgerald (2002) on the members of the Polish community in Melbourne. Such a comparison will allow drawing useful conclusions about the role technology can play in the maintenance of different languages and cultures and about those cultures themselves.

3.2 Expectations
It was expected that computer-mediated communication would play a great role in interactions of those who are familiar with the computer technologies. Web-based communication was supposed to be increasingly a supplement for traditional contact (e.g. face to face meetings, letter writing, and entertainment gatherings) amongst family and friends in the Arabic-speaking community. Based on literature review and personal observation, it was expected that the new generation of Australian-born Arabs would have some reading, writing and speaking problems in Arabic and a relatively better comprehension ability. However, it was assumed that the same generation would be more familiar with online technologies than older generations, which could be very beneficial for maintaining their Arabic language skills through online communication.

3.3 Pre-survey semi-structured interview
The semi-structured interview was conducted with five key informants of the Arabic-speaking community in Melbourne who were in charge of Arabic and Islamic clubs, schools, and associations. The aim of this interview was to identify authorized links through which social networks to recruit survey participants could be established. The interview also helped discover the attitudes and feelings toward using online technologies in the eyes of the highest educated and authorized figures of the Arabic-speaking community, who highlighted several issues concerning the trends and inclinations of the Arabic-speaking community officials toward employing Internet and web-based communication in Arabic-oriented projects for benefiting the community. The semi-structured interview included four sections asking questions about background, Internet usage and Arabic language, Internet communication and Arabic, and opinions about the future of the Arabic language in Australia (see appendix C). Responses to the interview questions were taken down as notes. The interviewees were provided with a plain language statement, available
in Arabic and English versions explaining the research. Also, consent forms were supplied to be read and signed by the interviewees.

### 3.4 Survey

This research was conducted through the use of a questionnaire to be completed by the Arabic-speaking people so that a larger number of participants could be included in the study. This method also allowed the Arabic-speaking community to contemplate their own use of Internet technologies and language to more fully express their attitudes. The participants of this study were 54 members of the Arabic-speaking community in Melbourne. They were mostly recommended by the key informants of the community as members of some Arabic and Islamic clubs, schools, and associations, such as East Preston Islamic College, Arabic School of Preston, and Islamic Community of Victoria. Some participants were also recruited from the researcher’s own social network in the community belonging to some institutes such as Maronite Trinity College and King Khalid College using a ‘snowball’ technique in the survey distribution. There was no specific age group targeted and participants ranged in age from 14-48.

All the participants were given a plain language statement, available in Arabic and English versions, explaining the research. A consent form was provided to be read and signed by participants, also available in both Arabic and English versions (see appendix B). There was also a separate consent form available for potential minor participants to be signed by their legal parents/guardians.

### 3.5 Questionnaire design

The questionnaire that participants completed was divided into six sections (see appendix C). Its design was based on Davis’ (1994) questionnaire used in her ethnographic study of language use in Luxembourg. Wisker (2001: 148) and Patton (1990: 298) were also useful in designing the questionnaire. A similar questionnaire was used by Fitzgerald (2002) on the use of networked communication by the Polonia living in Melbourne.

In the first section, participants answered questions to provide biographical and background information. In the second section, participants were asked questions about their language use, where and when Arabic is spoken, and their attitudes towards using it. The third section asked about the different domains in which the Arabic language is used either through active participation in Arabic-speaking community groups or passively through listening or watching Arabic language media. The fourth section asked participants to report on their Arabic literacy. In the next section of the questionnaire, participants were asked about their use of Internet communication, their communication preferences, and attitudes toward the use of these
technologies. In the last section, the participants were asked to hypothesize about how they would use language and technologies to communicate justifying their preference of means and language use in several situations.

An online version of the questionnaire was going to be set up for potential respondents, yet key informants did not seem to be enthusiastic about it due to the lack of an online mailing list of any sort for the Arabic-speaking community. In addition, a similar study by Fitzgerald (2002: 17) with an online version of the questionnaire displayed a noticeable prejudice for those who often accessed the Internet, as 41 of 56 participants completed the questionnaire online.

The questionnaire, in both versions Arabic and English, was piloted by four Arabic-speaking Australians, and some amendments were made to avoid potential ambiguity. The option of providing participants’ contact numbers was not given to avoid arousing their suspicion about the aims of the survey.

3.6 Data collection

Initially, interviews were conducted with five well-known key informants of the community who were considered influential in the community. Those key informants were performing principal roles in some Arabic and Islamic schools, clubs, or associations in Melbourne. They welcomed the idea and aim of the project and showed their pleasure that such a project was going to be carried out by one of the community members. Also, they offered their help regarding the recruitment of the survey participants.

More than 200 copies of the survey were given to those key informants and some other active members of the community to be passed to participants inside and outside these institutions following a ‘snowball’ technique. A number of the questionnaires was distributed among participants who were willing to take part in the project even those who lived in far suburbs, such as Doncaster and Dandenong, and did not join any organized group activity in the community. Those questionnaires were given to participants to be returned in a period of 2-3 weeks to any near Arabic or Islamic office in which a contact has already been established.

The overall reaction of the Arabic-speaking community members to the survey was disappointing. Most of the community members, aside from those who decided to participate, met the survey with either negligence or skepticism. The attitude of negligence and carelessness was drawn from the reaction of those who were handed in the survey and did not return it in spite of persistent reminders. Another camp in the community adopted public skepticism as a response to this survey though they were offered an explicit explanation about the objectives of this project.
by key informants or by the researcher, not to mention the plain language statement. The response of some of them was very offensive to the extent that one of them said pointing at the researcher, “Look at this guy, he wants to find out whether we are terrorists or not.” Such a response and some other similar responses deterred some community members who were willing to participate from doing so. Another segment of those skeptical people was more academic and highly educated. They justified their refusal to complete the survey by claiming that the results of this survey might be misused and taken advantage of for some purposes against the Arabic or Islamic community.

Unfortunately, only 54 out of 200 questionnaires were returned on time. A number of questionnaires were handed in after the collected data were processed, so they could not be included in the study. 14 questionnaires of the Arabic version of the questionnaire were completed. Most of the respondents who used the Arabic version were over 30 years old or they arrived in Australia relatively at a later age. Within days of the introduction of the survey, responses began to be received. The majority of responses took quite a longer time than expected. Responses varied in length and seemed to be affected by the lack of space due to the nature of the paper form questionnaire which limited the size of responses, though several respondents did not bother writing long comments. It has been noticed that Arabic-speaking people did not like questions that involve justifications. Some participants complained to the researcher in person about questions that asked about the reason behind using a certain language at home, or why they preferred a particular means of communication.

It has also been asked repeatedly about the necessity of signing the consent form and whether they could complete the survey without it. It seemed that the consent form consisting of those “big words”, as participants commented, was not necessary according to them. However, the researcher tried to convince them that these documents, consent form and PLS, were made essential by the Human Research Ethical Committee (HREC) to ensure confidentiality of information and agreement of participants to do the survey voluntarily.

3.7 Data analysis
This study is primarily based on quantitative data. However, some data can be qualified to define, shape, or direct the analysis of the quantitative data referring to a similar method used by Fitzgerald (2002) in his study of Polonia in Melbourne. Variables with strong correlations from the quantitative analysis were compared with qualitative information that was provided by participants in the questionnaires. Obvious trends that were discovered through statistical analysis verified certain qualitative anecdotes collected through the researcher’s observations while living within the Arabic-speaking environment and his involvement in its activities.
3.7.1 Quantitative data analysis

Data, such as place of birth, home language, frequency of computer use, and experience with technologies, were processed using the SPSS 12 Data Editor for statistical analysis. Descriptive statistics were run on all variables in order to describe the survey participants and to see how the data skewed. Correlations were also used to establish potential relationships between different measured variables to see how strong they were. Martin’s (1999) scale of correlation was adapted to determine the initial strength of the correlations:

- 0.80 – 1.00  Strong association between variables
- 0.60 – 0.79  Strong to moderate correlation
- 0.40 – 0.59  Moderate correlation
- 0.30 – 0.39  Weak to moderate correlation
- 0.20 – 0.29  Weak correlation
- 0.00 – 0.19  Little, if any, correlation

All correlations drawn in this study were significant at the 0.01 level. Data was crosstabulated to enable comparison of participants who received education in Arabic-speaking countries through the critical age of language skill development (Lightbown & Spada, 1999). Of the total 54 participants, 23 of them lived in Arabic countries through the age of 12. This statistical data was used to provide a guide to examining the data qualitatively.

3.7.2 Qualitative data analysis

The questionnaire was analyzed then pattern coded according to obvious trends. Trends were also categorized. Miles and Huberman’s (1994: 69) models of patter coding were adopted after reading all the questionnaires (see appendix D for selected responses). Obvious trends fell into the following categories: language and technology preference, comments on literacy, opinions on the importance of speaking Arabic, membership to Arabic-speaking organizations, exposure to Arabic-language media either online or through television or radio, and opinions on whether the Internet offers encouragement to use one language or another.

3.8 Human Research Ethics Committee approval

This research was authorized and approved upon by the Human Research Ethics Committee (HREC) at the University of Melbourne (see appendix A). The approval obtained included a permission to conduct a semi-structured interview with the key informants of the community and to distribute a self-completion questionnaire.
Chapter Four: Results

4.1 Introduction
This chapter presents the results of the questionnaire survey on the use of technology and language preferences among the members of the Arabic-speaking community in Melbourne. The results of this study are reported in three main sections. The first section divulges language preferences. This data provides a view of how Arabic and English are used by the Arabic-speaking people in Melbourne, and illustrates how Arabic is being maintained by participants and their families.

The second section reveals how technology is currently used in Arabic and English among the Arabic-speaking Australians living in Melbourne. This section highlights how participants currently use a variety of technology in general, and more specifically, how they utilize it to communicate in Arabic.

The third section shows the participants’ attitudes towards language and technology use. This section compares the feelings these participants held about using various forms of technology and using technology through the Arabic-language medium.

4.2. Language use and abilities
Four of the 54 participants “never” spoke Arabic at home. After tracing back the data, two of them were Australian-born. The other two were born in countries where Arabic is not spoken frequently and did not receive proper education in Arabic then arrived straight to Australia at an early age. A 17-year-old reported that his mother is Turkish while the other three participants reported that they spoke a language other than Arabic to one of their parents giving an indication that one of their parents is not Arabic-speaking. 64.8 percent of the respondents spoke Arabic at home either “most of the time” or “all of the time”. The rest of the respondents either spoke Arabic “sometimes” or “rarely” at home as shown below in Table 4.2.1.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Number of Participants</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
<th>Cumulative percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Never</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>7.4</td>
<td>7.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rarely</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>11.1</td>
<td>18.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sometimes</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>16.7</td>
<td>35.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Most of the time</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>31.5</td>
<td>66.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All of the time</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>33.3</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>54</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Participants’ responses to speaking Arabic outside the home also varied. Only two participants reported speaking Arabic “all of the time” outside the home, due to the nature of their job though one of them reported speaking Arabic “sometimes” at home. The majority of participants, 70.4 percent, spoke Arabic either “most of the time” or ‘sometimes” outside the home. Interestingly, one of the participants who “never” spoke Arabic at home reported speaking it rarely outside the home with friends.

Table 4.2.2

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Number of Participants</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
<th>Cumulative percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Never</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>7.4</td>
<td>7.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rarely</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>18.5</td>
<td>25.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sometimes</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>42.6</td>
<td>68.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Most of the time</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>27.8</td>
<td>96.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All of the time</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3.7</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>54</strong></td>
<td><strong>100.0</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Participants reported speaking Arabic to their family members occasionally with a great consciousness to keep speaking Arabic to their parents. Most of the parents did not accept middle-way solutions for the language use and urged their children speak Arabic at home. Several parents reported that their children started speaking English once they were left alone. Another parent said, “What can we do about it? My kids go to school from 9am to 4 pm and then they get busy with their homework until they go to bed; they don’t even have enough time to speak much Arabic at home.” Parents showed a clear insistence on speaking Arabic all the time to their children so that they maintain it. I personally observed some parents speaking Arabic all the time to their children who responded all in English. What was obvious is that young people were totally able to understand Arabic but their spoken Arabic was broken or mixed with English.

Conversely, some young participants claimed that they spoke Arabic to their parents because they did not understand much English. They also tried to please their parents by speaking Arabic to them and sounded happier if one of the parents did not insist on their speaking Arabic. A 15-year-old female said, “I speak English to my dad because he was born here and I feel more comfortable speaking to him in English, and I speak English with mum when I do not know how to say a word in Arabic, yeah but mostly Arabic.” Also, young participants reported their tendency to speak English to their siblings because it was a more natural language to them. Some young respondents spoke English all the time but they, now and then, spoke their few Arabic words for nothing but fun.
Respondents reported speaking both Arabic and English with relatives and friends who were not able to speak much English. Some other respondents spoke either Arabic or English depending on the topic of the conversation and said that there were certain topics that could only be discussed either in Arabic only or English only. A 46-year-old male participant showed a greater concern about the language and said, “I speak Arabic to my friends mostly to preserve the language, but we turn to English sometimes to show assimilation.” Most of the respondents reported speaking Arabic only to old people of the community simply because they do not understand English.

13 of the 54 respondents reported not being able to write in Arabic. Participants who reported “good” to very “good” writing ability represented 44.4 percent of the total as shown in the table below in Table 4.2.3

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Writing ability in Arabic</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ability level</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not at all</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Poor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fair</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Good</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Very good</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As it was expected, younger generation reported weaker writing ability in Arabic while participants who were 35 years or older reported high levels of writing ability. Therefore, there was a moderate significance of correlation between age and self-reported writing ability as shown in Table 4.2.4

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Correlation of writing in Arabic and Age</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Writing ability in Arabic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Considering the critical age of language acquisition, there was also a moderate correlation found between having been educated in Arabic countries until at least 12 years old and writing ability \((r = .479)\); a similar correlation was sketched with reading ability \((r = .459)\). Many participants who were obviously competent in Arabic did not respond to the question of having taken Arabic language classes, so potential correlation between reading and writing ability and having taken Arabic language classes was undermined. However, having left Arabic-speaking countries at a later age was an important factor for higher writing ability with a moderate to moderately strong correlation \((r = .528)\).
It was no surprise that there was a strong association between reading in Arabic and writing ability in Arabic with highly strong statistical correlation.

Table 4.2.5

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Writing ability in Arabic</th>
<th>Pearson Correlation</th>
<th>Reading ability in Arabic</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Sig. (2-tailed)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>.838</td>
<td>.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>N 54</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The majority of respondents who reported not being able to read in Arabic were mainly young participants who were under 30 years old. Conversely, none of the participants who were over 35 reported not being able to read or write in Arabic. Most participants indicated their willingness to being able to speak Arabic, but they could not go over the difficulties of reading and writing. One respondent, a 19-year-old female, accounted for not being able to read in Arabic saying, “Because my Arabic is really poor and it is hard for me to understand what I am reading”. Another 22-year-old female respondent said, “I was never taught how to read Arabic and now I have no intention to read”. Most comments on not being able to read in Arabic revolved around reading difficulties and not being taught Arabic at an earlier age. That may give a clear indication that acquiring literacy at an earlier age is, by far, easier than learning it at an older age.

4.3 Use of technology

This section presents how Arabic-speaking people in Melbourne reported their use of technology, and more specifically, the use of computers and Internet communications. Additionally, respondents reported their use of some other methods of communications such as telephone, SMS, and traditional mail. The results demonstrate how the community used these technologies generally and their language preferences.

4.3.1 General use

The majority of participants used the personal computer either “daily” (57.4 percent) or “several times per week” (11.1 percent). The others reported using computers on a weekly or monthly basis. Only two respondents reported using the computer only once a year. Participants who used computers more frequently represented younger age categories as shown in Table 4.3.1 below. Only five of the respondents did not have a regular Internet access though one of them, a 35 year male, reported a daily use of computers at work. Most of the participants reported that they started using the Internet in English. Only three participants started using the Internet in Arabic though one of them, a 32 year-old-male, received his entire education in Australia.
Participants started using the Internet for a variety of purposes. All generations were fascinated by the Internet for its novelty several years ago. There was a common purpose for all younger respondents which was school research as part of assignments. Younger respondents also used the Internet for multiplayer games, music downloads, chat and email. On the other hand, adult respondents showed a great interest in surfing news websites to find about world news and up to date reports about the home countries. Some other uses of the Internet were reported such as business, online banking and shopping. Both groups of participants obviously used the Internet for learning and information gathering. A 47-year-old participant said,” Internet is the only means that provides me with any kind of information easily and without even leaving my seat.”

Telephone was reported as a highly used means of communication being used by (96.3 percent) of the participants. Respondents favored the phone because of its low prices and the importance of hearing the voice clearly. On the other hand, mobile SMS did not seem to be a popular means of communication as it was used by only (20.4 percent). Online SMS also marked very low use among the respondents (only 16.7 percent in English and 15.6 percent in Arabic).
The next subsection reviews how the Arabic-speaking Australians use communication technologies more specifically in Arabic.

4.3.2 Arabic language use

Arabic use domains section of the questionnaire (see Appendix C) asked participants about their Arabic media use including television and radio. 61.1 percent of the participants reported listening to radio broadcasts in Arabic. Younger generation members (roughly aged 20 and younger) mainly listened to music and news looking forwards to having more interesting programs like fun or comedy programs. Adults had listened to news and religious broadcasts, and they were interested in more religious programs. Participants listened to the available Arabic stations such as Arabic SBS, Middle East, and LBC. Some participants mentioned listening to some stations which were not very popular, such as 2ME and Islamic Radio. 59.3 percent of the participants reported watching television programs in Arabic. All generations watched comedies and movies. Younger generations wished that they would have more romantic and horror movies in Arabic. Adults wanted greater presence of religious themes on television. News on television did not seem to capture any attention by participants the way it did on the radio.

It was assumed that respondents who might not have been connected to Arabic language media had some potential that they might have taken part in online communication activities. The assumption may languish if we know that English was absolutely dominant in the use of most Internet use domains. Table 4.3.2 below summarizes the domains of use that were examined and the percentage of those responding to the questionnaire using each domain. Correlations between the use of one type of technology in English and the same in Arabic by individuals were weak, aside from downloading music (r = .479).
Table 4.3.2

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Tool or purpose</th>
<th>English (percent)</th>
<th>Arabic (percent)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Surfing the web</td>
<td>74.1</td>
<td>38.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Email</td>
<td>66.7</td>
<td>29.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Newsgroups</td>
<td>24.1</td>
<td>24.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bulletin board</td>
<td>1.9</td>
<td>3.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Multiplayer games</td>
<td>13.0</td>
<td>1.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shopping</td>
<td>14.8</td>
<td>1.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Music downloads</td>
<td>33.3</td>
<td>14.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chat</td>
<td>35.2</td>
<td>20.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Greeting cards</td>
<td>7.4</td>
<td>13.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Online SMS</td>
<td>14.8</td>
<td>9.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Online radio</td>
<td>27.8</td>
<td>18.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professional reasons</td>
<td>11.1</td>
<td>3.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School research</td>
<td>38.9</td>
<td>9.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Job hunting</td>
<td>22.2</td>
<td>5.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Online learning</td>
<td>11.1</td>
<td>5.6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Survey participants reported that the telephone was the most preferable method to communicate with friends and family members overseas because it enabled them to talk instantly with their interlocutors very clearly. Many comments about using telephones by participants were similar to what one 18-year-old male said, “Telephone makes a direct contact quickly and not like Internet which takes a bit longer to establish a connection.”

There were many complaints about the lack of support for typing Arabic characters, especially, in emails. However, the majority of respondents agreed on the fact that email is very convenient in terms of cost and speed, but it is improper for instant message exchange. Some respondents also raised privacy as a critical issue dealing with emails. Some younger participants complained about being forced to type which meant extra work to them. A 15-year-old female respondent said,” My favourite thing about email is you get to email your friends, but my least favourite thing that I can’t be bothered typing.” Table 4.3.3 below illustrates the favourite methods of communications by the Arabic-speaking Australians in the survey.
As expected, there was a strong association between using email in Arabic and reading ability; that is, the more one reads, the better that person’s writing is, and as mentioned above, there was a strong correlation between reading and writing abilities in Arabic ($r = .838$). Nevertheless, the correlation was weak to moderate between writing emails in Arabic and reading in Arabic ($r = .354$) and writing ability ($r = .384$). After going over the data, it was discovered that those participants who reported their being able to write in Arabic did not use the email in Arabic as it was expected. Rather, they used email in English or did not report using it at all. 41 out of the 54 participants reported being able to write in Arabic, only 16 of them used email in Arabic.

Hypothetical situations were given in the survey asking about preferred methods of communication and language preference by the Arabic-speaking people in Melbourne in certain situations. Telephone (including the mobile phone) was the dominant type of communication among participants in the given hypothetical situations. Most respondents reported using Arabic in most of the situations. Personal invitations, in particular, were considered so formal and of a great cultural importance that using such methods like email or SMS would show a lack or respect. Therefore, if not face to face, most respondents would use the telephone to invite their guests in Arabic. Several respondents preferred using online bulletin boards and emails to invite a group of friends to youth or sports activities to inform as many members as possible. SMS in English was used by several participants in situations like a station pick-up or asking friends to meet up. Telephone or mobile phone in Arabic was reported to be the only way of informing family of being late so that they were not worried. Greetings by respondents were mainly preferred in English using either SMS or cards. Some respondents would rather use cards saying it is a lasting thing to remember and a more classic way of being nice to people.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Method of communication</th>
<th>Percentage of respondents</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Telephone</td>
<td>96.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Email</td>
<td>48.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chat</td>
<td>33.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SMS</td>
<td>20.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Videoconferencing</td>
<td>20.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Computer chat with microphone</td>
<td>14.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Telegram</td>
<td>1.9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
A crosstabulation of the Arabic technology usage data enabled a distinction to be drawn between those raised in Arabic countries through the critical age of language acquisition and those who left Arabic countries before that age or were born in Australia. The results of the comparisons show that the group of participants who were educated in Arabic countries until the age of 12 has a higher percentage of Arabic-language email users (52% compared to 16%). They were also more likely to surf the web in Arabic (60% compared to 28%). On the other hand, Australian-born participants or those who arrived to Australia in the critical age outstripped those educated in Arabic countries during the same age in the percentage of Arabic music download (32% percent compared to 00.0%), and online learning in Arabic (12% compared to 00.0%). Table 4.3.4 below elaborates explicitly those comparisons in a number of variables. Data illustrated in this table show that those who lived and were educated in Arabic countries through the critical period were more likely to use technologies dependent on written Arabic, as emails, newsgroups, and greeting cards. It also supports the hypothesis about the weak written skills of those who were born here or arrived at an earlier age bearing in mind their good comprehension skills (e.g. downloading music). Moreover, willingness and desire to learn Arabic can be exemplified through the higher percentage of online learning in Arabic users by those who were born in Australia or arrived at an earlier age.

Table 4.3.4

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Comparison of computer usage in Arabic between participants who studied outside Australia until age 12 and above and those who studied in Australia during their critical age</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Participants who studied outside Australia until age 12 and above (Percent)</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reading in Arabic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Writing in Arabic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Surfing the web in Arabic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Email use in Arabic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Newsgroups use in Arabic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bulletin boards in Arabic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Multiplayer games in Arabic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shopping in Arabic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Music download in Arabic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chat in Arabic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Greeting cards in Arabic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Online SMS in Arabic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Online radio in Arabic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professional reasons in Arabic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School research in Arabic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Job hunting in Arabic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Online learning in Arabic</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
4.4 Attitudes

Throughout the questionnaire, participants wrote their feelings on a variety of issues related to language and technology use. This section reviews the common threads in their feelings and highlights some differences on language preference and technology use besides potential difficulties that were reported as hindering the Arabic-language use by computers. I also drew on responses of the interviews conducted with the key informants of the Arabic-speaking community in Melbourne.

4.4.1 Attitudes on language preference

The Arabic language represents a viable means of communication within the Arabic-speaking Australians in everyday situations. Younger generations spoke Arabic to communicate with older members of the community, especially their parents, as a way of pleasing them. Young participants seemed to have difficulties using Arabic and they used a form of Arabic which was backed up by English in many instances. Hence, English dominated most of their conversations because it was more natural to them. A 19-year-old female wrote about her parents, “Their spoken English is not that good so I am forced to speak in Arabic.” Another 15-year-old female participant reported speaking English to her siblings saying, “Only when I am at home and around my parents we speak Arabic, but when we are alone we speak in English.” On the other hand, older generations spoke Arabic to their children even with potential misunderstanding because they wanted to keep the Arabic going at home. I also noticed several parents back up their Arabic with English sometimes to ensure that they have been fully understood. A 47-year-old male respondent wrote, “I try to speak Arabic to kids but I feel myself forced to explain certain things to them in English because they do not get it in Arabic.”

Arabic-language schools are popular among Arabic-speaking Australians. In total, 50 percent of the respondents had taken an Arabic-language course here. A comparison of Arabic-Australians who were born here or arrived in the critical period of language acquisition with participants who left Arabic countries after that age shows disparate numbers. 61 percent of respondents who did not live in Arabic countries in the sensitive age of language development attended Arabic-language classes, compared to 34.8 percent of those who did live in Arabic countries through this period. Many parents enrolled their children in these schools which were mainly Saturday and Sunday schools. Some other respondents reported that they studied Arabic in some private schools as part of their studies. It was also reported that Arabic is being supported as one of the CSF (Curriculum Standard Framework) languages in Australia. Attending private Arabic-language classes represented the participants’ own motivation to learn Arabic either for religious or cultural incentives.
Other respondents said that they should learn Arabic because it is the language of the Holy Qur’an and it is necessary to understand Islam deeply. As there were religious incentives, secular purposes were also behind learning Arabic by some other respondents. These purposes varied from being academic to commercial in nature. A 37-year-old male cited, “I studied Arabic for certain interests and one of them is to undertake LOTE\(^1\) courses.” Some younger respondents mentioned that they learned Arabic because it was a compulsory subject at school. A 21-year-old female participant wrote, “It was one of my VCE subjects and I am good at Arabic which will help me get good marks.”

Some participants showed a great passion toward being able to speak in Arabic. Only 1 out of the 54 participants reported that being able to speak Arabic does not bear any importance to him saying “I speak English and I am totally convinced that it is totally enough for me here in Australia”.

On the other hand, the majority of the other participants reflected that Arabic is important to very important for different motives. Most of these motives are connected to religion, linguistic and ethnic identity. Some participants who had an obvious Islamic affiliation justified its importance by being the language of the Holy Qur’an and it is important to be able to read it in Arabic. Some of them explained that readers of the Holy Qur’an get rewards from God for reading every letter. The importance of Arabic was social to some other respondents. A 22-years-old female said, “It has become important recently to me as my fiancé does not speak any English.” Other participants said that Arabic is the only way to communicate with their parents and relatives. Another type of importance for the Arabic language was reported as being cultural. Arabic music and the rich beautiful language, as they said, make it very important to keep. Few participants mentioned that Arabic is their mother tongue and it is very important to enhance the ethnic identity.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 4.4.1</th>
<th>How important it is to be able to speak in Arabic</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Level of importance</td>
<td>Frequency</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not at all</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Normal</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Important</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Very important</td>
<td>43</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

4.4.2 Attitudes on technology use

The telephone was the preferred method in communicating with family members and friends in Arabic countries. Respondents justified their use of telephone saying that it was quicker and allowed them to hear the voice of their interlocutors clearly. Also, telephone allowed face-to-

\(^1\) LOTE—Language Other Than English
face-like conversations on some topics that required instant “give and take” discussions. The lagging development of Internet infrastructure and not using it by some relatives or friends overseas were two main reasons for not using Internet communication by some participants who valued the practicality of tools like videoconferencing and audio chat.

Email was a feasible method of communication among the Arabic-speaking Melbournians. However, there was a sense of apprehension among participants towards issues like privacy and delay of the delivery of the response. Several participants cited that email receivers may not be available online for a period of time and that was a negative aspect of the email. There was a disagreement on the role of email among participants. Some said it should be used in formal situations where drafts could be kept as a record. Some others mentioned that email was very common in communicating informal messages among friends. What most participants agreed on was that email was not an appropriate means of communicating personal news like death, wedding, and important events. Rather, they preferred using telephone to keep privacy or to provide emotional support in some other situations. Letters and cards were more classical alternatives for those who preferred that their special ones overseas could keep something to remember in certain events such as wedding and happy occasions.

The use of the Arabic language on the Internet was the most frequent barrier reported by respondents. Most participants complained about the lack of Arabic-language software support. One of the key informants of the community explained this claim saying:

There are no physical obstacles such as software and resources because they have become available though software is sometimes hard to find. The real problem here is that young Arabic people lack the knowledge in Arabic. I am talking mainly about young people because they represent the majority of Internet users. Our problem simply is that competent Internet users and designers are not competent in Arabic, and competent Arabic-speaking people are not competent in computers.

Participants were asked to comment on whether the Internet encourages or discourages the use of Arabic. Several participants reported that Internet might discourage the use of Arabic because English is the dominant language online and participants whenever they had a language choice they just click the English language option. A highly educated respondent wrote as if he responded to the previous attitude, “I suggest creating a sort of Arabic search source online to offer Arabic-speaking people with more effective recourses in all fields. Current sources are limited and move people to look for some other resources in English which is not good for maintaining Arabic.” Participants also viewed the Internet as an encouraging factor for Arabic to be used widely, provided that users commit themselves to using only Arabic even if they
encounter language difficulties. Offering online courses in Arabic was reported as a positive aspect of the Internet enhancing the Arabic language. Many respondents suggested that using the Internet to discuss daily issues; typing and reading that in Arabic is very useful providing a sort of unconscious learning and making the use of Arabic a “great fun”. A former Arabic Studies Department Chairman and Arabic school principal indicated the impact of the Internet communication on language maintenance saying:

For sure, anything that forces mind to recall and respond quickly is very useful in learning languages, and that what communication online is all about. Internet chat and the other online tools are sorts of learning without a teacher. So you can compose your best of the language communicating with others without being aware of errors. As long as the idea is conveyed, this is, per se, a breakthrough. Furthermore, fluency can be obtained via online communications with all the new words provoked on the screen.
Chapter Five: Discussion

5.1 Introduction
This chapter discusses significant findings of the survey of the Arabic-speaking community in Melbourne. It focuses on the use of the Arabic language in Melbourne by this population, their Arabic writing ability, and their uses of Internet communication in the Arabic language. It wraps up with a reflection on this survey.

5.2 Use of Arabic in Melbourne
The results of the questionnaires show that most of the respondents were able to speak Arabic though they spoke it “rarely” or “sometimes” either at home or outside the home. A similar number of respondents reported that the ability to speak Arabic was very important to them even those who reported that they “never” spoke Arabic at home. A number of respondents cited religion as the only motive to speak Arabic so they could better understand Islam and the Holy Qur’an. Those respondents who seemed to have an Islamic religious affiliation did not refer to the importance of Arabic to sustain ethnic identity or culture. On the other hand, some other respondents cited ethnic identity and communication with family members as reasons for the importance of speaking Arabic. Participants who reported that speaking Arabic was not of a great importance to them were found to be mainly less than 20 years old. These results were much similar to those reported by Clyne and Kipp (1999) which indicated that Arabic-speaking Muslims’ motivation for maintaining Arabic was to have access to the Holy Qur’an, to communicate with family members, and to visit culture of origin. The same study reported an overall support for the maintenance of the ethnic identity among Australian Lebanese and Egyptians. This support had a great impact on the perception of community language to ethnic identity though this support seemed weaker in the younger generation (Clyne and Kipp, 1999: 195).

Based on the previous research (Patkowski, 1980; Lightbown & Spada, 1999), this study adopted the age of 12 as the marker for the sensitive period of language acquisition. It was discovered that 61.3 percent of participants who did not live in Arabic countries through the sensitive age, attended Arabic language classes. This gives a clear indication that there is a discrepancy in attitudes towards the importance of Arabic depending, I suppose, on cultural or religious affiliations, though most participants agreed on the importance of speaking Arabic. Participants with a certain religious affiliation more or less support the maintenance of the language for religious purposes, and so do people with strong traditional and cultural belonging. This could aptly be linked to Clyne’s (1992:131-137) assumption that the relationship between religion and a specific language may vary according to culture and religious ideology and tradition. Conversely,
some others may lack the motive to maintain the language, and thus, they do not show enthusiasm about the mother language maintenance, or at most, they might show their support but they do not put it in practice.

The sensitive period is individual and lasts until approximately the onset of puberty. Attending Arabic language schools by the young community members held the importance of the Arabic language to those who attended Arabic language courses or to their parents who wanted to pass Arabic language and culture to younger generations. The notion of schooling in the target language has been demonstrated by Fishman (1991) as an influential factor that helps foster language maintenance. As reported by Clyne and Kipp (1999), the Lebanese and Egyptian second generation went through a high rate of language shift. Thus, attending Arabic language lessons may help curtail language shift in younger generations. It was expected that young Arabic-speaking individuals would report speaking English to each other. According to the survey results, the Arabic language remains important to the Arabic-speaking Melbournians of all ages, but younger members of the community shy away from maintaining Arabic because they find English a more natural means of communication. This is met with a great opposition by their parents who always keep speaking Arabic to them even when they are responded to in English.

Overall, the results of this study have shown that older participants were able to communicate more easily in Arabic. Young participant’s ability to communicate in Arabic was highly affected by their family and friends influence as well as schooling in Arabic. On the other hand, when communication difficulties arose, young participants often slip back to English which is the preferred language by younger members of the community.

A comment on the political influences
It seems that the famous slogan of “shared Arabness” that Clyne and Kipp (1999) referred to after the Gulf War, which was common among the Arabic-speaking people, has been affected negatively by the current global political situation. I assume that Arabs in Melbourne have given up rehabilitating the blurry image of Arabs, and especially, Arabic-speaking Muslims. Rather, they tended to escape the reality and preferred to be just “Aussies” than “Australian Arabs” to ensure living peacefully in the new home. That was obvious through the distribution of this survey. As I mentioned (see chapter 3), 54 questionnaires have been completed out of 200 questionnaires that were actually distributed, not to mention the large number of those who apologized for not being interested in participating (once they knew it was about the Arabic-speaking people alone). Another example, only 46.6 percent of participants reported being members of Arabic-speaking associations. The other respondents either did not respond to that question, or replied “no”. After tracing back their responses, I found out that most of those, who
reported not participating in group activities, were given the questionnaires in some Arabic or Islamic organizations, and they submitted them to the same organizations or clubs. That is, they denied being participants or members of Arabic group activities. On the other hand, some other members of the Arabic community just displayed pride of their Arabic identity and might have clarified, whenever this issue is aroused, that what happened overseas would not represent what real Arabs and Muslims are all about. Such findings may give a clue that Arabic-speaking people are going through a real dilemma concerning ethnic identity, and subsequently, cultural and language issues due to the current global political situation. Moreover, this indicates one way or another, the significance of ethnic identity and may somehow support Smoliczs’ claim (1984) that ethnic identity is stronger than ties to a language.

As Australians, young Arabic-speaking people are urged to carry on the Arabic culture and language that their parents brought to Australia with them or that was passed down to them. Hence, they should not be affected by global changes and personal political attitudes. It would be suggested to make official efforts to increase the community awareness of the Australian policy towards ethnic communities and minority languages which strongly supports the maintenance of their language and culture. Australia has a long standing and continuing commitment to the core values of the nation which are pluralist, diverse, democratic society based on freedom, equality of opportunity, tolerance and peace, and those values have also given rise to anti-discrimination laws (Australian Teacher Education Association, 1998). Accordingly, it is assumed that ethnic languages in Australia have been looked after as natural resources that should be revitalized to the advantage of the Australian people affairs. Therefore, language maintenance should be construed as a national duty besides being a cultural or religious necessity.

5.3 Arabic writing ability

About 44.4 percent of the survey’s respondents rated their writing skills in Arabic as being “good” or “very good.” A moderate correlation between age and writing ability was discovered including all participants regardless of place of birth— the older the participant was, the better their Arabic writing skills were. Similar results were presented in Clyne and Kipp’s study (1999: 216) on the Arabic Egyptian and Lebanese groups which demonstrated that over-35s were more confident in their Arabic written skills than under-35s. It was not surprising that 95.7 percent of those who lived in Arabic countries through their critical age were able to write in Arabic, while only 88 percent of those who lived and were educated in Australia through their critical age reported being able to write in Arabic (see Table 4.3.4). Therefore, having left Arabic countries at a later age was held as a factor for being able to write in Arabic with a moderate to moderately strong correlation. This correlation takes into account the age at which the respondent arrived in Australia, be it thirteen years old or above. It also relates age as a factor to experience with
language and therefore ability. Accordingly, none of 35 year-old or above participants reported poor reading ability. On the other hand, the thirteen year-old would have completed Arabic education during the sensitive period, but would not have had as much varied experience in as many situations with the Arabic language, especially writing, as the older individuals. When leaving Arabic-speaking countries, the older individuals were the better their writing skills and probably their other language skills are. Consequently, it is recommended that parents begin literacy tasks with their children at an early age, before entering ethnic or mainstream schooling (Katsikis, 1993). The importance of a language can be bolstered by writing which provides a vital means a person use to communicate in a language. Hence, it has been held that people’s attitudes toward language change if they are not able to write in it having a lesser means of communication (Saunders, 1991).

5.4 Use of media by Arabic-speaking Melbournians

There was a fair number of participants reported their connection with Arabic media, radio and television, which were broadcasted either from Australia or directly from Arabic countries. About 61.1 percent of respondents listened to Arabic radio broadcasts. The rate was a bit lower with watching Arabic language television with 59.3 percent of all participants.

Listening to Arabic radio broadcasts was very popular among participants 35 years old or above. All members of this age group listened to Arabic radio for mainly news and religious themes. Conversely, younger respondents were less interested in listening to the Arabic radio, though some young participants reported listening to Arabic radio broadcasts for music and fun programs. SBS radio broadcasting in Arabic was the most popular among respondents besides Middle East and LBC Arabic radio stations.

It was discovered that watching television in Arabic is more interesting to younger generation than listening to the radio. 13 out of 18 participants under the age of 20 watched Arabic television programs. The number of Arabic television viewers went down as the age category went up. It is assumed that time is a crucial factor controlling adults’ media choices. That is, watching Arabic television can only be available at home where cable or satellite has been established which is not the case with workplaces. Therefore, adults find it easier to listen to radio broadcasts outside the home where they spend the most of the day. On the other hand, younger participants find enough time after school to relax and watch Arabic television programs in their leisure time.

Interest in media in the target language is a good sign of support for language maintenance. Radio and television provide a tangible contact to Arabic heritage and culture and bring it right to people’s homes. Besides, they provide entertaining alternative to family curtailing the
pervasiveness of the English-language media and introducing more domains of Arabic language use.

5.5 Use of Internet communication by Arabic-speaking Melbournians

Though 54.7 percent of respondents were able to write in Arabic, only 29.6 percent sent emails in Arabic. Similarly, the correlation between reading ability in Arabic and using email in Arabic was weak to moderate indicating that reading in Arabic did not help much write emails in Arabic. This is an indication that email may not be a preferable means of communication in Arabic among participants either for cultural reasons or for not feeling confident about the writing ability in Arabic. Many respondents denied the appropriateness of using email to communicate certain messages which were mostly preferred to be communicated through telephone such as personal news and invitations.

Writing emails in Arabic could be taken on as a choice among the community members to extend their social circle in which they are able to communicate in Arabic. This sort of activities is assumed to support social communication through performing (Greenfield, 2003). Hence, it is suggested that the Arabic community members reduce the influence of the social and cultural constraints that may hinder using the email to communicate daily life messages. The email can be an efficient communication tool helping overcome lack of confidence in writing Arabic, as it has been discovered that email could facilitate communication, reduce anxiety, and increase discussions in a certain language (Pratt & Sullivan, 1994). It has also been held that email develops the writing/thinking connections and facilitates social learning (Greenfield, 2003). Warschauer (1996) asserts the functionality of email exchanges to improve writing skills, especially for those who do not have the opportunity to write in a certain language.

The results of the survey show that the group of participants who were educated in Arabic countries until the age of 12 was more likely to use Internet communication tools in Arabic, especially tools requiring written skills. On the other hand, Australian-born participants or those who arrived to Australia in the critical age outstripped those educated in Arabic countries during the same age in the percentage of Arabic music download and online learning in Arabic. This may be an indicator that their writing ability lags behind their spoken and comprehension skills, and it also signifies their willingness and desire to learn Arabic online. What is more, those who missed the chance of living in Arabic countries display a passion and fondness of the mother culture through downloading Arabic music which can be a very effective linguistic tool. In this context, a former Arabic Department Chairman said:

It would be very helpful to establish language learning online and to set up communities where young people can communicate and exchange information in
Arabic. Interestingly, online Arabic music is an uncovered domain. Repetition of songs works as a good starter to learn a language. In fact, music has not been valued as a teaching tool. Language has music embedded in it, and your ears have to pick up the rhythm as attentively as musicians do with music.

By receiving education in Arabic-speaking countries through the sensitive period, Arabic-speaking Australians were able to develop their language skills. It has been assumed that learners who begin learning before puberty are much more likely to reach native-like proficiency than those who begin later (Patkowski, 1980; Lightbown & Spada, 1999). Those who are educated in Australia in their sensitive period are not offered enough schooling in Arabic even if they attend Arabic language classes which are mainly held on weekends. However, young participants who attended Arabic language classes rate their writing skills highly though they may not compensate for full Arabic education. Thus, incorporating Internet communication tools into the Arabic language learning inside and outside the classroom could be very advantageous in terms of extending the opportunities of learning despite of class time limit. CMC can offer the Arabic learners an enjoyable means of communication which reduces the risk of making mistakes in front of others. The monitoring of one's linguistic accuracy and pronunciation also seem to be overcome in CMC (Strambi & Bovet, 2003), so it can be a gateway to get familiar with the mother language and culture. By getting engaged in online learning environments using Internet communication, younger members and learners who are not familiar with Arabic language and culture are likely to experience less self-awareness and display less inhibition as reported by Roed (2003) in language learning contexts. It is recommended to focus on pursuing the learners’ area of interest providing tools that were reported to be more preferred by the members of the Arabic community such as music download, chat, and videoconferencing. The integration of such tools in the Arabic language classes and even outside the classroom walls is more natural and more likely to be appealing to members of the Arabic-speaking community in Melbourne.

5.6 Reflection on the study
This survey of the use of media and Internet communication by the Arabic-speaking Melbournians has several limitations. The study was only for the Arabic-speaking Australians leaving in the area of Melbourne excluding other Arabic-speaking people in other areas such as New South Wales which has the largest number of the Arabic speaking population in Australia. Hence, results are not generalized to all of the Arabic-speaking Australians because a representative sample was not obtained. In addition, participants were not randomly selected, and religious variation was not considered as a variable in the study. Future studies can further investigate the religious influence on language maintenance among Australian-Arabs.
Some complaints were made by participants about the length of the questionnaire. Further studies can avoid this problem by providing more closed questions and formatting them in multiple-choice patterns, so that it does not take participants a longer time to complete. It is interesting to note that female participants provided the most insightful and complete questionnaires. This can be attributed to less time commitments, and spending longer time using computer technology and media, or their eagerness to maintain their language and culture in Australia.
Chapter Six: Conclusions

6.1 Introduction
This chapter provides conclusions to arguments raised in the discussion chapter. These conclusions are focused around three main topics, the use of the Arabic language in Melbourne, survey participants’ writing ability, and the uses of Internet communication in the Arabic language.

6.2 The use of the Arabic language in Melbourne
The Arabic language is very important to members of the Arabic-speaking community in Melbourne. However, the incentive of maintaining their language seems to be drifting away from sole culture and ethnic identity, as most respondents have more religious, social, and academic motivations to signify the importance of their Arabic language. Language shift is inevitable because English is already the natural language of communication, especially among the younger members of the community whose communication with peers is unlikely to be in Arabic. However, parents and older relatives urge younger members of the community to speak Arabic. They may also supplement their children’s Arabic skills by enrolling them in Arabic schools which are mainly on weekends. Attending Arabic lessons would help curtail language shift in the second generation.

Further efforts can be done within the Arabic-speaking community to establish viable means of communication in Arabic between the community members through active involvement in Arabic-language group activities and the enrollment in weekend schools. Though they might not be enough, schooling in Arabic and group activities can help expand the use of Arabic, especially if their tasks and activities are extended beyond the actual contact hours. Group activities can include organizing friendly meetings, information contests, purposeful projects in which extensive discussions are conducted in Arabic. The key informants of the community can play an important role in raising awareness among the young members about the importance of the Arabic language and culture and the dangers of not keeping it going. They should bear in mind that their community is, over time, losing a generation of Arabic speakers, and they will be the only ones to preserve Arabic in Australia.

6.3 Arabic writing ability
Older members of the community reported higher levels of writing abilities. It was obvious that the younger participants’ writing was weaker or they had no writing ability at all. It is important that Arabic-speaking Australians get engaged in literacy activities including personal-selected reading in Arabic in areas of interest. Gradually, they can proceed to attempt writing in Arabic in
these areas or about the daily life situations in the form of diaries and blogs. Children’s writing skills could be fostered by parents even before reaching school age by introducing spontaneous and flexible tasks that the children enjoy doing at home, and offering incentive awards that can also promote Arabic language learning. Accordingly, the home is the best learning environment because it is distinguished by being flexible and driven by the children’s interests. Parents could aptly seize this opportunity to find out which activities might interest their children the most to help develop their literacy skills. Computers can be very useful at this stage supplementing traditional educational aids with specially-designed software to teach the basics of the Arabic language, or perhaps children can access extensively available websites specialized in teaching Arabic for youngsters.

In this context, because English is the language of written and spoken communication in Australia, Arabic schooling provides community members with wider contact in both spoken and written Arabic through a variety of language situations. Additionally, Arabic education would be more encouraged to be taken on as a personal VCE subject choice. Activities such as writing letters in Arabic and reading Arabic materials could be more supported by parents and teachers. Electronic tools such as email, online forums, and text-based chat in Arabic could be more exciting choices to help develop writing skills. One way of doing that is establishing an online community which can be devoted to discuss topics in Arabic via a variety of CMC tools. Further electronic solutions will be explicated in the following section.

6.4 The use of Internet communication in the Arabic language

Arabic-speaking Australians in Melbourne lack the desire to communicate in written Arabic via email. Though 75 percent of survey respondents were able to write in Arabic, only 29.6 percent sent email in Arabic. The difficulty of Arabic orthography is a vital obstacle deterring community members from trying out their Arabic written skills, especially those who do not have high levels of Arabic literacy. Another important thing is that Arabic social norms of communication set a certain kind of prestige that necessitate the use of spoken means of communication in many situations like invitations or personal news exchange.

Forms of Internet-based technology are commonly used by the Arabic-speaking Australians of all ages in general, and especially by the younger generation. It can be put this way, competent Internet users lack the Arabic literacy skills, and those who are competent in Arabic, mostly older

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2 Blog— is basically a journal that is available on the web. Blogs are typically updated daily using software that allows people with little or no technical background to update and maintain the blog. Postings on a blog are almost always arranged in chronological order with the most recent additions.

3 VCE—Victorian Certificate of Education
members of the community, lack the required Internet literacy. Therefore, it is suggested that key figures of the community take the initiative advising Arabic schools to coordinate short courses that explain how the Internet can best be exploited to serve language maintenance, introduce the available online Arabic resources, and make the public more aware of the benefits of using Internet communication tools. Internet literacy involves the development of skills necessary to seek information, to read and understand it, and to respond to it in written forms. Not only can they use available resources, but they are also able to contribute in the target language expanding the resources available to others. That might offer Internet users the incentive to communicate and publish work online to be shared and discussed by real audiences through online forums or chat rooms, such as discussing daily life situations and community issues, or publishing selected personal diaries in Arabic.

The Internet is rich in Arabic-language resources; therefore, Arabic schools can integrate the Internet into classrooms though there are obvious resource limitations. This integration would help establish Arabic as a viable language for Internet communication among learners who lack the confidence communicating in written Arabic. Though Internet access from classrooms may not be available, most participants had access from home. Activities can be extended beyond the classroom walls, and assignments can include the participation in collaborative activities conducted on the Internet. These collaborative activities can be task-based or in the form of larger scale projects which can include website creation, building and maintaining an online community, and information collection. Parents may play a more influential role by setting up a good learning environment at home (e.g. making the computer and Internet access available), and directing their children to the suitable Arabic materials online. Throughout these activities, CMC tools, especially those that are more preferred by learners, should be employed exclusively in Arabic to facilitate a variety of discussions. Arousing discussion topics online should be creative including assignment or project discussions which may be extended to include non-class related interactions on social aspects and cultural issues. This way, a wide range of authentic materials and purposeful use of language is made available to learners even when schools are short in time and computer facilities.

The Internet, as participants confirmed, is still dominated by the English language, and there are some difficulties finding proper Arabic software. Schools could shoulder the responsibility of directing learners to online Arabic resources, and play a greater role in developing learners’ computer literacy so that they can adjust operating systems to support Arabic characters. Also, Arabic schools may organize the deployment and purchase of Arabic software and actual Arabic keyboards making it available learners for reasonable cost, as many respondents complained about the scarcity of Arabic support tools in Melbourne driving prices to be unaffordable.
Though it is categorized as one the strongest language-maintaining communities, the Arabic-speaking community in Australia, in general, is running the risk of losing the Arabic language. This risk can be attributed to the loss of Arabic language skills by the younger generation and the domination of English as the language of written and spoken communication in Australia. As a result, the Arabic-speaking community in Australia is likely to lose a generation of Arabic speakers. It is critical to strengthen the use of Internet technologies, which have largely remained ignored over years, to maintain language and culture by ethnic communities. Being a viable and cost-effective means of communication, Internet communication in Arabic could help expand Arabic language use and make Arabic-speaking Australians re-consider their language preferences.
References

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Appendix A: Human Research Ethics Committee Approval

This appendix presents the Human Research Ethics Committee (HREC) application form at the University of Melbourne. The application was completed and sent to the HREC, and then it was received with a written approval. This approval represents the official human ethical permission for the researcher to commence this research. The application was scanned and saved to display the official signatures.
FORM 1 (8/00)
THE UNIVERSITY OF MELBOURNE
HUMAN RESEARCH ETHICS COMMITTEE

APPLICATION FOR APPROVAL OF A PROJECT INVOLVING HUMAN PARTICIPANTS

Registration No. (office use only) 
Period of Approval (office use only) 

This application form is to be used by researchers seeking human ethics approval for individual projects and studies.

The original and 13 copies of your completed application must be submitted to the Committee by the due date. Applications must be completed on the form; answers in the form of attachments will not be accepted, except where indicated. No handwritten applications will be accepted. Research must not commence until written approval has been received from the Committee.

PROJECT TITLE: The Use of Cyberspace Communications by the Arabic Melbournian Community

THIS PROJECT IS: 
☐ Staff Research Project ☐ Funded Consultancy
☐ Practical Class ☐ Clinical Trial
☒ Student Research Project ☐ Other - Please Describe:

This project is (tick as many as apply)

Certificate ☐ Honours ☐ Postgraduate Diploma
PhD ☐ Master's

PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATOR(S): Supervisors and co-supervisors of student projects are Principal Investigators. PhD and Doctoral students can be listed as Principal Investigator along with their supervisors.

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<tr>
<td>Assoc/ Prof.</td>
<td>Debski</td>
<td>Robert</td>
<td>(03) 8344 9655</td>
<td>(03) 8349 2180</td>
<td><a href="mailto:tdebski@hlc.unimelb.edu.au">tdebski@hlc.unimelb.edu.au</a></td>
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OTHER INVESTIGATORS:

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<tr>
<td>Mr.</td>
<td>Al-Asmari</td>
<td>Abdulrahman</td>
<td>0400571743</td>
<td>(03) 94780907</td>
<td><a href="mailto:abduliasmari@hotmail.com">abduliasmari@hotmail.com</a></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

FACULTY/DEPARTMENT/SCHOOL/CENTRE: Horwood Language Centre / Faculty of Arts

DECLARATION BY INVESTIGATOR(S)
The information contained herein is, to the best of my knowledge and belief, accurate. I have read the University's current human ethics guidelines, and accept responsibility for the conduct of the procedures set out in the attached application in accordance with the guidelines, the University's Code of Conduct for Research and any other condition laid down by the University of Melbourne's Human Research Ethics Committee or its Sub-Committees. I have attempted to identify all risks related to the research that may arise in conducting this research and acknowledge my obligations and the rights of the participants.

I and my co-investigators or supporting staff have the necessary qualifications, experience, and facilities to conduct the research set out in the attached application and to deal with any emergencies and contingencies related to the research that may arise.

Signature(s): Al-Asmari
Principal Investigator(s): Debski
Print name(s) of Principal Investigator(s) in block letters

Date 5/06/04
DECLARATION BY DEPARTMENT HUMAN ETHICS ADVISORY GROUP (DHEAG)

DATE APPLICATION RECEIVED: 25.1.04

☑ TECHNICAL REVIEW COMPLETED ✗ ETHICAL REVIEW COMPLETED

The DHEAG has reviewed this project and considers the methodological, technical and ethical aspects of the proposal to be appropriate to the tasks proposed and recommends approval of the project. The DHEAG considers that the investigator(s) has/have the necessary qualifications, experience and facilities to conduct the research set out in the attached application, and to deal with any emergencies and contingencies that may arise.

Comments/Provisos:

Signature(s):

Chair of DHEAG

Date ___/___/___

Print name of Chair in block letters

DECLARATION BY HEAD OF DEPARTMENT

DATE APPLICATION RECEIVED: 25.1.04

☑ TECHNICAL REVIEW COMPLETED ☑ ETHICAL REVIEW COMPLETED

I have reviewed this project and consider the methodological, technical and ethical aspects of the proposal to be appropriate to the tasks proposed and recommend approval of the project. I consider that the investigator(s) has/have the necessary qualifications, experience and facilities to conduct the research set out in the attached application, and to deal with any emergencies and contingencies that may arise. This project has the approval and support of this Department/School/Centre.

Signature(s):

Head of Department

Date ___/___/___

Print name in block letters

HUMAN ETHICS SUB-COMMITTEE USE ONLY

Date application received: ___/___/___

Period of approval: From: ___/___/___ To: ___/___/___

Comments/Provisos:

☐ see attached letter

Signature(s):

(Executive Officer, Human Research Ethics)

Date ___/___/___

Date PI notified: ___/___/___
1. PROJECT DETAILS

1.1 PROPOSED DURATION OF RESEARCH From: 01/07/2004 To: 01/08/2004

1.2 START DATE FOR DATA COLLECTION: 01/07/2004

1.3 LAY DESCRIPTION: Provide a brief outline of the project, including what participants will be required to do. This description must be in everyday language which is free from jargon. Please explain any technical terms or discipline-specific phrases. (No more than 300 words).

Arabic is one of the top spoken minority languages in Australia, particularly in Melbourne where a large number of the Arabic-speaking Community members have settled. It is believed that the use of a minority language is necessary for its survival. Language maintenance frameworks (e.g., Fisherman, 1991) emphasise legislation and processes by which the minority language becomes a means of communications in various domains such as work, school, and media. Although intergenerational transmission is the sine qua non of language survival, languages are maintained when they are used in different life domains.

The internet is a new rapidly expanding domain of language use. Previous research demonstrates that the internet strengthens languages associated with technological progress such as English, and supports smaller languages, offering new opportunities for minority language use and supporting the documentation and teaching of minority languages in schools or at home, subsequently, expanding chances of their survival in minority context. The internet creates new opportunities for overcoming isolation either cultural or social. The internet also has implementations for the teaching of minority languages in schools or at home.

The present research investigates the use of new media by the Arabic-speaking Community in Melbourne through the administration of a questionnaire and interviews. Barriers to media access and use will be identified as well as decisions Arabic-speaking people make about language choices for communication on the internet. Also the thesis will focus on attitudes towards media use in Arabic

1.4 AIMS OF AND JUSTIFICATION FOR THE RESEARCH: State the aims and significance of the project. Where relevant, state the specific hypothesis to be tested. Also please provide a brief description of current research, a justification as to why this research should proceed and an explanation of any expected benefits to the community. (No more than 600 words).

According to the Australian Bureau of Statistics (1996), around 39,478 Arabic-speaking people live in Melbourne alone, and that number has increased considerably since that time. To my knowledge, there is not much literature written about the Arabic-speaking Community in Australia, or in Melbourne in particular, let alone the concern about their use of communication technologies nor how they utilize them to maintain language. The results of the present research can be used to assess the role of the internet as a communication tool for the Arabic-speaking Community and to identify these factors that either encourage or discourage them from communicating in Arabic. Recommendations will be made for the Arabic-speaking Community on the use of the internet as a tool of cultural and ethnic language maintenance. This will include the use of the internet in ethnic schools. In the future, the results of this study can be compared with results of a similar study conducted by Fitzgerald (2002) on the members of the Polish Community in Melbourne. Such a comparison will allow drawing useful conclusions about the role of the national core values as well as cultural traits in communication preferences (e.g., using a certain means of communication in a certain event or with a certain person). Furthermore, the availability of using the World Wide Web has increased the interrelation and intra-relationship amongst languages. Thus, even minority language speakers can have the opportunity to interact and work within environments that are closely pertinent to their languages no matter where they live. Feeling like a part of the community and my growing interest in CALL (Computer-Assisted Language learning) as well as the interesting multiculturalism of Melbourne made me dedicate my effort in an attempt to find better ways of employing internet communication to serve the purpose of maintaining minority languages looking forward to a better multicultural society and richer ethnic resources in Australia.

1.5 PROPOSED METHOD: Provide an outline of the proposed method, including details of data collection techniques, tasks participants will be asked to do, the estimated time commitment involved, and how data will be
The research will include a short oral interview with key figures of the community who are in charge of Arabic clubs, schools, or associations around Melbourne asking questions about their opinions and suggestions of using the internet communication. The interviews will highlight the existing online Arabic language resources and projects. Notes of expected replies will be taken on the interview forms by the researcher. The interview is supposed to take no longer than 20 minutes with no less than 5 key informants in the community. The interview will also be a means of obtaining access to the Arabic-speaking community by establishing social networks with Arabic-speaking people in the community. I actually talked to a number of influential people in the community and they welcomed the idea of the research and offered their help to distribute the surveys among their friends and members of the aforementioned institutions, thus to give them back to me.

The research will also involve the administration of a survey with both closed and open-ended questions on linguistic background, computer experience and use of internet. It is estimated that it would take about 30 minutes to be completed. The participant can take the survey home and complete it in their own time, then return them to the club, school, or association where they got them from. The researcher will provide his telephone number and email address on the survey, and should any questions or issues arise, the researcher can be contacted.

Both the interviews and the surveys are provided in Arabic and English versions so that the participants can choose the one they feel able to understand properly.

The surveys will be analysed quantitatively and qualitatively. The quantitative results will be processed statistically using the SPSS. Descriptive statistics and correlations will be used. Interviews data are expected to be used along with qualitative analysis to support certain correlations.

1.8 INVESTIGATORS’ QUALIFICATIONS, EXPERIENCE AND SKILLS

List the academic qualifications and outline the experience and skills relevant to this project that the researchers, and any supporting staff have in carrying out the research and in dealing with any emergencies, unexpected outcomes, or contingencies that may arise.

Associate Professor Robert Debski is the director of Honwood Language Centre. He has vast experience in both the research and Computer-Assisted Language Learning (CALL) and has lectured in many countries around the world. Robert is the author and the editor of several books and has published many articles on a wide range of CALL topics. He is also on the editorial board of many journals. He received grants and funding for many projects. He has a lot of experience in the supervision of Masters and PhD students. Robert has also done much work on the use of technology in the maintenance and revival of minority and indigenous languages.

Abdulrahman Alasman is currently studying for his Masters degree in Computer-Assisted Language Learning. He has a B.A in English and educational training with excellency and distinction from Umm Al-Qura University, Faculty of Education, Taif, Saudi Arabia, and he was granted the prize of the Ideal Student at the university in his final year in 2000. Abdulrahman has a diploma in computer implementations and has studied a course in English for Business from ESL centres, USA and completed an Academic course at Hawthorn Language Centre, Melbourne. He is a qualified English teacher, and a Teaching Assistant at Taif Teachers’ College, Saudi Arabia. He has taught English for 3 years at the tertiary level. Abdulrahman has the same Arabic background as the participants and he is completely familiar with all the Arabic accents and a skilled translator. He also knows many key people in the Arabic-speaking community in Victoria who can help him a lot carry out his survey.

1.7 PLEASE EXPLAIN WHEN, HOW, WHERE, AND TO WHOM RESULTS WILL BE DISSEMINATED, INCLUDING WHETHER PARTICIPANTS WILL BE PROVIDED WITH ANY INFORMATION AS TO THE FINDINGS OR OUTCOMES OF THE PROJECT?

The results of the research will be presented in a minor Masters thesis which will be submitted to the Honwood Language Centre at the University of Melbourne in December 2004. The thesis will be placed on the web in pdf format and the URL to access will be given to schools, clubs, and associations involved.

1.8 WILL THE RESEARCH BE UNDERTAKEN ON-SITE AT THE UNIVERSITY OF MELBOURNE?

☐ YES ☐ NO (If NO, give details of off-campus location.) The interview part is going to be held in places to be arranged by the researcher and the interviewees. Those interviewees will be key informants of the Arabic-speaking Community in Melbourne, so interviews might perhaps be held in their offices at clubs, schools, associations, they are in charge of, after already fixed appointments. The survey, subsequently, will be
distributed either at those institutions under the auspice of the key figures, or they can be distributed personally by the researcher through his own social network.

1.9 OTHER APPROVALS REQUIRED Has permission to gain access to another location, organisation etc. been obtained. Copies of letters of approval to be provided when available. (Information concerning Department of Education approval for research is available at: www.sltweb.vic.edu.au/scsb/council/ethics_info.htm)

☐ YES ☐ NO ☒ NOT APPLICABLE

(If YES, please specify from whom and attach a copy. If NO, please explain when this will be obtained.)
The interviews will be conducted with key informants in the Arabic-speaking Community who are in charge of many Arabic clubs, schools, associations. The aim of these interviews is primarily to establish links with the Arabic Community networks, and also to clarify different issues concerning the survey and the research topic. Hence, those key figures will be helpful to provide a social network for distributing the survey and collecting them back. Additionally, the researcher has his own social network in the Arabic-speaking Community through which he can pass the survey and then collect it.

1.10 IS THIS PROTOCOL BEING SUBMITTED TO ANOTHER ETHICS COMMITTEE, OR HAS IT BEEN PREVIOUSLY SUBMITTED TO AN ETHICS COMMITTEE? Please refer to HREC's policy on Research at Other Institutions (Please note that these guidelines are currently under review. Please contact the Human Research Ethics Secretarial for further information.)

☐ YES ☒ NO

(IF YES, please provide details.)

2. PARTICIPANT DETAILS

2.1 DOES THE RESEARCH SPECIFICALLY TARGET: (Tick as many as applicable)

a) students or staff of this University
b) adults (over the age of 18 years and competent to give consent)
c) children/legal minors (anyone under the age of 18 years)
d) the elderly
e) people from non-English speaking backgrounds
f) pensioners or welfare recipients
g) anyone who is intellectually or mentally impaired to the extent that they cannot provide consent
h) anyone who has a physical disability
i) patients or clients of professionals
j) anyone who is a prisoner, parolee, or ward of the State
k) any other person whose capacity to consent may be compromised
l) Aboriginal and/or Torres Straight Islander communities
m) other collectives where a leader or council of elders may need to give consent

2.2 NUMBER, AGE RANGE AND SOURCE OF PARTICIPANTS

Provide number, age range and source of participants. Please provide a justification of your proposed sample size (including details of statistical power of the sample, where appropriate).

A snowball technique will be used to distribute the survey amongst participants. About 5 or more key informants will be interviewed to clarify the different issues of the research and to provide help to establish links to the Arabic-speaking community through which the survey is going to be distributed and collected. The survey will provide both closed and open-ended questions on linguistic background, computer experience and use of internet. Approximately 80 participants are expected to take part in the survey representing different age groups. Those participants are going to be selected from Arabic clubs, schools, and associations by the help of the aforementioned key informants or through the researcher's own social network.

2.3 MEANS BY WHICH PARTICIPANTS ARE TO BE RECRUITED
Please provide specific details as to how you will be recruiting participants. How will people be told you are doing this research? How will they be approached and asked if they are willing to participate? If you are mailing or phoning people, please explain how you have their names and contact details. This information will need to be included in the plain language statement. If a recruitment advertisement is to be used, please ensure you attach a copy to this application.

The interviews will be conducted with a number of key informants in charge of some Arabic and Islamic clubs, schools, and associations. Those key informants will provide the necessary help to establish links to the Arabic-speaking members of those institutions distributing the survey amongst them and then collecting it. The key figures of the Arabic-speaking Community have already welcomed the idea of the research and offered their help to recruit the participants either from inside and outside their institutions. The survey will be distributed to participants in their leisure time at associations, clubs, and schools. Participants will be free to take it home and complete it at their own ease. Then they can return the questionnaire forms to the nearest Arabic school, club, association which have been already informed about the project by the key informants or by the researcher. The researcher has very good social networks in these Arabic institutes.

2.4 WILL PARTS OF THIS PROJECT BE CARRIED OUT BY INDEPENDENT CONTRACTORS?

☐ YES ☑ NO

If YES, please confirm that the independent contractor will receive from the first named Principal Investigator a copy of the approved ethics protocol and be made aware of their responsibilities arising from it. (The responsibility for effective oversight and proper conduct of the project remains with the Principal Investigator(s).)

2.5 ARE ANY OF THE PARTICIPANTS IN A DEPENDENT RELATIONSHIP WITH ANY OF THE INVESTIGATORS, PARTICULARLY THOSE INVOLVED IN RECRUITING FOR OR CONDUCTING THE PROJECT?

Research involving persons in dependent or unequal relationships (for instance, teacher/student) may compromise a participant's ability to give consent which is free from any form of pressure (real or implied) arising from this unequal power relationship. Therefore, the University of Melbourne HREC recommends that, where possible, researchers choose participant cohorts where no dependent relationship exists. If, after due consideration, the investigator believes that research involving people in dependent relationships is purposeful and methodologically defensible, then the HREC will require additional information explaining why subjects in a dependent relationship are essential to the proposed research, and how risks inherent in the dependent and unequal relationship will be managed. They will also need to be reassured that refusal to participate will not result in any discrimination or penalty. NB. Reasons of convenience will not normally be considered adequate justification for conducting research in situations where dependent relationships exist.

☐ YES ☑ NO

(If YES, please explain the relationship and the steps to be taken by the investigator to ensure that the participant's participation is purely voluntary and not influenced by the relationship in any way. — including teacher/student, student/faculty, doctor/patient, employer/employee.)

2.6 PAYMENT OR INCENTIVES OFFERED TO PARTICIPANTS

Do you propose to pay or reward participants?

☐ YES ☑ NO

(If YES, how, how much and for what purpose?)

3. RISK AND RISK MANAGEMENT

3.1 DOES THE RESEARCH INVOLVE:

- use of a questionnaire? (attach copy)? ☐
- interviews (attach interview questions)? ☑
- observation of participants without their knowledge? ☑
- participant observation (provide details at question 1.5)? ☐
- audio- or video-taping interviewees or events? ☑
- access to personal and/or confidential data (including student, patient or client data) without the participant's specific consent? ☐
• administration of any stimuli, tasks, investigations or procedures which may be experienced by participants as physically or mentally painful, stressful or unpleasant during or after the research process?
• performance of any acts which might diminish the self-esteem of participants or cause them to experience embarrassment, regret or depression?
• investigation of participants involved in illegal activities?
• procedures that involve deception of participants?
• administration of any substance or agent?
• use of non-treatment of placebo control conditions?
• collection of body tissues or fluid samples?
• collection and/or testing of DNA samples?
• participation in a clinical trial?
  □ CTN Trial or □ CTX Trial
  □ testing a medical/diagnostic device
For CTN or CTX trial, please choose Phase number (e.g., either 1, 2, 3 or 4)
• administration of ionising radiation to participants?
  □ YES □ NO
  If YES, you will need to comply with the requirements of the Health Act 1958 and Health (Radiation Safety) Regulations 1994 No. 165. Please provide further details.

3.2 POTENTIAL RISK TO PARTICIPANTS AND RISK MANAGEMENT PROCEDURES
Identify, as far as possible, all potential risks to participants (e.g. physical, psychological, social, legal or economic etc.), associated with the proposed research. Please explain what risk management procedures will be put in place.

No potential risk of any nature to participants is anticipated. Participants will be informed that participation is purely voluntary. Should any participant or parent/guardian of a minor participant for any reason, wish to withdraw, they will be free to do so. The researcher will also provide his phone number to participants, so they can raise any issues or any questions that they have with him.

3.3 ARE THERE LIKELY TO BE ANY BENEFITS (DIRECT OR INDIRECT) TO PARTICIPANTS FROM THIS RESEARCH?
□ YES □ NO
  (If YES, provide details.)
The Arabic-speaking community, and Arabic schools in particular will benefit from this research. The participants will be more aware of the importance of their linguistic choices and the importance of the internet communication in the maintenance of their community language as a result of the reflection on the questions in the survey. Furthermore, the research will arouse many discussions on the use of the Arabic language in general and in the internet communication in particular.

3.4 ARE THERE ANY SPECIFIC RISKS TO RESEARCHERS? (where research is undertaken at an off-campus location researchers will need to consult the University guidelines and their Department – please refer to the University's handbook guidelines for information relating to difficulties associated with research in foreign countries – available from the Risk Management Office)
□ YES □ NO
  (If YES, please describe.)

3.5 ADVERSE / UNEXPECTED OUTCOMES
Please describe what measures you have in place in the event that there are any unexpected outcomes or adverse effects to participants arising from involvement in the project.

No adverse or unexpected outcomes of any nature are anticipated. It will be explicitly stated that participation is voluntary, and participants can withdraw at any time before processing the data. As for minor participants, they will be told that they are free to participate or not, and the parental consent form will explicitly state this. Moreover, there will be available translated versions in Arabic of the plain language statement, consent form, the parental/guardian consent form, and the survey itself in order to avoid any potential misunderstanding. The provision of the researcher's phone number and email address will allow for any issues or questions to be raised with him.

3.6 MONITORING
Please explain how the researchers propose to monitor the conduct of the project (especially when several people are involved in recruiting or interviewing, administering procedures) to ensure that it conforms with the procedures set out in the application, the University’s human ethics guidelines and the National Statement on Ethical Conduct in Research Involving Humans. In the case of student projects please give details of how the supervisor(s) will monitor the conduct of the project.

The supervisor and the researcher will be in close contact through fortnightly meetings and by telephone or email and the supervisor will be informed about every step of the research as it is conducted.

**IF THE RISKS YOU HAVE IDENTIFIED IN YOUR PROJECT ARE NOT MORE THAN THOSE ENCOUNTERED IN EVERYDAY LIFE, YOU MAY NOT NEED TO RESPOND TO QUESTIONS 3.7 TO 3.9.**

3.7 PLEASE EXPLAIN HOW THE POTENTIAL BENEFITS TO THE PARTICIPANT OR THE COMMUNITY OUTWEIGH THE RISKS?

3.8 SUPPORT FOR PARTICIPANTS

Depending on risks to participants you may need to consider having additional support for participants during the study. Consider whether your project would require additional support, e.g., external counseling available to participants. Please advise what support will be available.

3.9 DEBRIEFING

What debriefing will participants receive following the study and when? (Attach a copy of any written material or statement to be used in such a debriefing, if applicable). Participants may need to talk about the experience of being involved in the study with the researchers, as well as learn more about the aims of the research.

### 4. INFORMED CONSENT

4.1 HAVE YOU ATTACHED TO YOUR APPLICATION A COPY OF THE PLAIN LANGUAGE STATEMENT (PLS) FOR PARTICIPANTS - written information in plain language which you will be providing to participants explaining the project and inviting their participation.

☑ YES ☐ NO  (If NO, please explain.)

**DOES THE STATEMENT INCLUDE THE FOLLOWING:**

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<td>• details of what involvement in the project will require (e.g., involvement in interviews, completion of questionnaire, audio/video-taping of events), estimated time commitment, any risks involved</td>
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<td>• if the sample size is small, advice to participants that this may have implications for privacy/anonymity</td>
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<td>• a clear statement that if participants are in a dependent relationship with any of the researchers that involvement in the project will not affect ongoing assessment/management or treatment of health (as relevant)</td>
<td>☐ ☑</td>
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<tr>
<td>• that involvement in the project is voluntary and that participants are free to withdraw consent at any time, and to withdraw any</td>
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</tr>
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</table>
unprocessed data previously supplied
• advice as to arrangements to be made to protect confidentiality of data, including that confidentiality of information provided is subject to legal limitations
• advice as to whether or not data is to be destroyed after a minimum period
• advice that if participants have any concerns about the conduct of this research project that they can contact the Executive Officer, Human Research Ethics, The University of Melbourne, ph: 8344 7507; fax 9347 8759
• any other relevant information

4.2 HAVE YOU ATTACHED TO YOUR APPLICATION A COPY OF THE CONSENT FORM - if you are not obtaining consent in writing please explain how the informed consent process is to be documented. Please refer to the University’s guidelines for obtaining consent - http://www.unimelb.edu.au/research/ethics/human/consent.html

☐ YES ☐ NO (If NO, please explain how you consent will be documented.)

DOES THE CONSENT FORM INCLUDE THE FOLLOWING:

• will it be printed on University of Melbourne letterhead
• title of the project and names of investigators
• confirmation that the project is for research
• confirmation that involvement in the project is voluntary and that participants are free to withdraw at any time, or to withdraw any unprocessed data previously supplied
• confirmation of particular requirements of participants, including for example whether interviews are to be audio-video-taped
• advice of legal limitations to data confidentiality
• if the sample size is small, confirmation that this may have implications for anonymity
• any other relevant information

5. CONFIDENTIALITY/ANONYMITY

5.1 WILL THE RESEARCH INVOLVE:

• complete anonymity of participants (i.e., researchers will not know the identity of participants as participants are part of a random sample and are required to return responses with no form of personal identification)?
• anonymised samples or data (i.e., an irreversible process whereby identifiers are removed from data and replaced by a code, with no record retained of how the code relates to the identifiers. It is then impossible to identify the individual to whom the sample of information relates)?
• de-identified samples or data (i.e., a reversible process in which the identifiers are removed and replaced by a code. Those handling the data subsequently do so using the code. If necessary, it is possible to link the code to the original identifiers and identify the individual to whom the sample or information relates)?
• participants having the option of being identified in any publication arising from the research?
• participants being referred to by pseudonym in any publication arising from the research?
• the use of personal information obtained from a Commonwealth Department or Agency? (If YES, you may need to comply with the requirements of the Privacy Act 1988; information is available at: http://www.health.gov.au/nhmrc/ethics/contents.htm
• any other method of protecting the privacy of participants? Please describe:
Please bear in mind that where the sample size is very small, it may be impossible to guarantee anonymity/confidentiality of participant identity. Participants involved in such projects need to be advised of this limitation.

5.2 WHICH OF THE FOLLOWING METHODS OF ASSURING CONFIDENTIALITY OF DATA WILL BE IMPLEMENTED? Please select all relevant options.

- data and codes and all identifying information to be kept in separate locked filing cabinets
- access to computer files to be available by password only
- other (please describe)

5.3 LEGAL LIMITATIONS TO DATA CONFIDENTIALITY: Participants need to be aware that confidentiality of information provided can only be protected within the limitations of the law - i.e. it is possible for data to be subject to subpoena, freedom of information claim or mandated reporting by some professions. Depending on the research proposal you may need to specifically state these limitations. Have you included appropriate information in the plain language statement and consent form?

☐ YES ☐ NO (If NO, please advise how participants will be advised.)

6. DATA STORAGE, SECURITY AND DISPOSAL


☐ YES ☐ NO (If NO, please explain.)

6.2 WILL THE PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATOR BE RESPONSIBLE FOR SECURITY OF DATA COLLECTED?

☐ YES ☐ NO (If NO, please provide further details. You may also use this space to explain any differences between arrangements in the field, and on return to campus.)

6.3 WILL DATA BE KEPT IN LOCKED FACILITIES IN THE DEPARTMENT THROUGH WHICH THE PROJECT IS BEING CONDUCTED?

☐ YES ☐ NO (If NO, please explain how and where data will be held, including any arrangements for data security during fieldwork.)

6.4 ACCESS TO DATA

Access by named researchers only ☑ Stored at the University of Melbourne ☑
Access by people other than named researcher(s) □ Stored at another site □

Please explain who and for what purpose: Please explain where and for what purpose:

Other Please explain:

6.5 WILL DATA BE KEPT FOR A MINIMUM OF 5 YEARS FROM THE DATE OF PUBLICATION OF THE RESEARCH?

☐ YES ☐ NO (If NO, please explain. How long will that data be kept?)

6.6 WILL OTHERS BEHIND THE NAMED RESEARCHERS HAVE ACCESS TO THE RAW DATA?
6.7 IF DATA IS TO BE DISPOSED OF PLEASE EXPLAIN HOW, WHEN AND BY WHOM THIS WILL BE DONE?

7. FUNDING

7.1 IS THIS PROJECT BEING FUNDED?
☐ YES ☒ NO (If NO, please skip the remaining questions.)

7.2 SOURCE OF FUNDING?

7.3 PROJECT GRANT TITLE AND PROPOSED DURATION OF GRANT (Where applicable)

7.4 REGISTRATION NUMBER OF GRANT OR FUNDING APPLICATION (If known)

7.5 DOES THE PROJECT REQUIRE APPROVAL BEFORE CONSIDERATION FOR FUNDING BY A GRANTING BODY?
☐ YES ☒ NO

7.6 DEADLINE FOR THE GRANTING BODY?

7.7 HOW WILL PARTICIPANTS BE INFORMED OF THE SOURCE OF THE FUNDING?

DECLARATION BY INVESTIGATORS SEEKING NHMRC FUNDING

I have read the National Statement on Ethical Conduct for Research Involving Humans and accept responsibility for the conduct of procedures set out in the attached application in accordance with the principles contained in the Statement and Supplementary Notes.

Signature(s): Principal investigator(s) Date __________________________
Signature(s): Other investigator(s) Date __________________________

5. CHECKLIST

Please check that the following documents are attached to your application. Please note that where questionnaire or interview questions are submitted in draft form, a copy of the final documentation must be submitted for final approval when available.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Attachments</th>
<th>ATTACHED</th>
<th>NOT APPLICABLE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Recruitment advertisement (question 2.3)</td>
<td>☑️</td>
<td>☑️</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Plain language statement/Information Statement (question 4.1)</td>
<td>☑️</td>
<td>☐️</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Consent form (question 4.2)</td>
<td>☑️</td>
<td>☑️</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evidence of external approvals related to the research (question 1.9)</td>
<td>☑️</td>
<td>☑️</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Questionnaire (question 3.1)</td>
<td>☑️ draft</td>
<td>☐️ final</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Appendix B: Documentation for Research Participants

This appendix is comprised of all documentation made available to potential participants in this research study, including a plain language statement and one of two consent forms depending on the participant’s age. All documentation about the research was made available in Arabic as well as English for those members more comfortable reading in that language. An extra plain language statement was devoted exclusively to key figures of the community who were involved in a semi-structured oral interview. The interview and its plain language statement were made available only in English.
Dear member of the Arabic-Speaking Community,

I would like to invite you to participate in the following research project.

**Research project title:** Survey of the Use of the Internet Communication by the Arabic-speaking Community in Melbourne

This research is being carried out for the degree of Master of Computer-Assisted Language Learning (CALL) at Horwood Language Centre at the University of Melbourne. The principle investigator is Dr. Robert Debski and the student researcher is Mr. Abdul Rahman Al-Asmari.

**Project aims:**

The study will survey the current use of Arabic-medium Internet communication (email, computer chat, online bulletin boards or forums) among people of Arabic heritage living in Melbourne, Australia. It seeks to discover their knowledge and use of the Arabic Language for communicating online and to reveal their feelings toward these online computer applications.

The results of this project will help identify how Arabic speakers in Melbourne use the Internet. This information will help us recommend ways to incorporate technology into Arabic and other minority and community language classrooms throughout Victoria. It will also help researchers and community leaders learn how to develop online resources for speakers of minority and community languages. Ultimately, this may lead to a greater presence of the Arabic community online.

**What your participation involves:**

Key informants will be asked a number of questions to clarify some of the issues relating to the use of the Arabic language in Internet communications and suggested solutions for barriers of using the Arabic language online. Your participation is voluntary. If you are interested, your participation involves:

**Oral interview.** Questions will be asked about your background, your role in the community. Also, the interview will highlight some facts about the existing online Arabic language resources and projects as well as expectations about the use of the Arabic language on the Internet. The answers to these questions are to be taken note of on paper by the interviewer. It is estimated that this interview will not take more than 20 minutes.

Participants will not be asked to supply their names or addresses and if you do supply your name, it will not be used in reporting the results of the study to keep maximum confidentiality. All data transcripts will be kept under lock and key within the Horwood
Language Centre, accessible only to researchers (subject to legal limitations of confidentiality), and will be destroyed after a period of approximately five years.

Your participation in this research is voluntary. You are free to withdraw your consent at any time or to withdraw any unprocessed data that you may have supplied.

Your participation will greatly be appreciated. If you have any question, or would like to know more about the project, please feel free to contact the researchers.

Principle investigator: Dr. Robert Debski  
(03) 8344-9655  
 r.debski@hlc.unimelb.edu.au

Student investigator: Mr. Abdul Rahman Al-Asmari 
0400571743  
 abdulasmari@hotmail.com

If you have any concerns about the conduct of research project, please contact the Executive Officer, Human Research Ethics, and the University of Melbourne on (03)8344-2073.
Dear members of the Arabic-Speaking Community,

I would like to invite you to participate in the following research project.

*Research project title: Survey of the Use of the Internet Communication by the Arabic-speaking Community in Melbourne*

This research is being carried out for the degree of Master of Computer-Assisted Language Learning (CALL) at Horwood Language Centre, the University of Melbourne. The principle investigator is Dr. Robert Debski and the student researcher is Mr. Abdul Rahman Al-Asmari.

**Project aims:**

The study will survey the current use of Arabic-medium Internet communication (email, computer chat, online bulletin boards or forums) among people of Arabic heritage living in Melbourne, Australia. It seeks to discover their knowledge and use of the Arabic Language for communicating online and to reveal their feelings toward these online computer applications.

The results of this project will help identify how Arabic speakers in Melbourne use the Internet. This information will help us recommend ways to incorporate technology into Arabic and other minority and community language classrooms throughout Victoria. It will also help researchers and community leaders learn how to develop online resources for speakers of minority and community languages. Ultimately, this may lead to a greater presence of the Arabic community online.

**What your participation involves:**

Participants will be asked a number of questions about their computer use to be answered on paper. Your participation is voluntary. If you are interested, your participation will involve:

**Completing a questionnaire.** Questions will be asked about your background, your language use in and outside the home, how long you have been using computers, what types of computer programs you are familiar with, your familiarity with the Internet, and your use of Arabic-language media on the Internet. It is estimated that completing this questionnaire will not take more than 30 minutes.

Participants will not be asked to supply their names or addresses and if you do supply your name, it will not be used in reporting the results of the study to keep maximum confidentiality. All data transcripts will be kept under lock and key within the Horwood
Language Centre, accessible only to researchers (subject to legal limitations of confidentiality), and will be destroyed after a period of approximately five years.

Your participation in this research is voluntary. You are free to withdraw your consent at any time or to withdraw any unprocessed data that you may have supplied.

Your participation will greatly be appreciated. If you have any question, or would like to know more about the project, please feel free to contact the researchers.

Principle investigator: Dr. Robert Debski  
(03) 8344-9655  
r.debski@hlc.unimelb.edu.au

Student investigator: Mr. Abdul Rahman Al-Asmari  
0400571743  
abdulasmari@hotmail.com

If you have any concerns about the conduct of research project, please contact the Executive Officer, Human Research Ethics, and the University of Melbourne on (03)8344-2073.
جامعة ملبورن
مركز هورود للغات

دعوة للمشاركة

أعزائي أعضاء الجالية الناطقة باللغة العربية بمدينة ملبورن، أستراليا: ******

تحية طيبة وبعد.

يسرني دعوتكم للمشاركة في مشروع بحث وعنوانه: "الجالية الناطقة باللغة العربية بملبورن واستخدام الإنترنت".

ويذكرون أن هذا البحث سيقدم لهدف البحت في تخصص: "تعليم اللغة بواسطة الحاسب الآلي".

وهورود للغات بملبورن. مشرف البحث هو د. روبرت دبكي، مدير المركز بجامعة ملبورن والطالب الباحث: إبراهيم الرحمن الأسري.

أهداف البحث:

- يتضمن البحث استبيان شاملاً لمدى استخدام الأدوات التكنولوجية في مجال الاتصال، ومن بينها اللغة العربية.
- ويفسر الاستبيان نتائج الاستبان، مما يساعد على نشر اللغة العربية في مجتمع أمازيغي.

مشاريعكم في البحث:

- ستستضيف مشاركتكم المرحلة الإجابة على أسئلة الاستبيان الكتابي أو المشاركة في مقابلة شفهية من خلال الاتصال.

بالنسبة للأعضاء البارزين بالجالية:

- أعطاني، أن المشروع يهدف إلى تعزيز اللغة العربية في مجتمعنا وما يمكن أن يساهم في ذكرى اللغة العربية في مجتمعنا.

استبان كتابي يشمل الإجابة على أسئلة تتضمن معلومات عن مدى خفيفتك في اللغة العربية ومدى الاعتراف بها داخل وخارج المنزل، كما يتضمن أسئلة عن استخدام الإنترنت في استخدام اللغات الأقلية والأمضيات وتقنيات اللغة العربية.

كما أن نتائج هذا البحث ستساعد الباحثين والمتحدثين بأعمق المجالات للبحث عند فعالية انتظام استخدام اللغة العربية في مجتمعنا.

مقابلة شفهية قصيرة وذلك للأعضاء البارزين بالجالية، سوف تشمل بضعة أسئلة عن آرائكم وأفكاركم.

للاستخدام الحاسم وetriت اللغة العربية والدوام المقدر للاجئات التي تعبر استخدام اللغة العربية على الإنترنت، ولن تستغرق المقابلة أكثر من 20 دقيقة.

Sockmon المشاركين اختيارية ولكن تتضمن إعطاء أي معلومات شخصية عن المشاركين. كما يتم اختيار المشاركين من قبل الباحث، ولكن لن يستخدم بيانا في كتابة البحث وسيكون قيد السرية المتوقعة. كما أن جميع أوراق الاستبان ستحتفظ بسرية تامة بما يعرف هورود للغات بجامعة ملبورن، ولن يسمح لأحد بالإطلاع عليها إلا من قبل الباحث ومشرف البحث لتقييم البيانات. سوف يتم التخلص من هذه الأوراق بعد فترة زمنية لا تزيد عن 5 سنوات.

وفي حال الرغبة في الإنسحاب من البحث فلمشاركك كامل الأحقية في سحب بياناته في أي وقت قبل أن يتم تجميعها.

أعزائي... إن هذا البحث منكم ويتم تطويره، وتشارككم فيه ستكون موقع تقدير وامتنان كما ستتعد باللغة على جميع أفراد المجتمع. في حال الرغبة في الحصول على نسخة إضافية عن البحث أو الإدلاء بauważات مفيدة لموضوع الدراسة نرجو عدم التردد في الإتصال بالباحثين:
د. روبرت ديسكي  
مشارف البحث:
(03)8344 9655
r.debski@hlc.unimelb.edu.au

عبدالرحمن الأسمرى  
الباحث:
0400571743
abdulasmari@hotmail.com

إذا كان لديكم أي اعتراض أو مخاوف إزاء إجراء هذا البحث يمكنكم الاتصال بلجنة البحوث وحقوق الإنسان بجامعة ملبورن، المدير المسؤول: 0383442073
Consent form for persons participating in research projects

Research project title: The Use of Internet Communication by the Arabic-Speaking Community in Melbourne.

Name of participant: ________________________________________________

Name of investigators: Dr. Robert Debski and Mr. Abdul Rahman Al-Asmari

1. I consent to participate in the project named above; the particulars of which, including the survey or the oral interview, have been explained to me.

2. I authorize the researchers to use with me the task of a questionnaire or an oral interview in which the interviewer takes notes of my replies.

3. I acknowledge that:
   a. The possible effects of the questionnaire or the interview have been explained to me to my satisfaction;
   b. I have been informed that I am free to withdraw from the project at any time without explanation or prejudice and to withdraw any unprocessed data previously supplied;
   c. The project is for the purpose of research;
   d. I have been informed that the confidentiality of the information I provide will be safeguarded subject to any legal requirements;
   e. I have been informed that my name might become identified to the researchers. The researchers, however, will not use my real name in reporting the research.

Printed name: ____________________________________________
(Participant)

Signature: ____________________________________________ Date: ______________
جامعة ملبورن
مركز هورود للغات

نموذج موافقة للمشاركة في بحث

عنوان البحث: الجالية الناطقة باللغة العربية بمدينة ملبورن واستخدام الإتصالات عبر الإنترنت

اسم المشارك:

د. روبرت ديسكي و عبدالرحمن الأسري

أسماء الباحثين:

1- إنني أوافق على المشاركة في البحث المذكور أعلاه بما يتضمنه من استبيان أو مقابلة شفهية، وتم إطلاعي على موضوعه.

2- كما أنني موافق على السماح للباحثين المذكورين بإجراء الاستبيان أو المقابلة الشخصية معني ولا أمنع في ذلك.

3- أقر بالآتي:
   ● أن نتائج البحث المحتملة والأثر المتوقع قد تشرحها لي بشكل كافي.
   ● إنه تم إخباري بأنه يمكنني الإسهام من المشاركة في أي وقت طالما لم يتم تحليل البيانات.
   ● أن هذا البحث هو لغرض البحث العلمي فقط.
   ● أن جميع البيانات التي أقدمها سوف تكون قيد السرية المطلقة وعرضة لأي مسألة من قبلي.
   ● أنه تم إشاعري بأنه في حال معرفة الباحث باسمي فلن يستخدمها أو يشير إليها في بحثه إطلاقاً.
   ● وستكون قيد السرية التامة.

اسم المشارك:

توقيع:

tاريخ:_________________________
Consent form for parents or legal guardians of minors participating in research projects

Research project title: The Use of Internet Communication by the Arabic-Speaking Community in Melbourne.

Name of minor-aged participant: _________________________________________

Name of investigators: Dr. Robert Debski and Mr. Abdul Rahman Al-Asmari

4. I consent for the minor named above, of whom I am parent or legal guardian, to participate in the project named above; the particulars of which have been explained to me.

5. I authorize the researchers to use with the above named minor the task of a questionnaire.

6. I acknowledge that:
   a. The possible effects of the questionnaire have been explained to me to my satisfaction:
   b. I have been informed that I am free to withdraw the above named minor from the project at any time without explanation or prejudice and to withdraw any unprocessed data previously supplied;
   c. The project is for the purpose of research;
   d. I have been informed that the confidentiality of the information the minor provides will be safeguarded subject to any legal requirements;
   e. I have been informed that the minor’s name might become identified to the researchers. The researchers, however, will not use his real name in reporting the research.

Printed name: _________________________________ Signature: _________
                               (Minor participant)

Printed name: _________________________________
                             (Parent or legal guardian)

Signature: _________________________________ Date: ____________
                               (Parent or legal guardian)
جامعة ملبورن
مركز هورود للغات

نموذج موافقة ولي أمر الطالب للمشاركة في استبيان

عنوان البحث: الجالية الناطقة باللغة العربية بمدينة ملبورن واستخدام الإتصالات عبر الإنترنت

اسم الطالب المشارك:

د. روبرت ديسكي و عبدالرحمن الأسمري

أسماء الباحثين:

4 - إني أوافق على مشاركة الطالب الذي أنا ولي أمره، في البحث المذكور أعلاه بما يتضمنه من استبان.

5 - كما أنني موافق على السماح للباحثين المذكورين بإجراء الاستبيان معه ولا أمانع في ذلك.

6 - أقر بالآتي:

- أن نتائج البحث المحتملة والآثار المتوقعة قد تم شرحها لي بشكل كافي.

- إنه تم إخباري بأنه يمكن للطالب المذكور أعلاه الإسحاب من المشاركة في أي وقت طالما لم يتم تحليل البيانات.

- أن هذا البحث هو نشر البحث العلمي فقط.

- أن جميع البيانات يقدمها الطالب سوف تكون في السرية المطلقة وعرضة لأي مسالة من قبلي.

- إنه تم إشعاري بأنه في حال معرفة الباحث باسم الطالب فأنه لن يستخدمها أو يشير إليها في بحثه إطلاعا وستكون في السرية التامة.

اسم الطالب: 

التاريخ:

اسم ولي الأمر: 

التاريخ:
Appendix C: Melbournian Arabs Research Interview and Questionnaire

This appendix presents the interview questions that have been directed exclusively to the key informants of the Arabic-speaking community in Melbourne. Also, it presents the questionnaire that was distributed to participants and on which this study is based. Participants were able to take the questionnaire home and complete it in their own time.
Semi-structured interview questions for the Key Figures from the Arabic-Speaking Community in Melbourne

Research project title: The Use of Internet Communication by the Arabic-speaking Community in Melbourne.

Researchers: Dr. Robert Debski  
Mr. Abdul Rahaman Al-Asmari

Background

1. Age _________
2. Gender □Male □Female
3. Role in the community ____________________________________________

4. Arabic Language competence_______________________________________

5. Place of birth and Arrival to Australia:

__________________________________________________________________

__________________________________________________________________

Internet and Arabic

6. In your opinion, how can the use of Arabic on the internet impact the general use of the Arabic Language by the Arabic Community in Melbourne?

__________________________________________________________________

__________________________________________________________________

__________________________________________________________________

7. What are the obstacles hindering the use of Arabic on the Internet?

__________________________________________________________________

__________________________________________________________________

__________________________________________________________________

8. What Arabic language internet resources are you familiar with?
9. Are you familiar with any internet projects developed by the Arabic community in Australia? (e.g. websites, educational materials, mailing lists).

__________________________________________________________________

__________________________________________________________________

__________________________________________________________________

10. What online resources could be created in order to support the Arabic-speaking community, particularly in the maintenance of Arabic language and culture?___________________________________________________________

__________________________________________________________________

__________________________________________________________________

__________________________________________________________________

Internet communication and Arabic

11. Do you think that using Internet communications can enhance the Arabic language proficiency? □ Yes □ No

If yes, why? ____________________________________________________________

__________________________________________________________________

__________________________________________________________________

Opinions

12. What do you think about the future of the Arabic language in Australia?

__________________________________________________________________

__________________________________________________________________

__________________________________________________________________

13. Do you know any institutions or associations which offer Arabic language courses? How well-equipped are they with educational technologies? How do they use the internet?

__________________________________________________________________

__________________________________________________________________

__________________________________________________________________
Melbournian Arabs Questionnaire
The University of Melbourne, Horwood Language Centre

Researchers: Dr. Robert Debski
Mr. Abdul Rahman Al-Asmari

Title: The use of Media and Internet Communication in the Arabic Language by Arabic-Australians in Melbourne

Background information

1. Age________ years old
2. Sex □ Male    □ Female
3. In which country were you born? □ Australia □ other (specify)________ If born outside Australia, how old were you when you came to Australia?
   Year__________ Age________
4. In which suburb or area of Melbourne do you live? ______________
5. What is your highest level of education?
   □ PhD
   □ Postgraduate diploma
   □ Master degree
   □ Postgraduate certificate
   □ Bachelor/Graduate certificate
   □ Some university
   □ Postgraduate certificate
   □ Finished secondary school
   □ Started but didn’t complete high school
   □ Primary education
   □ Other (please specify)______________________________
6. How long have you studied to obtain the above qualification?
   in Australia? _______ years
   Outside Australia (please specify) ___________? _______ years

Language Use

7. How often do you speak Arabic at home?
   □ All the time  □ Most of the time  □ Sometimes
   □ Rarely  □ Never

8. With the following people of Arabic background, what language(s) do you speak? Please explain why you speak this language with those people.

Example:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>People</th>
<th>Language(s) spoken</th>
<th>why</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>mother</td>
<td>Arabic</td>
<td>She doesn’t speak much English</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>friend from school</td>
<td>Arabic and English</td>
<td>We speak Arabic only for fun. But we usually speak English.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>friend at work</td>
<td>English</td>
<td>He/she can understand me better in English</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>People</td>
<td>Language(s) spoken</td>
<td>Why</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>--------------</td>
<td>--------------------</td>
<td>-----</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Father</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mother</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wife/husband</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brother(s)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sister(s)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Relatives</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Friends</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Children</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Young people</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Old people</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

9. How often do you speak Arabic outside your home?

- [ ] All the time  - [ ] Most of the time  - [ ] Sometimes  - [ ] Rarely  - [ ] never

10. If you speak Arabic outside your home, where and with whom do you speak it?

____________________________________________________________________

11. Have you taken an Arabic Language class?  [ ] Yes  [ ] No
   - **If yes**, please indicate the highest level you completed and for how long?
     - [ ] Advanced  [ ] Intermediate  [ ] Beginner
   - For how long? ______________
   - Why did you study Arabic?

____________________________________________________________________
12. How important it is to you to be able to speak Arabic?

☐ Very important  ☐ Important  ☐ Normal  ☐ Not at all

Why? Explain please.

Arabic Use Domains

13. Are you a member of or a participant in any Arabic groups or organizations (i.e. community, youth, language, religious, etc.)? ☐ Yes  ☐ No

- **If yes**, of which groups are you a member or participant?

- **If yes**, in what sort of group activities do you participate?

- **If you do not participate** in Arabic group activities, is there a reason?

14. Do you listen to radio broadcasts in the Arabic language? ☐ Yes  ☐ No

- **If yes**, how often?
  ☐ Daily  ☐ weekly  ☐ twice a month  ☐ monthly
  ☐ Less than once a month

- What Arabic radio stations do you listen to?
  ☐ Middle East  ☐ Arabic SBS  ☐ LBC

- **If you do not participate** in Arabic radio programs (do) you like to listen to?

15. Do you watch Arabic TV programs/movies? ☐ Yes  ☐ No

- **If yes**, how often?
  ☐ daily  ☐ weekly  ☐ twice a month  ☐ monthly
  ☐ less than once a month

- What kinds of Arabic TV programs or movies (do) you like to watch?

- **If you do not participate** in Arabic TV programs (would) you like to watch?
**Arabic Language Literacy**

16. Do you read in Arabic? □ Yes  □ No
   * If yes, how well do you read in Arabic?
     □ Very well  □ Well  □ Fairly  □ Poorly  □ Not at all
   * If yes, what do you read? (Examples: books, newspapers, magazines, online Materials, etc.) __________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________

• **If you do not** read in Arabic, please explain why you don’t:
____________________________________________________________________

____________________________________________________________________

17. Do you write in Arabic? □ Yes  □ No
   • **If yes**, how well do you write in Arabic?
     □ Very well  □ Well  □ Fairly  □ Poorly  □ Not at all
   • **If yes**, how often do you write letters or cards and post them by mail (not email)?
     □ Daily  □ Several times per week
     □ Once a week  □ Several times a month
     □ Once a month  □ Several times a year
     □ Once a year  □ Less than once a year  □ Never

18. In what situation do you write in Arabic or when you would like to write in Arabic if you are able to?

   **Example:**
   
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Situation or person you write to</th>
<th>Reason for writing</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Old friend or a relative</td>
<td>greetings or asking about our family</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Situation or person you write to</th>
<th>Reason for writing</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Computer experience and use**

19. How often do you use a personal computer?
   □ Daily  □ Several times a week  □ once a week
   □ Several times a month  □ Once or twice a month
   □ A few times per year  □ once a year  □ Never

20. When did you first use a personal computer?
   □ Before beginning school  □ Elementary school
   □ Secondary school  □ After finishing secondary school
   • How old were you when you first used a computer? _____________

21. Do you have access to the internet? □ Yes  □ No
• If yes, where do you use the internet? (i.e. home, school, office)?

______________________________________________________________________________

22. When did you first use the internet?

☐ Before beginning school  ☐ Elementary school
☐ Secondary school  ☐ After finishing secondary school

23. In which language did you first learn to use the internet? (Please circle)

☐ English  ☐ Arabic  ☐ Others (specify) ______________________________

24. What was the reason that you started using the internet?

______________________________________________________________________________

25. What Arabic internet resources are you familiar with?

______________________________________________________________________________

26. Please check all of the features of the internet you usually use or you have used in English:

☐ Surfing the web  ☐ Email  ☐ Newsgroups
☐ Bulletin board  ☐ Multiplayer games  ☐ Shopping
☐ Music downloads  ☐ Chat  ☐ Greeting cards
☐ Online SM  ☐ Online radio  ☐ Professional reasons
☐ School research  ☐ Job hunting  ☐ Online learning
☐ Others (please specify) ______________________________

27. Please check all of the features of the internet you usually use or you have used in Arabic:

☐ Surfing the web  ☐ Email  ☐ Newsgroups
☐ Bulletin board  ☐ Multiplayer games  ☐ Shopping
☐ Music downloads  ☐ Chat  ☐ Greeting cards
☐ Online SM  ☐ Online radio  ☐ Professional reasons
☐ School research  ☐ Job hunting  ☐ Online learning
☐ Others (please specify) ______________________________

28. Do you have any friends and / or family living in Arabic countries?

☐ Yes  ☐ No

• If yes, do you communicate with them by using any of the following technologies?

☐ Telephone  ☐ Email  ☐ Chat  ☐ SMS
☐ Telegram  ☐ Videoconferencing (chat with web camera and microphone)
☐ Computer chat with microphone  ☐ Others (please specify) ____________________

• Which of the above technologies do you use most often and why?

______________________________________________________________________________
29. Give examples of some of your friends, family members, contacts in Arabic countries, their relationship to you, the language(s) spoken with them, and the type of technology you use to communicate:

Example:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Family or friend (relationship to you)</th>
<th>Language(s)</th>
<th>Technology</th>
<th>Why</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Younger brother</td>
<td>Arabic</td>
<td>email</td>
<td>cheap</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A friend I met on a holiday</td>
<td>English</td>
<td>chat</td>
<td>like face-to-face</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

30. What are your favourite or least favourite things about email?

31. Say that you had a choice of telephoning, writing a letter, or any traditional way of communicating and you chose email instead. Why did you choose the email?

32. In what situations do you think it is inappropriate to use email to communicate a specific message?

- What would be a better way to communicate that specific message?

33. If you can’t meet face-to-face, which way of communication do you prefer? List top 3

1. ___________________ Why? ________________________________
2. ___________________ Why? ________________________________
3. ___________________ Why? ________________________________
34. If you have friends and/or family in Arabic countries, how often do you communicate with them?

- Daily
- Several times per week
- Once a week
- Several times a month
- Once or twice a month
- A few times per year
- Once a year
- Never

35. Agree/Disagree

a. Owing to the internet, I can communicate more frequently with my family in the home country

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Neutral
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree

Please give an example _______________________________________________

b. The internet helps me participate in the cultural and social life in the home country

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Neutral
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree

Please give an example _______________________________________________

c. The internet helps me communicate with other Arabic people in Australia and around the world

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Neutral
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree

Please give an example _______________________________________________

36. Have you encountered a situation where you wanted to communicate in Arabic on the internet and you could not because of some obstacles? What were the obstacles? ________________________________

____________________________________________________________________

37. In your opinion, how do computers encourage or discourage the use of Arabic? Please provide examples

____________________________________________________________________

____________________________________________________________________

____________________________________________________________________
### Role Play

38. Below is a list of events or situations.

Suppose that you want to communicate to a member of your family or an Arabic friend living in Melbourne in the following situations. Think about ways of communication (email, telephone, chat, online bulletin board, letter or card, etc.) in the following situations.

What method of communication would you use, why? Which language would you use with your family and friends?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Situation</th>
<th>Method of communication</th>
<th>Language used</th>
<th>Why</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>To invite an Arabic friend to your house for a meal</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To invite your friends to an Arabic club activity</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To invite them to a footy game</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To ask them to meet you in the city at the last minute</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To tell your family that you will be late</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To ask a friend or a family member to pick you up at the train station</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To wish a happy day</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To give holiday greetings</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Thank you for your cooperation
نموذج استبيان

أعضاء الجالية الناطقين باللغة العربية بمدينة ملبورن
جامعة ملبورن، مركز هورود للغات

الباحثين: د. روبرت ديسبكي
عبدالرحمن الأسدري

عنوان البحث: الجالية الناطقة باللغة العربية بملبورن واستخدام الاتصالات عبر الإنترنت

بيانات عامة

4. العمر
5. الجنس
6. بلد الميلاد
    اغتال (فاضلا اذكرهما)
    إذا كان مكان الميلاد خارج استراليا، كم كان عمرك حين قمت إلى استراليا؟
    العمر
    سنة الدخول

7. ما هي الفترة الدراسية التي أمضيتها للحصول على المؤهل الدراسي الذي ذكرته؟
    في استراليا (عدد السنوات)
    خارج استراليا (فاضلا اذكر البلد) (عدد السنوات)

استخدام اللغة

10. هل تتحدث اللغة العربية داخل المنزل؟
    دائمًا
    عادة
    لا أتحدث
    لا أتحدث اللغة العربية إطلاقا داخل المنزل

8. ما هي اللغة اللغات التي تستخدمها عندما تAtlابك مع الأشخاص التالين ذوي أصول عربية مع ذكر السبب

لاستخدام هذه اللغة:

مثال توضيحي:

| السبب استخدامها | اللغة المستخدمة | الشخص | الشخص
|------------------|------------------|---------|---------|
| لا تتقن اللغة الإنجليزية | العربية والدولي | العربية والدولي
| عادة ما تتحدث الإنجليزية ولكننا نتحدث العربية للتفاوض أو حتى لا يفهم أحد حوارنا | العربية والإنجليزية | صديق في المدرسة أو الجامعة
<p>| نفهم بعضنا أكثر بالإنجليزية | الإنجليزية | زميل العمل |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>الشخص</th>
<th>اللغة المستخدمة</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>الأب</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>الأم</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>الزوج/الزوجة</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>الأبناء</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>الأصدقاء</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>الأطفال</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>الشباب</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>كبار السن</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

9. ما هو مدى تحدثك باللغة العربية خارج المنزل؟
   - دائمًا
   - معظم الوقت
   - بعض الأحيان
   - نادراً

10. عندما تتحدث اللغة العربية خارج المنزل، مع من عادة تتحدثها؟ وما هي الأماكن التي تتحدث فيها العربية؟

   ________________________________________________________________________________________________

11. هل التحقت بأي برنامج لتعليم اللغة العربية من قبل؟
   - نعم
   - لا

   إذا كانت إجابتك بنعم، فما هو أعلى مستوى حصلت عليه؟
   - مبتدئ
   - متوسط
   - متقدم

   مدة الدراسة: ____________________________________________

   لماذا درست اللغة العربية؟

   ________________________________________________________________________________________________
12. ما هو مدى أهمية اللغة العربية وتعلمها بالنسبة لكم؟
☐ مهمة جدا
☐ مهمة
☐ عادية
☐ ليست مهمة اطلاقا
لماذا؟

ذكر الأسباب من فضلك.

استخدام اللغة العربية

13. هل تشارك في أنشطة الأندية أو الجميات العربية أو الإسلامية بمليرون (الرياضية، الثقافية، الدينية، الاجتماعية الخ)؟
☐ نعم
☐ لا

إذا أجبت بنعم، هل تمارس هذه الهوايات أو النشاطات بصفتك عضو أو مشارك بهذه الأندية أو الجمعيات؟

إذا كنت لا تشارك في أي من نشاطات الأندية أو الجمعيات العربية أو الإسلامية، فما هو السبب؟

14. هل تستمع إلى الإذاعي باللغة العربية؟
☐ نعم
☐ لا

إذا أجبت بنعم، فما مدى استماعك للراديو؟
☐ أقل من مرة في الشهر
☐ مرة في الشهر
☐ أسبوعيا
☐ يوميا

ما هي المحطات الإذاعية العربية التي تتبعها؟
☐ إذاعة الإمارات
☐ الإمارات الإقليمية
☐ إذاعة السيتي
☐ إل ب سي
☐ أخرى (قم بتذكيرها)

ما هي البرامج العربية التي تسمى إليها عادة عبر المذياع؟

15. هل تشاهد البرامج التلفزيونية باللغة العربية؟
☐ نعم
☐ لا

إذا أجبت بنعم، ما مدى مشاهدتك لها؟
☐ أقل من مرة في الشهر
☐ مرة في الشهر
☐ أسبوعيا
☐ يوميا

إذا أجبت بنعم، ما هي البرامج العربية التي تحرص على مشاهدتها؟

إذا أجبت بنعم، ما هي البرامج العربية الغير منقولة وتتم مشاهدتها؟

مهارات باللغة العربية

16. هل تحسن القراءة باللغة العربية؟
☐ نعم
☐ لا

إذا أجبت بنعم، فكيف تقيم مهاراتك في قراءة اللغة العربية؟
☐ ممتازة
☐ جيدة
☐ سنية
☐ لا بس

إذا أجبت بنعم، ما هي الأسباب لانعكاس مهاراتك؟
إذا أجبت بنعم، فماذا تقرأ عادة؟ (كتب، جرائد، مجلات، مقالات على الإنترنت.. الخ.)

إذا كنت لا تستطيع القراءة باللغة العربية، فما هي الأسباب في نظرك؟

لا □ نعم □
هل تحسن الكتابة باللغة العربية؟
لا □ نعم □
إذا أجبت بنعم، فكيف تقي تدريبك في الكتابة باللغة العربية؟
لا □ سيئة □ معتززة □ جيدة □ لا تأس بها □

إذا أجبت بنعم، فهل تكتب رسائل أو بطاقات بريدية عادية (وليس إيميل) بكثرة؟
مرة في الشهر □ عدد مرات في الأسبوع □ يومياً □
عدد مرات في السنة □ أقل من مرة في السنة □
لا تكتب رسائل أو بطاقات بريدية باللغة العربية إطلاعاً

إذا أجبت بنعم، فإن الأشخاص الذين تفضل الكتابة إليهم وما هي المواقف أو المناسبات التي تحب أن تكتب فيها؟
مثال توضيحي:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>الشخص أو المناسبة</th>
<th>السبب/المناسبة</th>
<th>للسؤال عن أحوال العائلة أو للتهنئة بالعيد</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

استخدام الحاسب الآلي (الكمبيوتر)

19. ما مدى استخدامك للحاسب الشخصي (الكمبيوتر)؟
لا □ حسب □

في الأسبوع □ عدد مرات في الأسبوع □ مرة في الشهر □ عدد مرات في الشهر □ في السنة □ عدد مرات في السنة □ لا استخدمه إطلاقاً □

إذا أجبت بنعم، فما هي الأماكن التي تستخدم فيها الإنترنت؟ (المنزل، المدرسة، الجامعة، العمل، الجمعية.. الخ.)

لا □ نعم □
هل تستخدم الإنترنت؟
22. متى استخدمت الإنترنت لأول مرة؟

- قبل أن يتحقت بالمدرسة
- في المدرسة الابتدائية
- بعد أن أنهيت المرحلة الثانوية
- في المدرسة الإعدادية أو الثانوية

23. عندما بدأت التعلم على استخدام الإنترنت، ما هي اللغة التي كنت تستخدمها؟

- اللغة العربية
- اللغة الإنجليزية
- أخرى (فضلاً اذكرها)

24. ما هو السبب الذي شوقك لاستخدام الإنترنت في البداية؟

25. ما هي أسماء المواقع العربية المشهورة التي تعرفها على الإنترنت؟

26. فضلاً أشر إلى المميزات والأدوات التي تستخدمها على الإنترنت باللغة الإنجليزية.

- التصفح الإنترنت
- البريد الإلكتروني
- لوائح المناقشة
- الألعاب الجماعية
- التسوق
- بطاقات التهيئة أو المعاداة...
- Chat
- استخدامات متقدمة
- البحث عن عمل
- الدراسة
- أخرى (فضلاً اذكرها)

27. فضلاً أشر إلى المميزات والأدوات التي تستخدمها على الإنترنت باللغة العربية.

- التصفح الإنترنت
- البريد الإلكتروني
- لوائح المناقشة
- الألعاب
- التسوق
- Chat
- استخدامات متقدمة
- البحث عن عمل
- الدراسة
- SMS
- أخرى (فضلاً اذكرها)

28. هل لديك أقارب أو أصدقاء يعيشون في البلدان العربية؟

- نعم
- لا

إذا كانت إجابتك نعم، فكيف تتواصل معهم؟ فضلاً أشر إلى وسائل الاتصال التي تستخدمها.

- الهاتف
- البريد الإلكتروني
- Chat
- مؤتمر الفيديو
- رسائل عبر الهاتف المحمول
- SMS
- أخرى (فضلاً اذكرها)

أي من الوسائل السابقة تفضل استخدامه بكثرة ولماذا؟
29. فضلا أعط بعض الأمثلة عن ممارسات فعليّة تصلب في البلدان العربية، ووضعيّة علاقتك بهم، وما هي اللغة التي تستخدمها في التواصل معهم، ووسيلة الاتصال المستخدمة، فضلاً ذكر سبب استخدامك لهذه الوسيلة بالذات.

مثال توضيح:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>الشخص/القرابة</th>
<th>اللغة المستخدمة</th>
<th>وسيلة الاتصال</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>أخى الأصغر</td>
<td>اللغة العربية</td>
<td>البريد الإلكتروني (الإيمايل)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>صديق تعزته عليه في إحدى الإجازات</td>
<td>اللغة الإنجليزية</td>
<td>الدراسة الإنترنت</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

30. ما هي المميزات التي تفضلها في البريد الإلكتروني (الإيمايل) وأي العيوب التي لا تفضلها فيه؟

31. افتراض أنك أعطيت عدة خيارات للاتصال من ضمنها الهاتف، كتابة الرسائل العادية أو أي وسيلة تقليدية للاتصال، وفضلت استخدام البريد الإلكتروني (الإيمايل). لماذا؟ (في حالة تفضيل الإيمايل على غيره؟

32. ما هي المواقف أو المناسبات التي ترى أنه من غير المناسب فيها إرسال رسالة معينة عن طريق الإيمايل?

33. إذا لم تستطيع مقابلة شخص ما ووجه لوجه، فما هي أفضل وسائل اتصال تجنبها؟ أذكر أفضل ثلاث.

1. ______________________________________________________________________
2. ______________________________________________________________________
3. ______________________________________________________________________

34. إذا كان لديك أقرب أو أصدقاء في البلدان العربية، فما مدى تواصلك معهم؟

- [ ] يوميا
- [ ] عدة مرات في الأسبوع
- [ ] مرة في الشهر
- [ ] عدة مرات في الشهر
- [ ] مرة في السنة
- [ ] عدة مرات في السنة
- [ ] لا أتواصل معهم إطلاقا
35. أُؤذ / لا أُؤذ: فضلاً وضح رأيك فيما يلي:
أ. يفضل الإنترنت أصبح بإمكانية التواصل أكثر مع أقاربي وأصدقاء في بلدي الأم
معارض تماماً لا أُؤذ محتفظ أُؤذ
ب. استخدام الإنترنت ساعي كثيرة في المشاركة في الحياة الاجتماعية والثقافية السائدة في البلدان العربية
معارض تماماً لا أُؤذ محتفظ أُؤذ
فضلاً أعط مثالاً على ذلك:

ج. الإنترنت يساعد كثيرة في التواصل مع أقاربي وأصدقاء العرب في أستراليا وحول العالم.
معارض تماماً لا أُؤذ محتفظ أُؤذ
فضلاً أعط مثالاً على ذلك:

36. هل صادف وأن حاولت يوماً ما أن تواصل باللغة العربية على الإنترنت وواجت بعض المصاعب؟ ما هي هذه
المصاعب؟ (مثل صعوبة النص العربي، مشاكل فنية في تقبل النص العربي، بطء الاتصال... الخ)

37. في رأيك الخاص، كيف يمكن للحاسب الآلي أن يساهم فعاليةً أو لا يساهم إطلاقاً في استخدام اللغة العربية بشكل
عام؟ فضلاً أضرب بعض الأمثلة على ما تقترحه.
8. فيما يلي قائمة ببعض المواقف والمناسبات التي اقترح أن تكون الاتصال بأحد أفراد عائلتك أو أصدقاءك من الجالية الناطقة باللغة العربية في ملبورن في المواقف أو المناسبات التالية. اذكر وسيلة الاتصال (الإيميل، دردشة الإنترنت، الهاتف المحمول، ندوات الإنترنت… الخ) واللغة المستخدمة فيها. اذكر سبب استخدامك لهذه الوسيلة بالذات في ذلك الموقف أو المناسبة.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>السبب لاستخدام هذه الوسيلة</th>
<th>اللغة المستخدمة</th>
<th>الموقف أو المناسبة</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>لدعوة صديق إلى منزلك لتناول وجبة أو شرب الشاي والقهوة</td>
<td>العربية</td>
<td>لدعوة أصدقائك للمشاركة في إحدى النشاطات التي تقدمها النوادي أو الجمعيات العربية أو الإسلامية (رياضة، ثقافية، الخ)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>لدعوة أصدقائك لحضور مباراة مهمة في كرة القدم أو أي لعبة تابعونها</td>
<td>العربية</td>
<td>للطلب من أصدقائك مساعدتك في السيتي في آخر لحظة</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>لتخبر عائلتك انك سوف تتأخر</td>
<td>العربية</td>
<td>للطلب من صديبك أو قريبك أن يوفيك في محطة القطار ليأخذك بسيارته</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>لتتمنى يوما سعيدا لأحد معارفك أو أقاربك…..</td>
<td>العربية</td>
<td>لتحبب قريبك وصديقك قبل أو بعد إجازة</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

شكركم حسن تعاونكم واهمامكم.
Appendix D: Selected Responses to the Semi-Structured Interviews and the Research Questionnaire

The following appendix includes selected responses of key informants to the interview and participants to the questionnaire. These responses were used in the qualitative data analysis. The responses were handwritten on paper, and then they were typed and saved in Word documents with some necessary modifications to punctuation and capitalization. Responses in Arabic have all been translated.
10. In your opinion, how can the use of Arabic on the internet impact the general use of the Arabic Language by the Arabic Community in Melbourne?

- Internet is not limited to only one language; it is used in all languages. Moreover, it is a movable means; that is, it can optionally be used by individuals and groups everywhere e.g. homes, schools, associations. Muslims all over the world, especially in Melbourne, are very concerned about learning and maintaining Arabic. Therefore, internet is a good way of research and study. As for Arabic-speaking people here, it is the most available means to keep in touch with the Arabic world. However, it all depends on the individual how to make use of it properly.
- It will definitely impact Arabic positively. Internet enhances the use of Arabic in the community, especially those who are actively using the internet in Arabic.
- Yes, it especially helps those who were born in Australia and their Arabic is weak.
- It does impact the Arabic language positively. However, such an influence could not be high on some people who might not take the initiative toward internet use and utilize it appropriately.
- There is an impact but a small one. Mostly, young people access the internet looking for resources. Though Arabic programs now are available, they lack variety. Also, most of Arabic resources on the internet are limited and have nonsense information.

11. What are the obstacles hindering the use of Arabic on the Internet?

a. I am not quite familiar with Arabic language use on the internet. All what I can say that anything at the beginning is difficult, and by time, it becomes easier. Using Arabic on the internet is a long way behind English, but it is on the way to be more applicable.

b. Lack of knowledge in Arabic is one main obstacle. If the user has poor language proficiency, he might not go on using it on the net. The actual Arabic keyboards are hard to find here in Melbourne, so people just guess the functioning buttons of the corresponding letters. Generally, it is the language barrier either on the individual part or the computer part.

c. Our main problem is the deficit of the viability of the Arabic software but it was actually enhanced after the introduction of new operating systems like Windows xp though it does not fully support Arabic. Programs in general do not support the Arabic language. Besides, internet does not have Arabic back up.

d. First, we need to work on the computers to have Arabic software. Computers are just like envelopes to be reviewed, so these envelopes should contain Arabic messages to be understood or to be made use of.

e. There are no physical obstacles such as software and resources because they have become available though software is sometimes hard to find. The real problem here is that young Arabic people lack the knowledge in Arabic. I am talking mainly about young people because they represent the majority of internet users. Our problem simply is that competent internet users and designers are not competent in Arabic, and competent Arabic-speaking people are not competent in computers.
12. What Arabic language internet resources are you familiar with?
   a. I am not familiar with any.
   b. None is in Arabic in particular. There are some Islamic websites provide the service of consulting Sheiks in Arabic countries in order to respond to certain religious questions.
   c. Mainly they are Islamic-oriented websites and newsy websites. There also some search engines that support Arabic such as google.
   d. No idea.
   e. There are so many Arabic internet resources. For example, Al-Jazeera and Arabic BBC for news, Islam city which is an American website that has a section to teach Arabic.

13. Are you familiar with any internet projects developed by the Arabic community in Australia? (e.g. websites, educational materials, mailing lists).
   a. I haven’t come across any.
   b. They do exist, but I do not know any. We mainly deal with English-speaking Australians.
   c. I do not think that any body in Australia would do it in Arabic due to the lack of background of Arabic on the net. It also requires high proficiency in Arabic. However, I remember that there was a website for the Arabic Teachers Council in Victoria.
   d. As far as I know, they are all in English.
   e. To my knowledge, they are all in English. That may lead to the fact I mentioned earlier which is People who are competent in computers are not competent in Arabic and vice versa.

14. What online resources could be created in order to support the Arabic-speaking community, particularly in the maintenance of Arabic language and culture?
   a. There should be some Arabic online resources to teach the Arabic language created by well-specialized expert to non-Arabic-speaking people. Also, there should be some specialized websites to show people the beauty of the Arabic language. The most importantly, internet and computer technology are supposed to be translated to Arabic to facilitate creating any Arabic-language project.
   b. I suggest specialized websites to do a transliteration in English script to Arabic phonemes to provide a head start for beginners in Arabic. Such projects will make learners start off pronouncing Arabic on their own. I also may urge software designers to create specialized software for Arabic pronunciation of words because such software is very limited.
   c. Websites that are devoted to teaching and learning Arabic is useful to support the Arabic ethnic schools. Also, it is good to have some Arabic online resources to help students in research.
   d. It would be fabulous to establish online connections with people who speak Arabic overseas. Communicating in Arabic will be hard at the beginning, but learners will get used to it. Also, I would recommend people in charge of such projects to discuss such projects with ethnic associations first to discuss them and to advertise them because there might be some efforts online and we do not know about them.
   e. It would be very helpful to establish language learning online and setting up communities where young people can communicate and exchange information in Arabic. Interestingly, Online Arabic music is an uncovered domain. Repetitions of songs work as a good starter to learn a language. In fact, music has not been valued as a teaching tool. Language has music embedded in it, and your ears have to pick up the rhythm as attentively as musicians do with music.
**Internet communication and Arabic**

15. Do you think that using Internet communications can enhance the Arabic language proficiency?

   a. Yes. Users of these tools get used to the language in which these tools are operating and make it much more like language acquisition.

   b. Yes they will, provided that right tools are applied and access is facilitated. Such tools actually make you feel you are there. To me personally, these tools helped me achieve my goal which is writing and speaking in Arabic.

   c. They help to practice Arabic through these tools which really enhance users’ proficiency particularly if terminologies are in Arabic. We struggle here to maintain the Arabic language. People want to communicate with their relatives overseas and the only language used is Arabic, internet communication is a very helpful means. Moreover, business is huge between Arabic countries and Australia. Therefore, knowledge in Arabic and the use of internet communications are important factors to prosper this business.

   d. It definitely does. It makes learning and maintaining Arabic more appealing to learners.

   e. For sure. Anything that forces mind making it recall and respond quickly is very useful in learning languages, and that what communication online is all about. Internet chat and the other online tools are sort of learning without a teacher. So you can compose your best of the language communicating with others without being aware of errors. As long as the idea is conveyed; this is per se, a breakthrough. Furthermore, fluency can be obtained via online communications with all the new words provoked on the screen.

**Opinions**

12. What do you think about the future of the Arabic language in Australia?

   f. There is no doubt that English will remain the mainstream language. However, flows of new immigrants enhance the use of Arabic, but it is still a temporary factor. The new generations should hold on to their mother tongues. Otherwise Arabic will disappear though a lot of Muslims keep reading Qur’an only, but they may not understand its meanings.

   g. What I see that the Arabic-speaking community has a new awakening to write and read Arabic. I was not like this before. Furthermore, the desire for knowledge in Islam encourages learning Arabic; and people also want to understand their religion and teach it to their children.

   h. The Arabic language is very important to Australia in respect of population and trade. Government is supporting Arabic as well and evidence is that Arabic is one of the CSF (Curriculum Standard Framework) languages in Australia.

   i. The Arabic language in Australia has gone very far in comparison with the old days. Nowadays, the government funds and supports Arabic language learning and teaching it in universities, schools, and private lessons. It is actually spreading very fast.

   j. It will survive as long as the links with the overseas communities are maintained. Such maintenance can be viable through visits to Arabic countries, marriages, and using language maintenance facilitators such as online resources. However, it will remain with shrinking numbers as the majority will be absorbed in the host society.
13. Do you know any institutions or associations which offer Arabic language courses? How well-equipped are they with educational technologies? How do they use the internet?

a. There are hundreds of schools that offer the Arabic language courses in Melbourne. Also, there are many schools that offer Arabic as a second language. Most of these schools are state-funded. But their Arabic proficiency levels are very low. The thing is, I have no idea about their usage of computer technologies in these courses.

b. It seems that there is no use of the internet in teaching or learning Arabic in schools here in Melbourne. It is mainly individuals who sacrifice and take their time to teach others Arabic on the internet and they also show them how communicate with others in Arabic.

c. There are a lot ethnic schools but I do not think they can integrate computer technology for funding problems, but individual students may use them on their own. Some other schools use computer technology effectively e.g. RMIT, Melbourne University. Deakin University in Geelong is the most significant in offering Arabic courses with the employment of computer applications.

d. I do not think that they are very highly supported with educational technologies. There are only textbooks. There could be, but not to my knowledge.

e. I left the University of Melbourne 10 years ago. At that time, CALL has just emerged there. I was told that they were preparing some programs for the Arabic and the Asian languages section. Nowadays, most universities in Australia are facilitated with computer-supported language programs.
8. With the following people of Arabic background, what language(s) do you speak? Please explain why you speak this language with those people.

**Parents**
- I often speak Arabic to them because they do not know how to speak in English (19/f).
- I try to speak to them in Arabic so that I can learn (37/m).
- I speak to them in Arabic all the time because they are very traditional people (28/m).
- I speak to them in Arabic or Somali because they don’t understand English and my parents lived in Somalia for a while (18/m).
- Because they were born in Lebanon, I keep speaking Arabic to them (16/m).
- I can speak Arabic and English to them because they understand both (19/f).
- Their spoken English is not that good so I am forced to speak in Arabic (19/f).
- Arabic is our mother tongue through which we can understand each other and interact very clearly. (47/m).
- My dad speaks to me in English but my mum does not speak much English (14/f).
- I speak English to my dad because he was born here and I feel more comfortable speaking to him in English, and I speak English with mum when I do not know how to say a word in Arabic, yeah but mostly Arabic (15/f).

**Wife/husband**
- Arabic and English. If I can’t say a word in English I just say it in Arabic (19/f).
- Arabic. It gives a deep meaning of understanding (34/m).
- Arabic because we got used to it. (30/m).
- My wife has greater fluency in Arabic, so I keep the Arabic going at home (46/m).

**Siblings**
- English more than Arabic because we better understand each other (19/f).
- English coz we feel it is more natural (26/f).
- Only when I am at home and around my parents we speak Arabic, but when we are alone we speak in English (15/f).
- We all speak English coz some of us know only few words in Arabic and they just use them for fun (19/f).
- Arabic because we got used to it (30/m).
- I speak Arabic with my sis because she went to Lebanon and came back not understanding much English, but English with my brothers who were born here (15/f).

**Relatives**
- We speak Arabic most of the time because some relatives do not know to speak in English (19/f).
- I speak to my cousins in English, but to their parents in Arabic (15/f).
- It depends on what they speak; they sometimes mix Arabic with English (18/m).
- When their sitting with a parent they speak Arabic, but with kids they speak English (14/f).

**Friends**
- English usually but we chat sometimes in Arabic for fun.
- We speak both depending on what we are talking about (15/f).
We talk Arabic around people when we do not want them to know our business (19/f).

We speak Arabic usually but we shift to English if some of them do not speak Arabic, It is a kind of nice (30/m).

I speak Arabic to my friends mostly to preserve the language, but we turn to English sometimes to show assimilation (46/m).

We speak in Arabic if we do not want the non-Arabs to understand (14/f).

Children

- English mostly. Children usually don’t speak Arabic, so I talk to them in English (19/f).
- Arabic to those who used to it from home, but English with others because they got used to it from school (37/m).
- Arabic, so that they get to learn it (31/m).
- I try to speak Arabic but I feel myself forced to explain certain things to them in English because they do not get it in Arabic (46/m).

Young people

- It depends on who they are but mostly English to make them understand better (19/f).
- English especially with those who were born here because they do not understand Arabic very well (31/m).
- I speak to them some Arabic, but I get to speak English to make sure they understood (46/m).

Old People

- I speak to my granis in Arabic because they do not know to speak English, but sometimes I speak English to some other old relatives (19/f).
- Arabic to communicate with them better (37/m).
- They really like it when I speak Arabic to them (26/f).
- Only Arabic because they don’t socialized with any other backgrounds (31/m).

10. If you speak Arabic outside your home, where and with whom do you speak it?

- I speak Arabic with friends. There is no specific place. I may talk to any Arabic-speaking friends walking down the street (19/f).
- I speak it only when talking to old Arabic people (26/f).
- I do it sometimes. When I drive my taxi I meet with some customers from Arabic countries. I also speak to some relatives around (31/m).
- I have the chance to speak Arabic most of the time. I run a restaurant with my dad, so I speak Arabic with him and with some customers (24/m).
- I speak Arabic to my students in classes (48/m).
- Most of the time, I speak Arabic to my mates at school (17/m).
- I speak Arabic to my grandmother and my fiancé because they do not understand English (22/f).
- I do sometimes when I go to certain places such as mosques, Arabic markets, and cafes.
- Rarely do I. I just speak to elderly people (21/f).

11.3 Why did you study Arabic?

- Because it is my mother language and I like to learn more about it. Also I would like my language as I grow more and more. And I would like to have decent conversations with adults whom I feel I understand them very well (19/f).
- For certain interests and one of them is to undertake LOTE courses (37/m).
- Because it was a compulsory subject (26/f).
- To learn more about it and not to forget it (18/m).
• I started learning it in order to learn my religion (28/m).
• Back home in Sudan, I studied in Arabic in the elementary school (30/m).
• I learned Arabic in order to be able to read and understand Qur’an (15/m).
• To understand Qur’an and to read Hadith because the description in Arabic is more expressive (14/m).
• To get to know Arabic from a wider scope (34/m).
• Because I was studying in Lebanon and it was compulsory (35/m).
• For educational purposes in order to study in the university and to teach later on (48/m).
• Because I wanted to improve my Arabic (21/f).
• It was part of my school curriculum (16/f).
• It was one of my VCE subjects and I am good at Arabic which will help me get good marks (21/f).

12.1 How important it is to you to be able to speak Arabic? Why? Explain please.

• As I said it is very important because it is my mother language and I should be proud of it (19/f).
• It is never important to me. I speak English and I am totally convinced that it is totally enough for me here (37/m).
• It is very important because it enhances identity, cultural heritage, and communication (26/f).
• It is very important because my whole family speaks to me in Arabic (15/f).
• Very important. I want to understand Qur’an and stories about prophets as well if I have to write a letter or email to my parents or friends in the future so that they understand it (31/m).
• Important. It is the only language that my relatives in Arabic countries speak (18/m).
• Very important. Because my background is Arabic and having a second language is priceless (28/m).
• Very important because it is the language of Qur’an (40/m).
• It is very important for the purpose of Islam (24/m).
• Very important in order to understand what my parents are saying (16/m).
• Very important. Prophet Mohammed said you get rewards for reading every letter of Qur’an, so I want to be able to read it (33/m).
• It has become important recently to me as my fiancé does not speak any English (22/f).
• Important. Because we are Muslims and we have to talk Arabic all times with others (19/f).
• Very important. It is such a beautiful language to learn and read (30/m).
• Because I love it and I love Arabian music (35/m).
• Very important. I like to be informed about what is going on in the Arabic world, plus it is the best language I speak (30/m).
• Very important. Arabic is our mother tongue and it is the language of Qur’an, besides, competence in two languages is better than one (47/m).
• It is very important to keep the language and culture alive (46/m).
• Very important. Arabic is rich in words and with very sententious meanings and it is full of wisdom (42/m).
• Very important. I am a teacher and my duty is to help students speak correct Arabic, read, write and pronounce. Besides, I communicate with my students in Arabic (48/m).
• Very important to establish communication with people of Arabic culture (22/m).
• For me it is normal because I speak good in Arabic (14/f).
• Normal. Because not everyone is Arabic, I don’t need it much (15/f).
• Important; because without Arabic I won’t be able to communicate with my mum properly (16/m).
• It is important because I want to keep in touch with my language (15/f).
• Being able to talk Arabic is important because I need to understand older relatives but it doesn’t bother me much (16/f).
• Arabic is the most beautiful and interesting language (21/f).

**Arabic use domains**

13. If you do not participate in any Arabic group activity, is there a reason?
- Most of the members speak Arabic, so no understanding (30/m).
- Simply because I don’t know any (18/m).
- Because I am surrounded by Arabic friends all the time (37/m).
- I have got no time for that (32/m).
- Because I don’t speak proper Arabic (21/f).

**Arabic language literacy**

15 If you do not read in Arabic, please explain why you don’t:
- Because my Arabic is really poor and it is hard for me to understand what I am reading (19/f).
- It is too hard to learn plus I don’t need it here (26/f).
- I was never taught how to read and now I have no intention to read it (22/f).
- Arabic was not spoken at home while I was young (30/m).

18. In what situation do you write in Arabic or when you would like to write in Arabic if you are able to?
- Mum, wishing her a happy Mother’s Day (14/f).
- Aunty, telling her how I am doing (19/f).
- To my fiancé, writing to her about myself (37/m).
- Relatives and friends overseas sending them greetings and regards (15/f).
- Teacher, doing some homework (31/m).
- I write to my students to help them learn Arabic (46/m).
- I write to my online community members because I am an online community moderator (15/f).

**Computer experience and use**

24. What was the reason that you started using the internet?
- Researching for school assignment, downloading music, and chatting (19/f).
- For downloading music and chatting (26/f).
- When I started looking for business to establish (31/m).
- I remember starting using the internet when I intended to buy a bike (24/m).
- I like getting along with technology (34/m).
- Because it is a quick and easy way of communication (30/m).
- I want to keep updated about what is going on in the world (30/m).
- Curiosity to try anything new (34/m).
- Connecting the whole world and bringing it to your location (46/m).
- Because it is the only means that provides me with any kind of information easily and without even leaving my seat (47/m).
- Because it connects me with my friends all around the world (35/m).
- Curiosity and desire for knowledge (46/m).
When I first started to learn about computers I had to learn something about the internet access (14/f).

28. Which of the above technologies do you use most often and why?
- Videoconferencing because they can see how we look. It has been a long time since they saw us (19/f).
- Telephone because the sound is very clear (15/f).
- Telephone makes a direct contact quickly and not like internet which take a bit longer to establish a connection (18/m).
- Telephone because it is fast (30/m).
- Telephone because I like to listen to the voice of whom I am talking to without any interruptions (34/m).
- I prefer using chat with microphone because it is easy and cheap (26/f).
- Telephone because my parents want to make the call from home (16/f).
- Telephone because computers are not widely available in my home country (24/m).

29. What are your favourite or least favourite things about email?
- My favourite thing about email is that there is no limit of using it. Anyone has an email is easy to contact (19/f).
- It is quick and cheap, but reply may delay (37/m)
- Easy and economical (28/m).
- Receiving important messages from people that you cannot see (19/f).
- It is good in terms of cost, but it is improper for instant message exchange (30/m).
- What I hate about email is the inefficiency of controlling the spam (34/m).
- Everything is alright with email but it lacks privacy sometimes (46/m).
- I can transfer large amounts of information, photos, and documents instantly, but I am always skeptical about some emails that may contain malicious viruses (47/m).
- It is good but relatives overseas do not use it, so I can not use it to communicate with my overseas relatives (46/m).
- Easy to communicate with and you can keep record of drafts and emails (21/f).
- When you write messages to your friends, it is pretty much like a personal diary (14/f).
- My favourite thing is you get to email your friends, but my least favourite thing that I can’t be bothered typing ((15/f).

30. Say that you had a choice of telephoning, writing a letter, or any traditional way of communicating and you chose email instead. Why did you choose the email?
- You can write about whatever you want and you can write so many things so you do not forget what you are saying, but if you were talking on the phone, sometimes you rush and forget things (19/f).
- It is similar to a phone and it is easy to use (15/f).
- You can read and check messages instantly (31/m).
- It is good because it makes you commit fewer mistakes (24/m).
- It is easy to write, and you can make sure it has been received or not (21/m).
- It provides me with further information and photos, also it can be considered as a formal means of notification (47/m).
- It saves a lot of time and effort (35/m).
- Because it is fast and reliable (16/f).
31. In what situations do you think it is inappropriate to use email to communicate a specific message? What would be a better way to communicate that specific message?

- When I want anything from my friends or uncles asking them questions. I just do that by calling them on the phone (19/f).
- Telling someone to meet you somewhere and you write the address. Phone or face to face might be better (15/f).
- Weddings and congratulations or any situation where face to face is better, telephoning is the alternative (31/m).
- If the message is of extreme importance I’d rather use phone or videoconferencing (28/m).
- Eid greetings which should be better by mail or phone (14/m).
- When you have really good or bad news, the way to do it is the phone mostly (16/m).
- Bad news. I would rather use the phone for that (34/m).
- Situations that require give and take discussions, it would be better to do it on the phone or via internet chat (30/m).
- If there is something personal and confidential, I prefer discussing it face to face (46/m).
- It depends on the kind of information. Important data such as bank accounts and credit cards numbers better not be submitted via email, better be by phone (47/m).
- Death news is never acceptable by email or any sort of communication. It should be conveyed face to face (40/m).
- When you are emailing somebody you do not know; it is better be face to face (15/f).
- When I want to communicate with my grandma, I better use the phone (15/f).
- If the topic needs more instant explanation or discussion; email in this case is useless. I better use the phone in such situation (24/m).

36. Have you encountered a situation where you wanted to communicate in Arabic on the internet and you could not because of some obstacles? What were those obstacles?

- Language is the biggest obstacle to me (26/f).
- I have trouble with Arabic software (31/m).
- Internet connection and translation problems (19/f).
- Some people don not have the Arabic software or keyboard so it would be very difficult (22/f).
- Reading and writing Arabic are the most difficult things (30/m).
- My windows software does not support Arabic (40/m).
- Banning or blocking some online forums and magazines is really an annoying thing, and also the buffering or freezing when opening some other websites (47/m).
- The problem is that all my friends do not speak proper Arabic (32/m).
- There is a problem with Windows xp encoding Arabic text (24/m).

37. In your opinion, how do computers encourage or discourage the use of Arabic? Please provide examples

- They encourage the use of Arabic and they make use of getting used to it by writing emails and chatting with people online (19/f).
- Practicing Arabic through chat is really good (26/f).
- Computers discourage the use of Arabic, e.g. when you need to install Arabic programs to be able to type in Arabic. They encourage Arabic because they enhance one’s Arabic language by learning how to type in Arabic, to read and write (15/f).
- They encourage the use of Arabic by talking to other people and reading online but they waste time instead of using more important things (18/m).
- Computers do encourage Arabic-speaking users in every field. The wide variety of Arabic software is now available and websites as well.
- I think they don’t because people mainly speak English (18/m).
• It helps if someone has got basic Arabic skill; otherwise, I do not think so (16/m).
• It just better for people who do not understand English (19/f).
• Computers can be helpful if they are used by the Arabic community to discuss their issues and the way they live (34/m).
• Using online communities such as PalTalk is very effective. You can deliver speeches or communicate with others in Arabic (30/m).
• It works very effectively through offering online courses and social activities on internet communities (46/m).
• I suggest creating a sort of Arabic search source online to offer Arabic-speaking people with more effective recourse in all fields. Current sources are limited and move people to look for some other resources in English which is not good for maintaining Arabic (47/m).
• I am pretty sure it is gonna enhance the new generation’s Arabic specially those who use the internet in Arabic.
• They discourage the use of Arabic because English tends to dominate on the internet as a means of communication (46/m).
• It helps because it helps a person to learn Arabic in a fun way (16/f).

Role Play

38. Below is a list of events or situations.
Suppose that you want to communicate to a member of your family or an Arabic friend living in Melbourne in the following situations. Think about ways of communication (email, telephone, chat, online bulletin board, letter or card, etc.) in the following situations.
What method of communication would you use, why? Which language would you use with your family and friends?

A. To invite an Arabic friend to your house for a meal:
• Telephone in Arabic, it is a nicer way for them coming over my place (19/f).
• Telephone in Arabic showing respect and letting them know that you care plus it is quicker.
• Phone in Arabic because I enjoy speaking in Arabic the words I know (22/f).
• I prefer ringing them up in English because it is more polite (30/m).
• Phone in Arabic, because they are always available on the phone (34/m).
• Phone in Arabic so I can get an instant word about the invitation (30/m).
• Phone in Arabic as I would like to explain clearly what I want to say and the only way is speaking out.
• Phone in Arabic to make sure that you inform them about invitation on time, plus our traditions and customs imply seriousness when inviting through at least telephoning if not face to face. That also makes people more likely to accept your invitation (47/m).
• Phone or face to face to show hospitality (46/m).

B. To invite your friends to an Arabic club activity:
• Email in English, it is easier and quicker (19/f).
• Bulletin board in both Arabic and English so that everybody sees it and understands it (15/f).
• Email in Arabic or English because it is not urgent (31/m).
• Mobile phone in Arabic because it is the only means of communication that I have outside home (34/m).
• Email in both languages to make it more formal and to inform as many members as possible (47/m).
C. To invite them to a footy game:

- Telephone in English because it is faster (15/f).
- Email in English so that I can invite as many friends as possible (30/m).
- Phone in Arabic for assurance (46/m).
- Phone or any means of communication in English because it is an Australian game and there is no such word for that in Arabic (15/f).

D. To ask them to meet you in the city at the last minute:

- SMS in English, coz it is better accessed (19/f).
- Phone in Arabic so I can make sure they are coming (30/m).
- Mobile in Arabic because it is urgent and I only can catch them up by mobile (47/m).

E. To tell your family that you will be late:

- Phone in Arabic, to tell them exactly where we are, not to get worried and it is easier (19/f).
- Telephone in English coz it is the only way to get to them (15/f).
- Telephone in Arabic to make them hear your voice and know you are ok and safe (18/m).
- Phone in English to make sure that they got the message (19/f).
- Phone in Arabic to express the reason and to avoid letting them down or being disappointed (46/m).

F. To ask a friend or a family member to pick you up at the train station:

- Telephone in Arabic because it is easier (19/f).
- Telephone in Arabic and English because it is safer, easier and the only thing around (15/f).
- Phone in English, if you get stuck at the station do you have any other alternative? (33/m).

G. To wish a happy day:

- Card in English so they remember that and keep it lasting (19/f).
- SMS in English. It is flexible and you can get the answer quickly.
- I’d rather use email in Arabic because it is not an important matter (30/m).
- It is nicer to do it by phone in both Arabic and English (19/f).
- SMS in English, this way I am charged less (30/m).

H. To give holiday greetings:

- Letter in English to remember what they did in the past (19/f).
- Cards or letter in English, posting them would be nicer (37/m).
- Send a card in English. The good old way are best (30/m).
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