Subtitling against the current: Egyptians' perceptions of English sitcoms subtitled in Standard Arabic and Egyptian Colloquial Arabic

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Abstract: This study examined Egyptians' attitudes towards subtitling English sitcoms in Standard Arabic (SA) and Egyptian Colloquial Arabic (ECA), using a scene from the American sitcom *Friends* as a case study. It aimed to investigate the changing perceptions of subtitling in dialect, identify the driving forces, and assess the leading agents behind this change. The study utilized quantitative data from two online questionnaires completed by 261 participants classified by gender, age, and educational level, and qualitative data derived from their comments. The questionnaires were designed to evaluate participant preferences and specific aspects such as humor, readability and closeness to Egyptian culture. The results show that the ECA subtitle is rated as more humorous and closer to Egyptian culture, although perceived as less readable compared to the SA subtitle. They also reveal that younger participants, particularly females, show a greater preference for the ECA subtitle. Males across all educational levels tend to prefer the SA subtitle, while females with lower educational levels exhibit the highest preference for the ECA subtitle. The study highlights the increasing significance of colloquial dialects in shaping cultural representations as well as the influence of factors such as age, gender, and education on subtitling preferences. Furthermore, the study considers the implications of these results for subtitling practices and policies in Egypt and similar diglossic environments.

Keywords: diglossia; subtitling sitcoms; Standard Arabic; Egyptian Colloquial Arabic

1. Introduction:

Translation is a process loaded with many problems, both linguistic (syntactic, semantic, stylistic, etc.) and cultural. The number and types of such problems are particularly greater in audiovisual translation (henceforth AVT) as it involves the "transfer of multimodal and multimedia speech (dialogue, monologue, comments, etc.) into another language/culture" (Gambier, 2013, p. 45). Therefore, problems encountered in AVT could be linguistic, cultural, technical (Thawabteh, 2011), semiotic (De Linde & Kay, 2016), as well as societal or political, as is the case when there is censorship (Mazid, 2006; Keating, 2016), etc.

One of the prominent linguistic challenges in AVT into Arabic is diglossia. As defined by Ferguson (1959, p. 336), diglossia refers to a language situation involving two distinct language varieties, the High (H) variety and Low (L)

variety. In Arabic, the H variety (*Fuṣḥā*) is used in formal speech and written communication, taught in schools, but not spoken as the mother tongue. On the other hand, the L variety (*'āmmiyya* or *Dārija*) is the mother tongue used in daily conversations and informal writing. While the L variety may encompass a prestigious variant (e.g., ECA in Egypt and Beirut Arabic in Lebanon), the H variety holds greater prestige due to its association with formal education and written literature, including the Qur'an.

Although Ferguson (1959, p. 340) recognized the presence of an intermediate variety that incorporates characteristics from both the H and L varieties, his model has been subject to criticism for not considering the nuances between the two poles. Therefore, to provide a more inclusive comprehension of linguistic variation in Arabic, several multiglossic models have been proposed. These models include five levels proposed by Blanc (1960) and Badawi (1973), four levels by Meiseles (1980) and three levels by Cadora (1992). However, some scholars, like Mejdell (2006), argue that these models "tend to be flawed by lack of, or only minimal, empirical support, and turn out to be difficult to apply to natural data" (p. 47).

Brustad (2017) argues that diglossia should be understood as an ideology rather than an accurate representation of the language situation. According to her, diglossia was formulated by the cultural elite of the *Nahḍa* (Renaissance) movement in the latter half of the 19th century. This ideology aimed to idealize *Fuṣḥā* as the sole "correct" form of Arabic, disregarding the presence of *'āmmiyya*-like features that had found their way into the writings of many literary figures before the *Nahḍa*. But due to recent technological developments, Brustad writes, attitudes towards writings in *'āmmiyya* have changed positively. However, she acknowledges that the division between *Fuṣḥā* and *'āmmiyya* remains significant in the perception of Arabic speakers and, accordingly, using terms like *Fuṣḥā* and *'āmmiyya* as analytical tools is necessary, especially in the absence of alternatives (p. 42). Thus, throughout this study, *Fuṣḥā* and *'āmmiyya* will be used as analytical terms but will be replaced with SA and Colloquial Arabic (CA) respectively.

Some of the challenges faced in AVT in Arabic stem from its diglossic nature. While subtitling in Arabic has typically relied on SA, the use of CA for subtitling has often been considered inappropriate. However, there have been notable shifts in the norms of written Arabic, particularly in the acceptance of incorporating CA in written form (Høigilt & Mejdell, 2017). This study aims to explore the influence of these evolving norms on the perceptions of Egyptians regarding SA and CA subtitles, considering their perceptions as a representative sample reflecting broader Arab attitudes towards subtitling.

This study contributes to understanding language attitudes in Egypt, especially within the context of diglossia, and provides insights into the changing norms of written Arabic and the potential application of CA in subtitling. Furthermore, the study offers valuable information on the language preferences of different demographic groups regarding subtitling, which can benefit subtitlers, subtitling programs, and language policymakers operating in Egypt and other similar diglossic environments.

2. Attitudes towards Arabic varieties in AVT

SA has been used in subtitling constantly and in dubbing considerably, especially in children's cartoons. CA has been used in dubbing some cartoons, movies, and series. For example, Syrian Arabic has been used in dubbing many Turkish series and India's Bollywood series and movies. ECA had been used in dubbing Walt Disney's production since the 1970s, before Disney decided to

switch to SA in 2012, when it launched its Dubai branch, in a bid to accommodate its Gulf conservative viewers (Think Marketing, 2017). But due to negative attitudes towards the use of SA in dubbing and the claim that ECA is better "at communicating the light hearted nature of Disney films" (Ahram Online, 2017), Disney decided to return to ECA in 2017.

This popular belief that dubbing, especially dubbing humor, should be done in CA has also been confirmed in research. Almanna and Farghal (2015) maintain that ECA is better at translating humor, while SA can be used in translating serious works like historical cartoon series (p. 160). Allam (2016) assessed three translations of Disney's *Toy Story 1*: a fansubbed dubbing in SA, an SA dubbing by the Qatari Jeem Channel, and an ECA dubbing by Disney. She found that the two SA dubbings depended on word-for-word translation. In contrast, the ECA dubbing relied on situational paraphrase and transcultural substitution, thus making the movie look like an original. Allam concluded that the ECA version conveys the humorous goal of *Toy Story 1* better than the two SA versions. Similarly, in her investigation of the techniques adopted in the ECA dubbing of Netflix's sitcom *Fuller House*, Abomoati (2019) emphasized that dubbing the series in ECA instead of SA is "a good choice to represent the informal dialogues of the sitcom" (p. 12) since "a dialect would be better than the formal language variety for successfully translating the humorous effect" (p. 7). Comparing two dubbings of Disney's *Monsters*, one in SA and the other in ECA, Yahiaoui et al. (2020) found that the ECA dubbing is better at rendering irony since the dialect is "more fluid in terms of transferring the linguistic and humorous aspects of the original dialogue" (p. 36) and because ironic contrast is "much more pronounced" in ECA (p. 38). What could be inferred from these studies is that dubbing in CA facilitates domesticating the dubbed work, thereby making it better at creating on the target culture receivers an effect like the one created on the source culture audience, which is the ultimate goal of AVT (Chaume, 2004, p. 844).

Attitudes towards the use of dialect in subtitling are generally negative. By definition, subtitling

> consists of presenting a written text ... that endeavours to recount the original dialogue of the speakers, as well as the discursive elements that appear in the image (letters, inserts, graffiti, inscriptions, placards, and the like) and the information ... contained on the soundtrack (songs, voices off). (Díaz Cintas, 2013, p. 274)

This implies that subtitling requires a lot of mental effort on the part of viewers to focus on the image and read the subtitles simultaneously, which may be more challenging in the case of dialectal subtitles. According to Mazid (2006), dialects "still lack the codification and orthographic systematicity necessary for being used in writing" (p. 94) compared to standardized varieties that have codified writing systems. For this reason, it is believed that dialects would be difficult to read on screen and that subtitling in dialect would add another barrier to the various linguistic and technical barriers characterizing subtitling (Díaz Cintas & Remael, 2007; Fawcett, 1996; Rosa, 2001). Rosa (2001) also maintains that native speakers emotionally classify the varieties of the language they speak across a scale of prestige, with the formal written variety typically considered more prestigious and every deviation from it "pushed towards the edges and regarded as something beyond the border of what they consider correct" (p. 215). This popular belief among viewers forces subtitlers to adopt the strategies of centralization; namely, they are pushed to use subtitles that represent the TL written register rather than the oral register used in the SL (Rosa, 1999, 2001). Accordingly, the general tendency in subtitling is to use the written variety and consider dialect less sophisticated and better to be avoided.

According to Karamitroglou (1997), even when dialect is seen fitting for subtitling, it must have appeared in printed form so that it could be understood.

The previous reasons for rejecting subtitling in dialect can be refuted, but the refutations offered here are as brief as possible for space considerations. Exposure to written dialect is currently unprecedented as represented in phone texts, texting apps, social networking sites and email services. As of April 2023, the number of internet users globally reached 5 billion people, 64.6% of the global population (Dataportal, 2023). The common language variety used on all these apps is dialect, with all its oral features.

The technological boom referred to above has also hit Arab countries, where 65% of Arabs use the internet (International Telecommunication Union, 2021), with engagement in social media, texting, blogs, forums, emails, and chatrooms largely in written CA. In this connection, many studies concluded that written CA is the preferred means of digital communication for most Arabs (Al-Saleem, 2011; Gully, 2012; Kebede & Kindt, 2017; Mimouna, 2012; Palfreyman & al Khalil, 2003; Warschauer et al., 2002), possibly since it is beyond the control of authorities and allows for numerous linguistic choices (Brustad, 2017).

A new trend in publications written in CA, especially fiction, is also growing in Arab countries. There are no figures, but book fairs and online bookshops are evidence that literature written in CA is attracting large numbers of readers.

Bivalency between SA and CA is another major factor reducing the difficulty of reading written CA. A bivalent word belongs "equally to two recognized linguistic codes, descriptively and sometimes even prescriptively" (Woolard & Genovese, 2007, p. 488) as is exactly the case in SA and CA. In Arabic, bivalency covers words that, without diacritics, could be read as either SA or CA, as in the example below.

Bivalent sentence	مدرسة محمد في الحي الرابع جميلة وأكبر من مدرسة بدر.
Translation	Muhammad's school in the 4th District is nice and bigger than Badr's school.
As read in SA	madrasat(ʊ) muħammad(ɪn) fi: ʔal-ħajj(ɪ) ʔɑr-rɑ:bɪʕ(ɪ) dʒami:la(tʊn) wa-ʔakbɑr(ʊ) mɪn madrasat(ɪ) badr(ɪn)[1]
As read in ECA	madˈrasɪt maˈħammad fɪl ħajj ʔɪr-ˈrɑ:bɪʕ ɡaˈmi:la wɪ-ˈʔakbɑr mɪn madˈrasɪt badr

This sentence can be read in SA (with or without case marking) or ECA with no difficulty. Bivalency facilitates reading printed folk literature, newspaper cartoon captions and comic books written in CA.

Receivers' high evaluation of written SA versus low evaluation of written CA is also changing. Rosa's (2001) opinion above presupposes that standard varieties are the only prestigious ones. Ibrahim (1986) clarified the difference between the notions 'standard' and 'prestigious' regarding Arabic; namely, SA cannot be the 'standard' and 'prestigious' variety simultaneously as is the case in European languages. SA is the standard variety in Arab countries, but there exist prestigious varieties like ECA in Egypt, Damascus Arabic in Syria, etc. Further, even if Arabs' attitudes are very supportive of SA, they generally avoid using SA in speaking (Al-Wer, 2014) and mostly use CA in personal written correspondence, whether they live in Arab countries (Belnap & Bishop, 2003) or abroad (Belnap, 1998). Compared to Belnap's study (1998) and Belnap and Bishop's study (2003), Meiseles (1979) concluded that informal Egyptian, Syrian, and Palestinian written Arabic was mainly in SA. This difference among

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[1] Case is between parentheses.

these studies, spanning less than 25 years, is evidence of a major positive change towards written CA. Similar findings were also found regarding email correspondence written in CA among university undergraduates in Jordan (Al-Tamimi & Gorgis, 2007) and Algeria (Mimouna, 2012).

Similar results regarding the changing attitudes towards written CA were obtained via two surveys launched by the Fafo Research Foundation. The first survey, completed by 2478 participants living in Cairo, aimed at collecting data regarding written ECA (Kebede et al., 2013). The second survey, completed by 959 participants in Rabat, aimed at collecting data regarding Moroccan Colloquial Arabic known as *Dārija* (Kebede & Kindt, 2016). Both surveys included a sample of individuals ranging from 18 to 64 years old, comprising both males and females with diverse educational levels and socioeconomic backgrounds. The results showed a relatively high rate (57%) of acceptance for ECA as a written language in Cairo (Kebede et al., 2013, p. 78), compared to 32% of acceptance for *Dārija* in Rabat (Kebede & Kindt, 2016, p. 86). In addition, the results showed that the Cairo participants either largely use written ECA or believe it is fit for different purposes (comics, printed ads, subtitles, short stories, and newspaper columns) much more than the participants in Rabat, where *Dārija* is almost solely used for Facebook and personal notes and believed to be unfitting elsewhere.

Having shown that Arabs' attitudes and practices towards using written CA have changed, the current study seeks to answer the following questions:

1) Has there been a change in Egyptians' attitudes towards subtitling in dialect?
2) If so, who leads the change?
3) What is/are the cause/s of change?

3. Methodology

To address these questions, the researcher subtitled a four-minute scene from Season 6, Episode 9 of the American TV sitcom *Friends* (Chase et al., 1999) into ECA. This ECA-subtitled version and the SA-subtitled version aired on the widely watched MBC4 TV channel were included in two online questionnaires that were distributed among the researcher's Egyptian acquaintances, friends, colleagues, and students. The two subtitled clips were uploaded on YouTube and their links[2] were provided in the questionnaires designed on Google Forms. Participants had the convenience of watching the clips directly within the questionnaires. Appendix 1 contains the two questionnaires[3], and Appendix 2 includes the English transcript along with the SA and ECA subtitles.

The researcher relied on the SA subtitle by MBC4 because it represents the prevailing subtitling practices on Arab TV channels. The questionnaires were completed by 261 participants. To eliminate the influence of which subtitle was viewed first, one questionnaire (completed by 124 participants) presented the SA subtitle first, while the other (completed by 137 participants) presented the ECA subtitle first. Additionally, to exclude the effect of whether the participant had watched the scene in English or with subtitles in any Arabic dialect, those who had viewed it before were excluded from the study.

The participants were asked to judge which subtitle (SA or ECA) is generally better, and decide which is more humorous, easier to read and closer

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[2] The SA subtitle can be found at https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ctg6cD5lel8, and the ECA subtitle at https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tYTl26vMCzc&t=1s.
[3] Questionnaire 1 is available at https://shorturl.at/ekLNO and Questionnaire 2 at https://shorturl.at/atKMP

to Egyptian culture. All rating questions were of a linear-scale type (1-10), with 1 = least and 10 = most. Also, the participants were asked to add comment/s to justify their choices.

Table 1: Participants' social backgrounds

| Education | Age Group | | | | | | Total |
| | 15-22 | | 23-40 | | 40+ | | |
	female	male	female	male	female	male	
Secondary or below	21	6	1	0	4	2	34
university	58	15	27	37	8	9	154
Postgraduate	0	0	21	38	0	14	73
Total	79	21	49	75	12	25	261
	100		124		37		

Table 1 lists the profiles of the participants who come from 20 governorates by gender, age, and educational level. 'Secondary or below' covers the secondary, preparatory/middle and primary levels. 'Postgraduate' covers postgraduate levels (masters and beyond). Age was divided into three groups as follows:

1) 15-22: Young people have few responsibilities and much free time to watch TV. Most young men finish their higher or further education at 22.
2) 23-40: Responsibilities increase, including work and caring for children/elders. Free time and watching TV decrease.
3) 40+: Work responsibilities become more administrative or leadership related. Family responsibilities gradually decrease. At 60, retirement starts, and job responsibilities nearly disappear, thus allowing free time to watch TV.

3.1. Hypotheses of the study

Compared to the SA subtitle, the ECA subtitle was hypothesized to be more humorous and closer to Egyptian culture, while the SA subtitle was expected to be easier to read due to Egyptians' familiarity with SA subtitles. Due to the limited exposure of Arab women to SA, particularly in religious and political contexts (Sadiqi, 2003), including those in Egypt (Haeri, 1996), the ECA subtitle was hypothesized to be preferred by females. Moreover, preference for the ECA subtitle was expected to correlate negatively with age and education: the younger the participant and the lower his/her educational level, the more he/she would prefer the ECA subtitle.

To determine which independent variable is responsible for leading participants to prefer one subtitling variant (ECA or SA) over the other, a logistic regression analysis was conducted using R, which is a programming language widely used for statistical analysis, computational tasks, and creating graphical visualizations (Antoch, 2008).

Logistic regression, a type of Generalized Linear Model (GLM) analysis, is a statistical method used to analyze the relationship between a categorical dependent variable and independent variables. The dependent variable has two possible options (e.g., *yes* and *no*), and the goal is to predict the probability of the dependent variable being one option (e.g., *yes* or *no*) based on the independent variables. This is done using a mathematical function that converts the independent variables into a probability between 0 and 1. This function considers the estimates (values of the independent variables) and their impact on the likelihood of the dependent variable being one of the two options. These estimates are determined by finding the values that make the model most likely to predict the observed data. Once the estimates are determined, the logistic function can be used to make predictions. By choosing a threshold probability,

such as a p-value of 0.05 or less (considered statistically significant), the predicted probability can be compared to the threshold to classify the dependent variable as either statistically significant or not (Menard, 2010). Logistic regression deals with many independent variables, overcomes normal distribution issues, and requires no assumptions (BCCVL, 2021). Thus, it was deemed an appropriate method for analysing the dataset upon which this study relied.

4. Results

4.1. Frequency

Analysis of the data yielded the results outlined in Table 2. The participants prefer the ECA subtitle by 79.19% and the SA subtitle by 72.58%. The ECA subtitle was rated higher than the SA subtitle in terms of conveying a sense of humor and approaching the Egyptian viewers' culture, while the SA subtitle was rated higher regarding its suitability to be easily read. The largest difference between the two subtitles lies in each's fitness to approach Egyptian culture: ECA by 83.79% compared to SA by 64.67%.

Table 2: Participants' preference for the SA and ECA subtitles

	More humorous		Easier to read		Closer to Egyptian culture	
	SA	ECA	SA	ECA	SA	ECA
Sum of rating:	1822	2039	2174	1975	1688	2187
Total [4]	2610	2610	2610	2610	2610	2610
%	69.80	78.12	83.29	75.67	64.67	83.79
Average	SA subtitle 72.58 %			ECA subtitle 79.19%		

4.2. Statistical results

4.2.1. How does logistic regression analysis work?

To determine who exhibits more positive attitudes towards ECA in subtitling, logistic regression analysis was conducted using the results of the general question (*Which is generally better, the SA or ECA subtitle?*).

The dependent variable in the analysis refers to the preference between the ECA or SA subtitle, with a value of 1 assigned to the ECA subtitle and a value of 0 assigned to the SA subtitle. Each independent categorical variable has a reference level with an estimated value of 0. For example, in Table 3, the estimate for the reference level of gender (female) is 0, and the estimate for the other level (male) is -0.1398. This negative estimate suggests that males have a lower preference for the ECA subtitle compared to females. To determine the statistical significance of this difference, the p-value can be examined. In this case, the p-value (0.6252) is greater than 0.05, indicating that the observed difference is not statistically significant.

4.2.2. Results of separate regression

The statistical results in Table 3 show that males prefer the ECA subtitle less than females, but the difference is non-significant (p-value at 0.6252). Also, the participants who watched the ECA first prefer it more than those who watched the SA subtitle first, but the difference is not significant (p-value 0.1121) either.

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[4] 2610 is the total of answers to linear questions (on a scale of 1 to 10) answered by 261 participants.

Table 3: Contribution of gender, age group, education and the subtitle watched first on the participants' general preference for the ECA subtitle over the SA subtitle

	Coefficients	Estimate	Std. Error	z value	Pr(>|z|)
	(Intercept)	1.7450	0.4692	3.719	0.0002 ***
Gender	female	*reference level*			
	male	-0.1398	0.2862	-0.488	
Age Group	15-22	*reference level*			
	23-40	-0.4621	0.3406	-1.357	0.1748
	40+	-1.1347	0.4464	-2.542	0.0110 *
Education	secondary or below	*reference level*			
	university	-1.0507	0.4678	-2.246	0.0247 *
	postgraduate	-0.7525	0.5409	-1.391	0.1642
Watched First	ECA	*reference level*			
	SA	-0.4359	0.2744	-1.589	0.1121
	Signif. codes: 0 '***' 0.001 '**' 0.01 '*' 0.05 '.' 0.1 ' ' 1				

The participants between 15 and 22 prefer the ECA subtitle the most, followed by those between 23 and 40, but the difference between the two groups is not significant (p-value 0.1748). Those over 40 are the least likely to prefer the ECA subtitle, and the difference between them and those in the range 15-22 is significant (p-value 0.0110*). This shows that there is a negative correlation between age and preference for the ECA subtitle: the younger the participant, the more he/she prefers the ECA subtitle. Conversely, the older the participant, the more he/she prefers the SA subtitle.

The participants with a secondary educational level or below prefer the ECA subtitle significantly more than the participants who study/studied at a higher educational level. While participants with a university educational level prefer the ECA subtitle less than those at a postgraduate level, the difference is non-significant as confirmed by the small difference between their estimates (university: -1.0507 and postgraduate: -0.7525).

4.2.3. Results of interaction regression
In order to examine potential positive interactions between the independent variables, other statistical fits were run using logistic regression analysis. Interacting age group with which subtitle was first watched (WF) & education, and interacting which subtitle was first watched with education & gender proved non-significant. Although gender as a separate independent variable was found non-significant, interacting it with age group and education proved significant as shown in Table 4.

It is clear that age still affects the participants' choices: the younger the participant, the more he/she prefers the ECA subtitle. Among females of the three age groups, there are no significant differences. However, significant differences exist between the three age groups of males, with the 15-22 group preferring the ECA subtitle significantly much more than the 40+ group. It could be said that young females show a higher preference for the ECA subtitle, while older males, in contrast, exhibit a greater preference for the SA subtitle. As for the interaction between gender and education, males of various educational backgrounds show minimal variance, although those who have completed or are pursuing university tend to slightly prefer the ECA over those with other levels of education. On the other hand, females who have not attended university show no significant preference for the ECA subtitle over postgraduate females, but they do exhibit more preference over females enrolled in or holding a university degree.
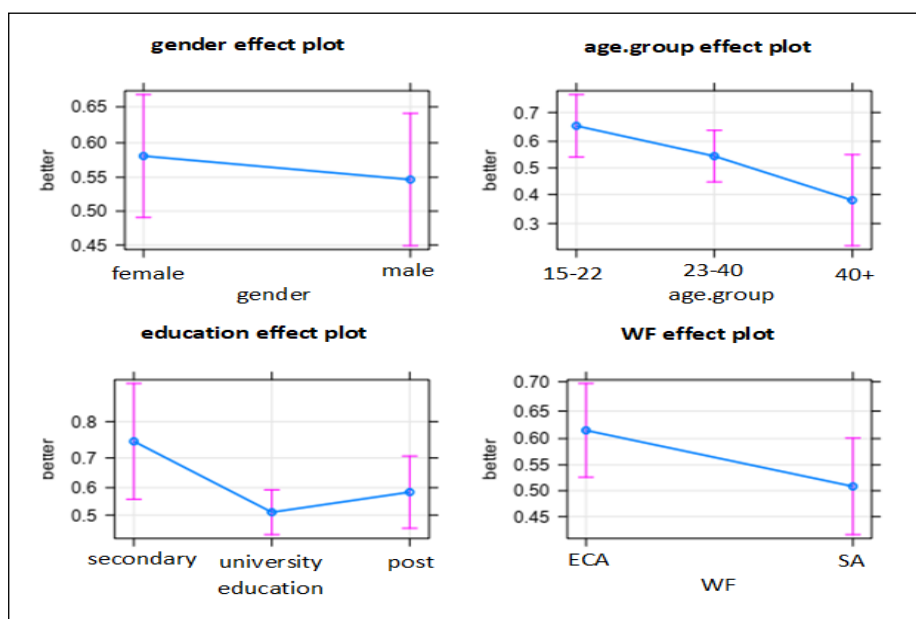
Figure 1: Contribution of gender, age group, education and the subtitle seen first on the participants' general preference for the ECA subtitle over the SA subtitle

Table 4: Contribution of gender interacted with age group and education on the participants' general preference for the ECA subtitle over the SA subtitle

Coefficients	Estimate	Std. Error	z value	Pr(>|z|)
(Intercept)	1.8943	0.5720	3.312	0.000927 ***
gender: male	-1.5658	0.9440	-1.659	0.097166 .
Gender interacted with age group				
female: 24-40	-0.4474	0.4602	-0.972	0.330927
male: 24-40	-0.8850	0.6157	-1.437	0.150597
female: 40+	-0.8787	0.6659	-1.319	0.187005
male: 40+	-1.3961	0.6958	-2.007	0.044795 *
Gender interacted with education				
female: university	-1.4927	0.6040	-2.471	0.013463 *
male: university	0.5226	0.8622	0.606	0.544487
female: postgraduate	-0.9613	0.8340	-1.153	0.249052
male: postgraduate	0.5371	0.9250	0.581	0.561502

5. Discussion

5.1. Ratings of the SA and ECA subtitles

5.1.1. Readability

The results indicate that the participants' preference for the SA subtitle over the ECA subtitle is confined to easy reading. This could be explained by the long-established tradition of reading subtitles in SA. So far, subtitles of audiovisual products have been done almost exclusively in SA. Subtitles in CA are very few and could be limited to songs (intralingual subtitling). The effect of tradition is very clear in the inconsistency between the answers by a large number of participants to the general question (*Which subtitle is generally better, the SA subtitle or ECA subtitle?*) and the ratings by the very participants regarding

which subtitle is more humorous and closer to Egyptian culture. Many participants, possibly affected by their positive ideologies towards SA (Albirini, 2016), rated the ECA subtitle higher but chose the SA subtitle as better. These inconsistencies are clear in participant comments such as the following:
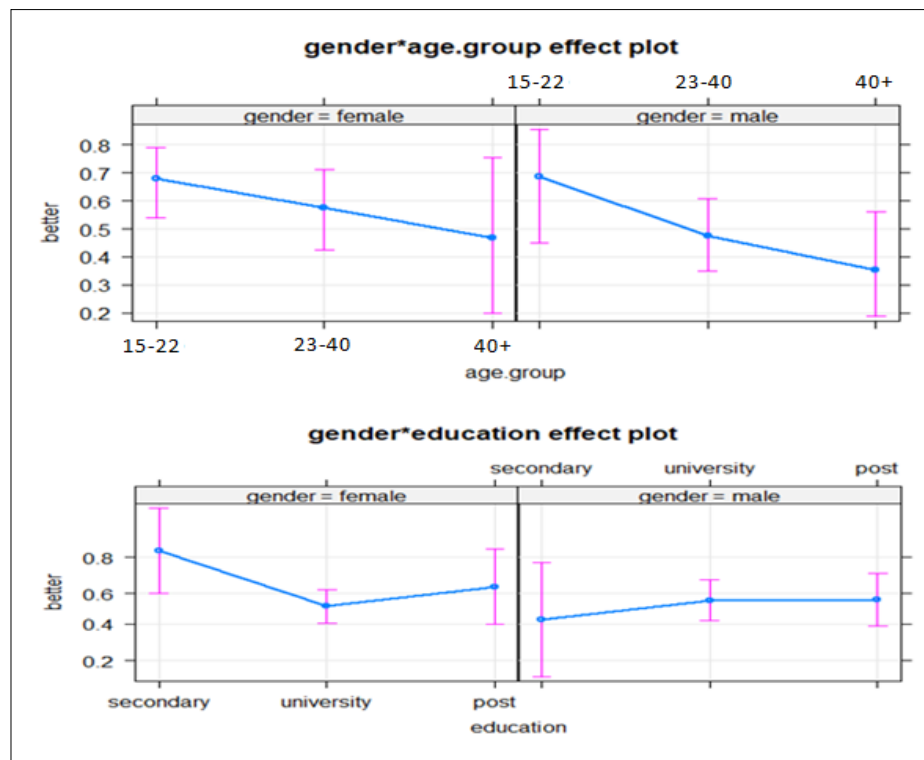

Figure 2: Effect of gender interacted with age group and education on the participants' general preference for the ECA subtitle over the SA subtitle

> Participant M14: Although the ECA subtitle is more humorous and closer to my culture, I believe that the SA subtitle is better because SA unites all Arabs. If subtitling is in ECA in Egypt, it could be done in Kuwaiti Arabic in Kuwait, for example. I see that this will be bad for all Arabs and would 'kill' SA.

> Participant M68: I prefer the SA subtitle though it is not as expressive or humorous as the ECA subtitle. It is because of my children. I want them to learn proper Arabic grammar as in the SA subtitle. If ECA is used in all subtitles, children will lose connection with SA.

> Participant F213: I laughed more when I watched the ECA subtitle. I also got how the actors felt terrible about Rachel's trifle in the ECA subtitle. This is not funny in the SA subtitle. However, I prefer the SA subtitle because I am used to it in subtitles and because SA is Arabic that should be on TV.

It should be noted that the difference between the ratings of the SA subtitle (83.29%) and ECA subtitle (75.67%) in terms of readability is inconsiderable, which can be regarded as a positive change towards written ECA. This change is also mirrored in Kebede et al. (2013), who found that 57% of their Cairo participants (of the total 2478) agree that ECA has a place as a written language (compared to 30% who disagree, 4% who are undecided and 9% who do not know) (p. 77).

The SA subtitle may have been rated as easier to read than the ECA subtitle because of the discourse markers and clarifying phrases in the ECA subtitle as

illustrated in Table 5. The underlined phrases were added to emulate the spoken register as in using the discourse marker بذمتكم [bɪzɪmˈmɪtkʊm] (lit. *in your conscience*) '*honestly*'. Another aim of the additions is to clarify the meaning as in subtitling '*ladyfingers*' as بسكوت صوابع الست [bɪsˈkoːt sˀɑˈwɑːbɪʔ ʕɪsˈsɪtt] '*biscuits like a lady's fingers*' compared to الحلوى [ʔɪlˈħalwa] '*the sweet*' in the SA subtitle, thus depending on specialization in the ECA subtitle versus generalization in the SA subtitle (Pedersen, 2011).

Table 5: Examples showing discourse markers/ clarifying phrases in the ECA subtitle compared to the SA subtitle

Original	SA subtitle	Words	ECA subtitle	Words	Timing[5]
Rachel: Look at it, isn't it beautiful?	انظرا، أليست جميلة؟	3	بصوا كده، مش جميلة؟ بذمتكم؟	5	00.07.32-3
Back Translation	Look, both of you. Isn't it beautiful?		Look at this, both of you. Isn't it beautiful, honestly?		
Ross:Yeah, yeah, what is it?	أجل، ما هي؟	3	آه جميلة، ودي إيه بقى إن شاء الله؟	8	00.07.35-6
Back Translation	Yes, what is it?		Yes, beautiful, and what is this, God willing.		
Rachel: First there's a layer of ladyfingers.	أولًا طبقة الحلوى.	3	أول طبقة بسكوت صوابع الست.	5	00.07.38-9
Back Translation	First, a layer of the sweet.		The first layer is biscuits like a lady's fingers.		
Rachel: I mean that's an English dessert	وهي حلوى إنجليزية.	3	وده طبق حلويات إنجليزي برضه.	5	00.08.12-3
Back Translation	And it is an English sweet.		And this is a dish of English sweets as well.		
Joey and Ross: Okay.	حسنًا.	1	ده كلام برضه؟؟	3	00.08.24-5
Back Translation	Well.		No way, ma'am.		
Joey: I like it.	أنا أحببتها.	2	مالها؟ ما هي حلوة أهي!	5	00.17.25-6
Back Translation	I liked it.		What is wrong with it? It is already good.		

5.1.2. Humor
In terms of humor, the ECA subtitle received a higher rating compared to the SA subtitle, with 78.12% for the former and 69.80% for the latter. The three participants' comments above are a few of the comments confirming the success of the ECA subtitle in conveying the sense of humor in the *Friends* scene more than the SA subtitle. Another comment by a participant detailing why she found the ECA subtitle more humorous goes as follows:

> Participant F178: I found the ECA subtitle very humorous because it is in the language that we use daily, not a language taught in schools like the SA subtitle. Also, the language of the ECA subtitle is lively and funny compared to the 'hard'

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[5] Timing as in the full episode available at https://bit.ly/38eq7wK
[6] The ECA subtitles integrate specific orthographic elements from SA, including letters like ق and ج, although with differing phonetic variants. Also, common lexical features, such as expressions إن شاء الله, and كلام, أول are observed in both ECA and SA. This reiterates the previously explained concept of bivalency (refer to Section 3).

> language in the SA subtitle which is like someone in a formal suit cooking in a kitchen.

Much is summed up in this enlightening simile that the SA subtitle is like 'someone in a formal suit cooking in a kitchen'. This quote is just a reminder of the diglossic division between SA and CA, highlighting that SA is commonly associated with serious writings, formal debate and public speaking, whereas CA is considered more appropriate for non-serious or informal situations.

This viewpoint is confirmed by Almanna and Farghal (2015), who consider that SA indexes seriousness and suits subtitling serious works like historical cartoon series (p.160). The same viewpoint is also mirrored in many contrastive studies (Abomoati, 2019; Allam, 2016; Yahiaoui et al., 2020) showing that when humor is dubbed in CA, the humorous effect is better achieved than in SA dubbings.

It should be noted, however, that the difference between the ratings of the SA and ECA subtitles in terms of humorousness is a little inconsiderable. The SA subtitle is still deemed humorous, and this could be due to the scene as part of a sitcom. A sitcom is mainly based not on jokes but on characters' gestures, facial expressions or unexpected noises, and problems that seem unsolvable, etc. (Corke, 2013). Humor in *Friends* "often relies on repeated stereotypical behavior" (Schubert, 2018, p. 179). For example, when Rachel is involved in making a trifle, she does not know that she has combined an English trifle with a shepherd's pie because of two recipe book pages being stuck together, thus causing Ross and Joey's awestruck expressions, and resulting in all the audience's laughter while watching the rest of the cast pretending that the seemingly *awful* cake is *awesome*. If the scene had relied more on verbal humor rather than on *situations*, the ECA subtitle, judging by the obtained results, would have probably been rated much higher than the SA subtitle.

5.1.3. Closeness to Egyptian culture

As hypothesised, the ECA subtitle was rated significantly higher than the SA subtitle (by nearly 20%) in terms of closeness to Egyptian culture. The relationship between language and culture is so solid that language is considered an essential component of cultural production rather than a reflection of culture (Bucholtz & Hall, 2004). In connection with Arabic, again due to its diglossic situation, there are usually two images of culture: SA representing the culture of all Arab countries, Arab unity or modern formality, and CA representing contemporary Arab culture (e.g., Lebanese Colloquial Arabic representing contemporary Lebanese culture). It is unsurprising, then, that the ECA subtitle was evaluated as closer to Egyptian culture since the participants (who come from different regions of Egypt) regard ECA as an embodiment of Egyptian culture. This echoes Silverstein's (2014) standpoint that dialects or accents express cultural values (second-order indexes) rather than speakers' origin or socioeconomic backgrounds (first-order indexes). Accordingly, ECA, based on the features of spoken Arabic in Cairo, has been associated with Egyptian cultural values and converged on by Upper Egyptians within Cairo (Miller, 2005) and outside Cairo (Sadiq, 2016), and by Lower Egyptians outside Cairo (Ornaghi, 2010). Outside Egypt, ECA is the "code of [Egyptian] culture and the key to fame", especially for non-Egyptian artists (Bassiouney, 2018, p. 292).

5.2. Social criteria behind preference for SA or ECA subtitles

5.2.1. Age

Subtitling in ECA is an innovation violating the conventions of subtitling into Arabic. As such, the significant contribution of age can be understood. Many sociolinguistic studies have found that youngsters lead or accept language

innovations more than other age groups (Al-Wer, 2006). In this regard, the results of the present study are in harmony with those reported by Kebede et al. (2013) concerning how Egyptians from different age groups consider ECA suitable for subtitling movies. Despite the differences in the age group structure in the two studies, Table 6 shows a similar trend in both (i.e., an increase in age suggests a negative attitude towards using ECA in subtitling and vice versa).

Table 6: How the participants of different age groups consider written ECA suitable for subtitling in Kebede et al. (2013) and the current study

Kebede et al. (2013)			Current Study		
Age group	%	sample size	Age group	%	sample size
18-34	57.00	1317	15-22	67.00	100
35-49	55.00	729	23-40	51.61	124
50-64	49.00	362	40+	40.54	37
Total		2408	Total		261

Why age is a significant factor can also be explained by the demographics of social media users in Egypt. According to Dataportal (2023), 72.2% of Egyptians use the internet and most of them use social media platforms as blogs or for political engagement, entertainment or marketing. Age and use of social media are inversely proportional, with the largest number of users below the age of 44 (Social Media Users in Egypt, 2021). If written dialect is "not only accepted, but expected" (Kebede & Kindt, 2017, p. 38) on platforms designed for informal communication like social media platforms, it is unsurprising that youngsters would probably develop positive attitudes towards using written dialect in many fields, including subtitling.

Explaining the spread of written *Dârija* in Morocco, Miller (2017, p. 98) maintains that the "development of internet, sms and social networks represents the strongest dynamics of spreading dārija writings and the major factor of change in writing practice". If this is the case in Morocco, where national identity has been connected to SA due to an Arabization program aimed at supporting SA at the cost of French (Kebede & Kindt, 2017, p. 38), it is anticipated that the internet and social media are promoting written ECA and causing a larger change in writing practices in Egypt, where national identity is largely connected to ECA.

Age and language ideologies are also interrelated. The generation gap in the Arab world has led to different language ideologies and practices. The older generation in many Arab countries may still have some affinity with pan-Arab nationalism. This age group lived at a time when independence from colonial powers, Arab fraternity, and Arab unity were very powerful concepts represented in curricula in primary, preparatory/middle and secondary schools. At university, it was customary for a large number of Arab students to join Egyptian, Iraqi or Lebanese universities up to the 1960s, thus embodying pan-Arab nationalism. Until the end of the 1970s, many Arab countries allowed Arabs to travel to and stay in them without visa or stay restrictions. All this gave Arabs a sense of being *Arab* along with being Egyptian, Syrian, Algerian, etc.

The term 'Arab World' has nearly been replaced by 'Arab states', with each state having better relations with the US, the EU, China and/or Russia. Some Arab states have political disputes, others are at war, while others are plotting against one another. Each Arab state is doing its best to assert its local identity as a state with its own vision and strategies. Also, visa, stay and work requirements are becoming increasingly stringent. Surprisingly, an American, European, or Australian would travel to any Arab state more easily than any

Arab national. Ideals related to pan-Arab nationalism have almost disappeared from school curricula (Manduchi, 2017). Given these circumstances, it is understandable that younger Arabs no longer feel a strong connection between SA and pan-Arab nationalism as in the past. Instead, they seek a sense of local identity through the colloquial language they use among their fellow citizens. In contrast, Suleiman (2003) argues that only SA plays a crucial role in shaping Arab national identity. This suggests a comparison between CA, which lacks the necessary cultural, historical, and symbolic richness to function as a marker or symbol of Arab national identity, and SA which holds greater significance in expressing and preserving the collective Arab identity. This divergence of viewpoints reveals a noteworthy development in understanding the evolving perceptions of language and identity among young Arabs.

This generation gap is seemingly affecting Egyptians' attitudes towards using SA and ECA in subtitling, as is clear in some participants' comments. For the older generation, SA is "the language that is conventional in subtitling and that must remain so", "a language with a glorious history that cannot be compared to dialects" and "the language of the Glorious Qur'an preserved by Allah Almighty". For young participants, however, ECA is "a natural means of communication", that "can be used in subtitling like SA", "better represents Egyptians", and is "the lingua franca that can be understood by all Arabs". Those in the middle hold values in between these extremes.

5.2.2. Education
As is shown in the Results section, education plays a significant role in directing attitudes towards using SA vs. ECA in subtitling. It was hypothesized that higher educational levels would trigger negative attitudes towards using ECA in subtitling and this has proved true. This hypothesis was formulated since higher education (undergraduate and postgraduate stages alike) most likely involves extensive exposure to SA. As noted by Albirini, this exposure "often leads to a greater command, fluency, and possibly an appreciation of SA" (2016, p. 85). This is also in harmony with Haeri's (2003) conclusion that highly educated Egyptians who have been to Arabic schools consider SA highly as the only language fitting for religion, science and political discourse, implying a positive attitude towards it. In contrast, Egyptians with low educational levels are not exposed to SA for a long time; thus, they do not generally master it and may find it complicated to abide by its grammar and spelling rules. This sense of linguistic insecurity, so to speak, leads them to use ECA in writing as is clear in their personal correspondence and social media engagement. It is unsurprising then that Egyptians with low educational levels find it easier to read subtitles in ECA, especially it is customary for SA subtitles to utilize archaic, too formal and unnatural words/constructions on many TV channels (see Mazid, 2006 for examples).

5.2.3. Gender and age
The interaction between gender and age has proved significant in triggering young females to develop the most positive attitudes towards using ECA in subtitling compared to the most negative attitudes by old males. As asserted above, subtitling in ECA is a linguistic innovation. Robust findings from many studies prove that young females lead or accept language innovations the most, especially if these innovations are associated with prestige. For instance, this has been found regarding the adoption of [ʔ], the prestigious variant of (q), by young females in Amman (Abdel-Jawad, 1981), Damascus (Zaidan, 1987), Karak (El Salman, 2003), and Gaza (Cotter, 2016). Similar examples are countless regarding phonetic, phonological, syntactic and lexical variables in many Arabic-speaking speech communities (Al-Essa, 2009; Al-Rojaie, 2013;

Haeri, 1996; Sadiq, 2016, among others). The reasons underlying this phenomenon are countless and community bound.

In many Arabic-speaking communities, SA is available for males more than females, as noted by Haeri (1996) regarding Cairo. The same still applies to other regions of Egypt where males have more access to the settings where SA is used more than dialects (e.g., mosques and courts), which seemingly leads males to have more positive attitudes towards SA as a spoken variety, let alone as a written variety. This exposure to SA in addition to the language ideologies held by the old versus the young also leads old males to have more positive attitudes towards the SA subtitle than young males; inversely, young males have more positive attitudes towards the ECA subtitle.

Another reason why females tend to prefer the ECA subtitle could be the relationship between language variety and gender. Some time ago, Taha Hussein, a prominent Egyptian intellectual (1889-1973), voiced his opinion that "the educated Arabs who do not master their [SA] language lack cultivation as well as manhood" (cited in Alhuseiny, 2018, p. 8, my translation). ECA is also thought of as *nāʿim* "soft" (Miller, 2005, p. 917). These opinions have been subconsciously associated with SA in the minds of many Egyptians represented by a participant's comment that "SA is a language that suits males, while ECA suits females." No wonder then that males develop more positive attitudes towards SA, while females develop more positive attitudes towards ECA in general. When it comes to subtitling, the attitudes held by males who prefer SA subtitles get stronger due to the long history of SA as a written language. Females' preference for the innovative subtitle in ECA is also in harmony with the general trend in sociolinguistic terms; that is, females tend to prefer innovations, or they are "most often the innovators" (Labov, 1990, p. 215).

5.2.4. Gender and education

The interaction between gender and education shows that the educational level is more significant among females, with those holding low educational levels preferring the ECA subtitle more significantly than those with higher educational levels. This could be because about 80% (around 62% females and 18% males) of the participants with educational levels below university are between 15 and 22, thus involving age (and its interrelationship with language ideologies) as a factor in leading young females to prefer ECA in general and the ECA subtitle in particular. It is also worth noting that a considerable number of the young female participants are/were students at vocational schools which admit low achievers in preparatory/middle schools. Since SA is not taught as a core subject in these schools, it is not anticipated that their students would possess a high level of proficiency or strong appreciation for SA. Among males, in contrast, there is hardly any significant difference among all participants with different educational levels, and all tend to prefer the SA subtitle. The reason for this could be attributed to the previously mentioned effect of gender, with males being more exposed to SA than females and SA therefore tending to be associated with masculinity.

6. Conclusion

Arabic diglossia was discussed a long time ago (Ferguson, 1959) and its impact has been overstudied and applied to many (sub)disciplines; however, the present study proves that diglossia still involves some intricacies that can be investigated. As shown above, comparative studies on dubbing in SA and CA showed that CA dubbing is more communicative and better achieves the intended effect of audiovisual products, especially if humor is involved

(Abomoati, 2019; Allam, 2016; Yahiaoui et al., 2020). Although Arabs are accustomed to SA subtitles and although the general attitude in the literature is to reject subtitling in dialect (Díaz Cintas & Remael, 2007; Fawcett, 1996; Mazid, 2006; Rosa, 2001), folks' attitudes towards written CA in general and subtitling in it particularly have changed.

The results above demonstrate that Egyptians, particularly the young and females with lower educational levels, perceive written ECA as comparable to SA in readability for subtitling. However, they find it more humorous and closer to Egyptian culture. This marks a positive change toward ECA as a written language, intensifying competition with SA across domains previously exclusive to the latter. Comparing the SA domains in Ferguson (1959) to the current linguistic situation proves that CA in general and ECA in particular advance day after another. This advancement is driven by socioeconomic and political factors, notably the overwhelming spread of digital communication whose main means of communication is CA (Al-Saleem, 2011; Gully, 2012; Mimouna, 2012; Palfreyman & al Khalil, 2003; Warschauer et al., 2002), erosion of pan-Arab nationalism, and the changing language ideologies of young people. If these factors remain unchanged, written ECA (and by extension written CA in other Arab countries) is projected to sweep to domains where SA is currently used. Other factors that could lead to a wider acceptance of written ECA in Egypt include the ongoing changes in newspapers relying on heavy quoting in ECA rather than reporting in SA (as they used to do) and the political regime adopting ECA as the main means of political discourse. These two final factors are worth investigating in future studies.

Given the widespread acceptance and understanding of ECA in many Arab countries, it is believed that subtitling in ECA would be well-received in these countries. While the current study is centered on exploring the use of SA and ECA in subtitling just one scene from one American sitcom (*Friends*), confined by its sitcom genre, American origin, and humorous nature, it is hypothesized that employing ECA in subtitling other genres with different origins and natures (such as serious series, cartoons, or movies) could also be successful. However, these hypotheses require verification. Whether other Arabic dialects could prove successful in their speech communities and whether a mixed approach combining SA and CA would prove better than a single variety in subtitling are two areas of research that could further be explored.

The current study proves that ECA could be used in subtitling to better convey the communicative function of audiovisual (esp. humorous) products addressed to Egyptians. But, since the results do not reveal stark differences in favor of subtitling in ECA at the expense of SA concerning readability and conveying humor, it is still early to recommend subtitling all audiovisual products in ECA. Since the striking differences between SA and ECA subtitles pertain to closeness to viewers' culture, it is highly recommended that culture be paid extra attention in SA subtitles.

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Appendix 1

Questionnaire 1

Evaluation of Two Subtitles of a Scene from *Friends*

Thank you for participating in this questionnaire, and I assure you that all responses will be used solely for research purposes, with no disclosure of any personal information.

This questionnaire aims to assess two subtitles: one in Standard Arabic (SA) and the other in Egyptian Colloquial Arabic (ECA) of a scene from the American series *Friends*. The purpose is to determine which subtitle is better. The scene is approximately 4 minutes long. Please, watch both subtitles and then respond to the questions.

If you have already watched this scene subtitled, please do not answer the questionnaire.

- Name (optional):

- Age:

- Gender:

    o   Male

    o   Female

- Education

    o   Secondary school or below

    o   University

    o   Postgraduate

- Governorate (place of residence):

- Religion:

First subtitle (Standard Arabic): [Link to YouTube]

Second subtitle (Egyptian Colloquial Arabic): [Link to YouTube]

1. To what extent does the first subtitle (in SA) make you laugh?

The subtitle doesn't make me laugh at all.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	The subtitle makes me laugh a lot.
	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	

2. To what extent does the second subtitle (in ECA) make you laugh?

The subtitle doesn't make me laugh at all.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	The subtitle makes me laugh a lot.
	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	

3. To what extent does the first subtitle (in SA) can be read on the screen easily?

Reading is very difficult.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	Reading is very easy.
	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	

4. To what extent does the second subtitle (in ECA) make reading on the screen easy?

Reading is very difficult.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	Reading is very easy.
	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	

5. To what extent does the first subtitle (in SA) align with Egyptian culture?

The subtitle is very distant from Egyptian culture.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	The subtitle is very close to Egyptian culture.
	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	

6. To what extent does the second subtitle (in ECA) align with Egyptian culture?

The subtitle is very distant from Egyptian culture.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	The subtitle is very close to Egyptian culture.
	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	

7. Overall, which subtitle do you prefer?

- o The first subtitle (in SA).
- o The second subtitle (in ECA).

8. What is the reason for your choice in question 7 (in brief)?

- If you have any comments, please write them below.

Questionnaire 2

Evaluation of Two Subtitles of a Scene from *Friends*

Thank you for participating in this questionnaire, and I assure you that all responses will be used solely for research purposes, with no disclosure of any personal information.

This questionnaire aims to assess two subtitles: one in Standard Arabic (SA) and the other in Egyptian Colloquial Arabic (ECA) of a scene from the American series *Friends*. The purpose is to determine which subtitle is better. The scene is approximately 4 minutes long. Please, watch both subtitles and then respond to the questions.

If you have already watched this scene subtitled, please do not answer the questionnaire.

- Name (optional):

- Age:

- Gender:

    o   Male

    o   Female

- Education

    o   Secondary school or below

    o   University

    o   Postgraduate

- Governorate (place of residence):

- Religion:

First subtitle (Egyptian Colloquial Arabic): [Link to YouTube]

Second subtitle (Standard Arabic): [Link to YouTube]

1. To what extent does the first subtitle (in ECA) make you laugh?

The subtitle doesn't make me laugh at all.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	The subtitle makes me laugh a lot.
	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	

2. To what extent does the second subtitle (in SA) make you laugh?

The subtitle doesn't make me laugh at all.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	The subtitle makes me laugh a lot.
	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	

3. To what extent does the first subtitle (in ECA) can be read on the screen easily?

Reading is very difficult.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	Reading is very easy.
	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	

4. To what extent does the second subtitle (in SA) make reading on the screen easy?

Reading is very difficult.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	Reading is very easy.
	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	

5. To what extent does the first subtitle (in ECA) align with Egyptian culture?

The subtitle is very distant from Egyptian culture.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	The subtitle is very close to Egyptian culture.
	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	

6. To what extent does the second subtitle (in SA) align with Egyptian culture?

The subtitle is very distant from Egyptian culture.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	The subtitle is very close to Egyptian culture.
	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	

7. Overall, which subtitle do you prefer?

- o   The first subtitle (in ECA).

- o   The second subtitle (in SA).

8. What is the reason for your choice in question 7 (in brief)?

- If you have any comments, please write them below.

Appendix 2

Appendix 2: ECA versus SA subtitles

	ST	TT in ECA	TT in SA
Rachel:	Look at it, isn't it beautiful?	بصوا كده، مش جميلة بذمتكم؟	انظرا، أليست جميلة؟
Ross:	Yeah, yeah, what is it?	آه جميلة، وإيه دي بقى إن شاء الله؟	أجل، ما هي؟
Rachel:	It's a truffle. It's got all of these layers.	دي كيكة بالفواكه، وفيها طبقات كثير.	إنها كعكة فاكهة، إنّها مكونة من طبقات عدّة،
	First there's a layer of ladyfingers,	أول طبقة بسكوت صوابع الست.	أولاً طبقة الحلوى،
	then a layer of jam,	وبعد كده مربى.	ثمّ طبقة من المربى
	then custard, which I made from scratch,	وكاسترد، عملته كله بنفسي والله.	ثم مخفوق القستر الذي حضّرته بنفسي
	then raspberries, more ladyfingers,	وبعدين توت، وصوابع الست تاني،	ثمّ الفراولة، مزيد من الحلوى
	then beef sauteed with peas and onions,	ولحمة بقر مطبوخ معاها بسلة وبصل،	ثمّ اللحم المقلي مع البازلاء والبصل،
	then a little more custard,	وبعدين هأزود كاسترد،	ومزيد من القستر
	and then bananas, and then I just put some whipped cream on top!	وبعدين موز، وآخر حاجة كريمة على الوش.	والموز، وسأضيف في الأعلى القشدة
Ross:	W-What was the one right before bananas?	معلهش، إيه اللي قبل الموز؟	ما الذي كان قبل الموز؟
Rachel:	The beef?	تقصد اللحمة؟؟!!	اللحم؟
	Yeah, that was weird to me, too.	معاك حق، أنا برضه استغربت.	أجل، أنا أيضاً استغربت
	But then, y'know, I thought "well, there's mincemeat pie," I mean that's an English dessert,	بس، افتكرت إن فيه فطيرة باللحمة المفرومة، وده طبق حلويات إنجليزي برضه.	ثمّ فكرت في فطيرة اللحم المفروم، وهي حلوى إنكليزية
	these people just put very strange things in their food, y'know.	الإنجليز دول أكلهم غريب قوي، زي ما أنت عارف.	إنهم يضيفون مكوّنات غريبة في الطعام
	Oh! by the way, can I borrow some Rum from your place?	بالحق، ممكن أستلف شوية شراب روم من أوضتكم؟	هل يمكنني استعارة بعض الشراب منكما؟
Joey	Y-sure!	آه، طبعًا.	أجل

Rachel:	And while I'm gone don't you boys sneak a taste.	شباااب، اوعى حد فيكم يأكل حاجة وأنا بره.	حسناً، وإياكما تذوّقها في غيابي
Joey & Ross:	Okay.	ده كلام برضه؟؟	حسناً!
Ross:	Beef in a dessert?!	لحمة بقر في طبق حلويات!!	لحم في الحلوى...
	I- no no no, there is no way!	مش ممكن!!	هذا محال
Joey:	I know, and only one layer of jam?!	حاجة غريبة فعلًا، وطبقة مربى واحدة بس!!	أعلم، وطبقة واحدة من المربّى فقط؟
	What is up with that?	إيه اللي بيحصل ده؟!	كم هذا غريب!
Ross:	Oh my God, the pages are stuck together!	يا لهوي! الصفحات لازقة في بعض (صفحة للكيكة، وصفحة للحمة المفرومة).	يا للهول! الصفحات متلاصقة!
Joey:	Chandler!	- تشاندلر، الحقنا!!	(تشاندلر)
Joey:	Oh and	لا لا، لسة شوية.	
	Okay, and uh if anyone needs help pretending to like it,	بصوا يا جماعة، لو حد محتاج مساعدة عشان يبان إن الكيكة عاجباه،	وإن كنتم تحتاجون إلى ما يساعدكم على التظاهر إنّها لذيذة
	I learned something in acting class,	فأنا اتعلمت شوية حاجات في دروس التمثيل.	تعلمت أشياء في صفوف التمثيل
	try uh, rubbing your stomach	ممكن تحطوا إيديكم على بطنكم كده.	افركوا بطونكم
	or uh, or saying "mmm"	أو تقولوا: إمممم!!	أو قولوا...
	and uh, oh oh! And smiling,	آه، وممكن تبتسموا وإنتوا بتأكلوا!	وابتسموا...
	okay?	تمام يا جماعة؟	
Chandler:	Yeah, I'm not gonna pay for those acting classes anymore.	أنا مش هأدفع لحصص التمثيل دي، خد بالك!	لن أدفع لصفوف التمثيل هذه بعد الآن
Joey:	Rachel, there you are! Come on, let's serve that dessert already!	رايتشل، خلصي بقى. عايزين نأكل الكيكة!	، ها أنت، هيا (رايتشل) لنقدّم الحلوى
Rachel:	Joey, you're gonna have to stop rushing me,	جوي، ما تسرعنيش!	(جوي)، توقف عن استعجالي
	you know what? You don't get any dessert.	تعرف، مش هأكّلك من الكيكة.	أتعلم؟ لن تحصل على الحلوى

Joey:	Really?	بتتكلمي جد؟!	حقاً؟
Rachel:	No, I'm just kidding I would never do that to you!	لأ، بأهزر طبعًا، مقدرش أعمل كده معاك.	لا، أنا أمزح وحسب، لن أفعل بك هذا أبداً
	Okay, everybody, it's trifle time!	يلا يا جماعة، نأكل الكيكة بقى!!!	حسنًا، حان وقت تقديم كعكة الفاكهة
Phoebe:	So, now, Rach, this is a traditional English trifle, isn't it?	رايتشل، حبيبتي، دي كيكة إنجليزي إنجليزي، مش كده؟	(رايتش)، إنّها كعكة إنكليزية تقليدية، صحيح؟
Rachel:	It sure is.	أيوة.	أجل
Phoebe:	Wow. So then did you make it with beef or Eggplant?	يا سلام!! وعملتيها باللحمة ولا الباتنجان يا حبيبتي؟	هل وضعت لها اللحم أو الباذنجان؟
Rachel:	Beef.	باللحمة، ليه؟	اللحم
Phoebe:	I can't have any. You know I don't eat meat. Ohhh no.	يبقى مش هأقدر أكلها! ما إنتي عارفة إني مش بأكل اللحمة! يا خسارة!!	لا أستطيع تناولها تعلمين أني لا آكل اللحم
	[Phoebe gets up and goes into Rachel's old room, a smile on her face.]	(فلتت بنت الإيه!)	
Rachel:	Alright, Monica, I want you to have the first taste.	طيب، مونيكا، عايزاكي أول واحدة تدوقي الكيكة.	(مونيكا)، أريدك أن تكوني أول مَن يتذوّقها
Monica:	Really?	بجد؟	حقاً؟
	[Rachel hands Monica a plate. Monica takes a spoonful of the whipped cream portion.]	(يا رب استر!)	
Rachel:	Oh oh oh, wait! You only got whipped cream in there! Ya gotta take a bite with all the layers!	حاسبي، إنتي ما حططتيش غير الكريمة. لازم تأكليها بالحشو كله.	مهلاً، لم تضعي سوى القشدة يجب أن تتذوّقي الطبقات كلّها
Monica:	Okay. [Monica takes a bigger spoonful and a pea falls off]	ماشي (يا ساتر استر)!	حسناً
Rachel:	Op! Wait, you dropped a pea.	حاسبي، حبة بسلة وقعت.	أوقعت حبة بازلاء!
	[Monica puts the pea on top of the spoonful and takes a bite.]	(وآدي حبة البسلة. ياكش تعدي الليلة على خير!)	
		(بآكل كيكة وإنتوا لأأأ!!)	

Rachel:	Well?	إيه رأيك يا حبيبتى؟	حسناً؟
Monica:	Mmmm!	(مش قادرة!!)	إنّها لذيذة!
	It's good!	حلوة.	
Rachel	Really? How good?	بجد؟ حلوة قد إيه؟	حقاً؟ لذيذة لأيّ درجة؟
Monica:	It's so good, that I feel really selfish about being the only one who's eating it,	حلوة قوي وده محسسني إني أنانية لأن أنا الوحيدة اللي كلتها.	لذيذة لدرجة أني أشعر بالأنانية لأنّني الوحيدة التي تتذوّقها
	that I think we should have everyone taste how good it is. Especially Ross.	عشان كده، لازم كلنا نأكل من الكيكة... خصوصًا روس.	أظن على الجميع أن يتذوّقه بخاصة (روس)
	[Ross glares at Monica.]	(شايلها لك يا مونيكا!)	
Chandler:	Yeah, this is so good, that I'm gonna go enjoy it on the balcony	الكيكة حلوة قوي، عشان كده هأروح أستمتّع بيها فى البلكونة.	إنّها لذيذة جداً لذا سأذهب وأتمتّع بتذوّقها على الشرفة
	so that I can enjoy the view whilst I enjoy my dessert.	فأستمتع بالمنظر والكيكة مع بعض!	بهذه الطريقة أتمتّع بالمنظر فيما أتناول الحلوى
Mrs. Geller:	I've gotta call my friend Mary and tell her how good this is, from Monica's room.	وأنا هأتصل بصاحبتي ماري من أوضة مونيكا وأقولها قد إيه الكيكة حلوة.	علىّ الاتصال بصديقتي (ماري) وأخبرها كم الحلوى لذيذة. سأتصل من غرفة (مونيكا)
Mr. Geller:	I'll help you dial.	خديني معاكِ أساعدك.	سأساعدك لتطلبى الرقم
Monica:	I'm gonna go into the bathroom so I can look at it in the mirror, as I eat it.	وأنا هأروح الحمام عشان أبص في المراية وأنا بآكل الكيكة.	سأذهب إلى الحمّام لأنظر إلى المرآة وأنا أتناولها.
Rachel:	Okay, now what was that all about? Is it-does it not taste good? Let me try it.	إيه الحكاية؟ هي وحشة للدرجة دي؟ خليني أدوق كده.	حسناً، ما الأمر؟ هل طعمها سيئ؟ دعني أتذوّقها
Ross:	Wha? No no! Ah!	لأ لأ!!	لا، لا!
	All gone!	خلصتها كلّها!	نفدت كلّها
	So good!	فظيعة بجد!!	لذيذة جداً
	Maybe Chandler has some left.	شوفي تشاندلر، يمكن لسة ما خلصش طبقه.	ربما تبقّى لدى (تشاندلر) القليل
Ross:	It tastes like feet!	طعمها زي الشرابات المعفنة!!	طعمها كالقدمَين!
Joey:	I like it.	ما لها؟ ما هي حلوة أهي!	أنا أحببتها
Ross:	Are you kidding?	بتستهبل، حضرتك؟!	هل تمزح؟

Joey:	What's not to like? Custard? Good. Jam? Good. Meat? Gooooood.	إيه اللي مش عاجبك؟ الكاسترد كويس، والمربى جميلة، واللحمة ممتااازة.	ما الذي لن تحبّه؟ القستر؟ لذيذ، المربى؟ لذيذة، اللحم. لذيذ!
Rachel:	So a bird just grabbed it,	عايز تقنعني إن عصفورة جات وخطفت الكيكة...	أتى طائر وسرقها...
	and then tried to fly away with it and,	وحاولت تطير بيها،	وحاول أن يطير وهو يحملها؟
	and then just dropped it on the street?	وبعدين رمتها في الشارع؟!	ثمّ رماها على الطريق؟
Chandler:	Yes, but if it's any consolation, before the bird dropped it, he seemed to enjoy it.	بالظبط كده، بس لعلمك كان واضح إنها مستمتعة بالكيكة قبل ما ترميها.	أجل، لكن إن كان في هذا عزء لك إنّها بدا أنّها أعجبته قبل أن يرميها