

*MIXED ARABIC AND STYLISTIC CHOICES
IN CONTEMPORARY EGYPTIAN WRITING¹*

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1. Introduction

The linguistic situation in Egypt has gone through tremendous changes since the mid-twentieth century. *ʿĀmmiyya*, Colloquial Egyptian Arabic (CEA), became a written language,² challenging the prestigious *Fuṣḥā*, Modern Standard Arabic (MSA), and gradually gaining more and more acceptance as a literary language. Although facing a strong opposition, and after fierce debates between supporters and opponents,³ CEA started to be used in poetry, drama and prose dialogues. The opposition to the use of CEA in prose narration, however, was the strongest, and it penetrated this kind of writing at a

¹ This paper was presented at the 3rd conference on mixed Arabic and middle Arabic held in Florence in October 2010; it is based on sections from a larger study on Egyptian Arabic as a written and literary language (in preparation).

² CEA was used in literature already in the nineteenth century, and to a more limited extent even earlier.

³ For a general description of this debate until the beginning of the twentieth century see GULLY 1997; on this debate in Egypt see, e.g., SULEIMAN 2003, pp. 169-204; AL-ŠĀRŪNĪ 2007; DAVIES 2006, pp. 601-602.

much slower pace. Before the last decade of the twentieth century the use of CEA in narration was quite limited, and prose works written entirely in CEA, in the narration too, were rare.

Since the end of the last decade of the twentieth century, and especially in the last five years, the attitude towards using CEA in the narration has changed considerably. The use of CEA together with MSA in prose narration by Egyptian writers is intentional, sought for and desired. This has been clearly manifested in two types of style. One is a style that I have called *Fuṣḥāmmiyya* (ROSENBAUM 2000),⁴ a kind of intentional mixed style in which MSA and CEA are used alternately;⁵ the other is created by changing the point of view through the use of CEA (ROSENBAUM 2008a).⁶

Since the publication of the two above-mentioned studies of mixed styles in prose, Egyptian literature has changed. Thousands of texts, long and short, literary and semi-literary, written in CEA or mixing MSA with CEA, have been published. *Fuṣḥāmmiyya* and changing the point of view through the use of CEA became literary devices that are now employed by many. The contemporary generation of writers is more daring in incorporating CEA into prose narration, and writing in mixed styles that contain large portions of CEA has become a common phenomenon in Egypt to the extent that very often it is impossible to understand literary and semi-literary texts without knowing both varieties, MSA and CEA. This style is also found on the internet whose influence on more traditional ways of writing is constantly increasing.

CEA is nowadays in extensive use also in journalistic writing and is to be found in most Egyptian newspapers;⁷ advertisements, road-billboards⁸ and other semi-literary texts also use CEA extensively.

The number of books written in or with CEA has increased tremendously, especially in the last five years, and the CEA sections in prose narration became larger. This paper, therefore, focuses on prose narration, fiction and non-

⁴ First presented at the *AIDA 3rd Conference* in Malta, 1998.

⁵ On *Fuṣḥāmmiyya* and its relation to other types of mixed style see ROSENBAUM 2000, pp. 68-69, note 4; on oral mixed style see BASSIOUNEY 2006; MEJDELL 2006.

⁶ First presented at the first AIMA conference in Louvain la-Neuve, 2004.

⁷ See ROSENBAUM 2011.

⁸ See ROSENBAUM 2008b.

fiction, written in Egypt, that largely utilize *Fuṣḥāmmiyya* and CEA for changing the literary point of view, with examples taken from texts published in the last five years.

A note on marking the different varieties in the text:

Following the method employed in my two above-mentioned articles, *Fuṣḥā* sections in the examples are printed in regular font, while *ʿĀmmiyya* sections are printed in boldface. As many words in both *Fuṣḥā* and *ʿĀmmiyya* are common to both varieties and very often written with the same spelling (and sometimes also pronounced the same), it is not always clear, especially at “transition points”⁹ between *Fuṣḥā* and *ʿĀmmiyya*, to which variety a particular word may belong, and some words may be realized in two ways. Those sections which are ambiguous or common to *Fuṣḥā* and *ʿĀmmiyya* are printed in italics. Words printed in boldface and italics in the Arabic quotations are accordingly repeated in the English translations.

2. Mixed style in the narration: some notes about overt versus ambiguous and disguised CEA

When CEA started being accepted in prose, it was confined to the dialogue, while narration was the realm of MSA only. Writers who wanted to insert CEA elements into the narration often used disguised or camouflaged constructions so that they would look like MSA.¹⁰ Today writers do not hesitate to use overt CEA in the narration, but disguised CEA is still used sometimes, not as the main way of inserting CEA into the text but rather as a secondary literary device. The following is a typical example:

وقد أكلتُ مع البطالة خبزاً وملحاً.

I’ve had a true friendship with unemployment. (IBRĀHĪM 2009, p. 30).

?*Akal* (or *kal*) *ʿēš wimalḥ-i maʿa...* (lit. “Eat bread and salt with...”) is a CEA expression meaning “had a true friendship with...”. The CEA word *ʿēš* (“bread”) has been replaced here with its parallel MSA word *ḥubz*, and both خبز and ملح (in CEA *malḥ*; in MSA *milḥ*) appear here in the accusative with

⁹ On “transition points” see ROSENBAUM 2000, p. 72, note 12.

¹⁰ See SOMEKH 1993; ROSENBAUM 2008, pp. 399-400.

the appropriate case ending, according to the grammatical rules of MSA. By figuratively using a CEA expression, the narrator emphasizes the fact that he has been unemployed for a long time.

The following disguised phrase has been employed by the same author in two different books:

a. طول عمري، أسير إلى جوار الحائط.
All of my life I am treading carefully (lit. “Walking by the wall”). (IBRĀHĪM 2009, p. 18).

b. ومرت سنوات، وأنا أسير فيها إلى جوار الحائط.
Years passed by, while I was treading carefully. (IBRĀHĪM 2010, p. 5).

Miši gamb (or *ganb*) *il-ḥēṭ* (lit. “Walk next to the wall”) in CEA means “to behave very carefully in order to avoid trouble”. In both cases, the verb *miši* has been replaced with the MSA word *sāra*, the CEA word *gamb* has been replaced with *giwār*, and the CEA form *ḥēṭ* has been replaced with the MSA form *ḥāʔiṭ*.

Today, however, in most cases writers no longer disguise the CEA elements in the narration. Sometimes, CEA elements appear between quotation marks. For example:

ونحن عيال “مطلعناش من البيضة”.
While we were **still inexperienced kids** (lit. “Have not emerged out of the egg”). (BARAKA 2010, p. 5).

Naḥnu (“we”) is a distinct MSA word (versus *ʔiḥna* in CEA); the rest of the sentence is in CEA. The expression *ma ṭlišš-i min il-bēda*, that does not exist in MSA, is figuratively said in CEA of someone who is too young and still inexperienced. The CEA word *ʔiyāl* appears here without quotation marks.

In the following example, there is one overt CEA collocation, while the rest of the phrase is in MSA:

في مشهد من المشاهد التي أعتبرها إبداعاً كوميدياً محصلش [...].
In one of the scenes that I regard as an **unparalleled** unique comic creation [...]. (TAHA 2010, p. 63).

The overt CEA collocation *ma ḥaṣalš* (that according to the orthography norms of CEA may be written as one prefixed word)¹¹ literally means “did not happen” and figuratively refers to something which is excellent and unparalleled.

A reader of a text written in MSA is not always prepared for an occurrence of CEA inside the text, and may sometimes wonder or hesitate whether a certain word or collocation is in MSA or in CEA. Egyptians whom I have asked to read aloud such texts, often got stuck, re-considered the text, and then went back to read the same section again in another version. The following is an example of such an ambiguous word:

حلفنا ألا نفعل إلا لما يفسر كلامه الأول.

We swore not to do that on the condition that *at first* he explains his words. (FADL 2008, p. 107).

From a first glance the last word in this phrase may look like a MSA adjective, *al-ʔawwal*, “first” (“his first words”), while in fact it is a CEA adverbial collocation, *il-ʔawwil*, “at first”. Since often unvocalized written CEA looks like MSA, such reading problems are common.

The following two quotations contain metaphorical phrases that may look like MSA but exist in CEA only:

a. **طبعاً سعدية إتجنت، وطلبت من طوب الأرض التدخل حتى يعيد لها الأولاد أو يرجع هو.**
Naturally Saʔdiyya got mad and asked everybody to intervene so that he will give her back the children or will come back himself. (ʔĀṢĪ 2007, p. 7).

The CEA verb *ʔitgann* (“got mad”, here in the feminine), also in the form *ʔitgannin*, is parallel to the MSA verb *tajannana*. The expression *ṭūb il-ʔarḍ* (lit. “Earth bricks”) is a CEA expression meaning “everybody, every person”, implying that a certain action involved very many people; this expression has no meaning in MSA and has to be interpreted according to CEA.

b. **وإيمان الضعيفة مريضة الأنيميا تكاد تقع من طولها وتشعر بالحر الشديد في ذلك الوقت من شهر أغسطس.**
And weak Imān is sick with anemia, she is nearly **collapsing** and feels the strong heat of that time in the month of August. (AL-ʔARABĪ 2008, p. 7).

¹¹ On this phenomenon in written Egyptian Arabic see ROSENBAUM 2004a, p. 301.

The CEA expression *wiʔiʃ min ʔūlu*, meaning “could not hold himself”, is said on a person who feels weak and can hardly stand on his feet. Since it appears here inside MSA, the tendency of the reader is to read its first word as *taqaʃu*, in MSA, but when noticing the whole phrase to go back and re-read it in CEA, as it has no meaning in MSA.

The identification of CEA expressions inside MSA may become difficult when one element in an expression is replaced with a MSA one.

سقط في فخ الحسناوات اللواتي أكلن بوطنيته حلاوة.

He fell into the trap of the beautiful women who **used his patriotism to deceive him**. (FADL 2010, p. 73).

Here an allusion is made to *ʔakal* (or *kal*) *biʃaʔlu ʔalāwa* (lit. “Ate with his brain [used as bread] the *ʔalāwa* [a sweet made of *ʔahīna* (crushed sesame) and sugar]”), which is a CEA expression meaning “he deceived him by sweet words (and got from him what he wanted)”. The word *ʃaʔl* (“brain”) has been replaced here with *waʔaniyya* (“patriotism”). The only way to understand the phrase here is by referring to the original CEA expression, that might be unknown to non-Egyptians.

Egyptian readers, however, usually identify the “Egyptianisms” that appear in a MSA text. Non-Egyptians, on the other hand, may not always identify them and misinterpret them according to MSA. One of the results of this is inadequate translations of such occurrences in Egyptian literature into foreign languages.¹²

CEA may now be used in all parts of literary or semi-literary prose. Traditionally it was confined to the dialogue, while narration was the realm of MSA only. Today both varieties may be used in both parts of the text. The following example reflects this change of roles; it is taken from a book based on discussions between Rūka, a contemporary Egyptian, and a Pharaonic king; the narration is written mostly in MSA, and its two protagonists speak different varieties: the king speaks MSA, while Rūka speaks CEA. In the following quotation, the narration reflects the narrator’s voice, but a phrase in CEA that

¹² See ROSENBAUM 2001.

appears in it reflects Rūka's point of view; the narration that contains CEA is followed by a section of dialogue written in MSA:

لاحظ روكا أن مزاج الملك مش تمام. وأنه لا يعبر كلامه اهتماما. قبل أن يسأله عن السبب قال الملك:
أكاد أموت جوعا!

Rūka noticed that the king **was not in a good mood** and that he did not pay any attention to his talking. Before he asked him about the reason for that, the king said: I am nearly starving of hunger! (ṢALĪ 2008, p. 12).

Although writers often just enjoy the freedom of using CEA and mixing it with MSA whenever and wherever they want, in many cases this mixing has other functions. Thus, in the last example we may assume that the CEA phrase in the narration changes the point of view and reflects the thought of Rūka in his own words. The two common literary devices of mixing the two varieties in contemporary Egyptian writing are *Fuṣḥāmmiyya* and changing the point of view through the use of CEA, as will be described below.

3. *Fuṣḥāmmiyya in prose narration*

When *ṢAmmiyya* was first integrated into modern Egyptian prose, it was generally used in the dialogue, while the language of narration has traditionally been written in *Fuṣḥā*. *Fuṣḥāmmiyya*, an alternating style of *Fuṣḥā* and *ṢAmmiyya*, appears mostly in the narration (that is usually reported from the first-person point-of-view). In the examples below the narrators switch back and forth between *Fuṣḥā* and *ṢAmmiyya*.

a. خرجت من منزل حسن وأنا مش عارفة أقول إيه لسعدية، هي أصلا مش عايزة تتطلق، فقررت
أن أذهب إلى منزلي وأؤجل لقائي مع سعدية لبكرة حتى أكون هديت شوية.

I went out of Ḥasan's home **not knowing what I should say to Saḥdiyya, as a matter of fact she does not want to be divorced**, so I decided to go to my home and to postpone my meeting with Saḥdiyya **until tomorrow when I will have calmed down a little bit**. (ṢĀṢĪ 2007, p. 9).

b. استمرت المحاولات من كل الأطراف، ولكن بلا جدوى. مرضت سعدية وجالها السكر وجلست
أمام منزلها تبكي وتتوسل للي رايح واللي جاي.

Attempts by all parties continued, but of no avail. Saḥdiyya became sick and **got diabetes**. She sat in front of her home crying and beseeching **all of the passersby**. (ṢĀṢĪ 2007, p. 7).

- c. الاتهام بالهزار وضعني في خانة اليك، لا مفر من استكمال المشوار، مانا اللي غلطان، فيه لوسا حد يقول م "عايز أتجوز".

Accusing [me] of joking **trapped me in a tight corner** (lit. "Put me in the first point in the backgammon game"). There is no escape of completing the route, **after all I am the one who is wrong, is there anybody that would say to Wisām "I want to get married"?** (ṢATĀ ALLĀH 2009, p. 24).

- d. سيكون مكتظًا بالناس، وسوف تتأخرين على البيت وغسيل الأطباق.. وسوف تنظر لك أمك نظرة مش تمام.. والعملية مش ناقصة..

[The place] will be crowded with people, and you will be late for home and for washing the dishes, and your mother will give you **a deadly look, and this is not what you need.** (ABU AL-ṢILA 2008, p. 15).

- e. طالما بنشوف النساء بتتضرب في الشارع وأحيانًا بالحذاء أمام جميع الناس.. يبقى فيه أزمة رجالة.
As long as **we see women beaten on the street**, sometimes with a shoe, in front of all of the people, **then there is a shortage of men.** (ṢABD AL-SALĀM 2008, p. 16).

Fuṣḥāmmiyya is very common in prose fiction in which the narrator directly addresses the reader; this stylistic characteristic is typical of satirical literature which today largely tends to use *Fuṣḥāmmiyya*, as in the following examples.

- a. تستطيع أن تغلق الشارع بمزاجك دون أن يعترض أحد إذا كانت عندك حالة وفاة، ساعتها تستطيع أن تحول الشارع إلى دار مناسبات وتغلقه بصوان ضخم بس تسبب ممر صغير للناس تعدي منه على رجليها علشان ماتسبش للمرحوم، أما إذا كان عندك فرح يمكنك أن تغلق الشارع "من غير ماتسبب ممر للناس تروّح علشان مافيش حد أصلا هيروّح قبل الفرح ما يخلص".

You can close the street **as you wish** without anybody protesting when you have someone who has passed away. **At that time** you can turn the street into a celebration-hall and to close it with a huge tent, **but you have to leave a small passage-way for people to cross it on their feet so that they will not curse the deceased.** But if you have a wedding you can close the street **"without leaving a passage-way for people to go home because as a matter of fact nobody will go home before the wedding ends"**. (TAHIR 2009, p. 39)

- b. هل حدث ذات يوم ورأيت طفلا دون مشاعر؟ يعني أول ما جاء لهذه الدنيا لم يبك أو يصرخ؟ نازل في صمت كده وكأنهم كانوا عاملين الصوت بتاعه **mute** زي ريموت التليفزيون!.. عندما يجوع لا يصرخ طالبا الطعام وعندما تؤنبه أمه وتضربه برفق مش بيرقع بالصوت ولا أجدع "ندابة" جاية من سعيد مصر.

Did it happen one day that you saw a baby without feelings? That is, as soon as he came to this world he did not cry or scream? **Going down like that in silence, as if they have put his volume on mute, like the television remote control!** When he starves he

does not scream demanding food and when his mother rebukes him and gently beats him **he does not raise his voice higher than the best woman-mourner who came from Upper Egypt.** (ʕIBIYYA 2009, p. 30).

The use of English elements incorporated into CEA is now spreading in prose writing in Egypt.¹³

c. الغريب أُنِي فِي هَذِهِ اللَّيْلَةِ حَلَمْتُ حَلْمًا عَظِيمًا تَمَنَيْتُهُ رُؤْيَا، وَلَأَنْنِي لَسْتُ مِنَ الصَّالِحِينَ الَّلِي يَبْشُوفُوا الرُّؤْيَا، فَتَأَكَّدْتُ أَنَّهُ مَشْ رُؤْيَا، وَاسْمَحُوا لِي أَنْ أَحْكِيَهُ لَكُمْ.

The strange thing in that night was that I had a great dream that I wished would be a vision. But because I am not one of the virtuous **who see** visions, I was sure that it was **not a vision**. *So please let me* tell it to you. (ʕID 2011, p. 10).

d. بِسْ مَا تَخَافْش.. لَسْ فِيهِ وَقْتٌ.. مَعَكُمْ سَنَدْرِدْش حَوْلَ الْأَسْبَابِ الْخَاطِئَةِ الَّتِي تَجْعَلُنَا - جَمِيعًا - نَقَعُ فِي الْحُبِّ. **But don't worry, there is still time.** Together with you **we shall chat** about the wrong reasons which make us - all - fall in love. (ʕIBIYYA 2007, p. 54).

The prefixed word *sanudardiš* is created by combining the MSA prefix *sa* that marks the future tense, and the CEA verb *dardiš* ("chat") that does not exist in MSA.

4. Changing the point of view through the use of CEA

One of the functions of mixed style in prose is to reflect the characters' speech or thoughts in their own language and style and thus to help in changing the literary point of view. This has become very common in contemporary writing in Egypt; the following are some examples.

a. تَعُودُ إِيمَانُ شَبْرَا لِبَيْتِهَا مَنكَسَةَ الرَّأْسِ خَلَاصَ هِيَا وَأُخْوَانَهَا حَيِدْخَلُوا فِي بَجَاعَةٍ، يَامَا يَبْشُحْتُوا يَامَا يَحَاوَلُوا يَأْخُدُوا شَكْكَ مِنَ الْبِقَالَةِ الَّلِي تَحْتُ بَيْتِهِمْ يَامَا اللهُ أَعْلَمُ أَنَا شَخْصِيَا لَا أَعْرَفُ كَيْفَ يَمْكُنْ لَهُمْ وَلَأَمْثَالَهُمْ تَدْبِرُ مَصَارِيْفَهُمْ لِأَخْرِ الشَّهْرِ.

Imān of Šubra returns to her home with a bowed head **that's it she and her sisters will start experiencing** hunger, **they will either beg for alms or will buy on credit at the grocery shop underneath their home or God knows** what. Personally I don't know how they and people like them can handle their expenses until the end of the month. (AL-ʕARABĪ 2008, p. 14).

¹³ See ROSENBAUM 2004b, p. 194; ROSENBAUM, Forthcoming.

which may be read as either MSA or CEA. This phrase, together with the one that follows, reflects the thoughts of the protagonist from his point of view in his own words, then the point of view returns to the narrator.

e. كان الجميع يطلب من حسن أن يعود ويستحمل عرشان العيال "يستحمل إيه معرفش" وربنا غفور رحيم وحسن يجيب: لا أبدا، مش ممكن أنا أرجع ل بنت ال...
Everybody was asking Ḥasan to return and to *endure for the sake of the children* "endure what I don't know" and our Lord is Forgiving and Merciful, while Ḥasan was answering: **No, never, no way that I go back to this daughter of ...** (ṢĀṢĪ 2007, p. 8).

The quotation starts with a report by a protagonist narrator, written in MSA. The phrase *ʕalaṣān il-ʕiyāl* ("for the sake of the children") is reported through the collective point of view of a group of characters, written in CEA that reflects their own language. The word *يستحمل* that precedes it is a transition point. The following phrase, *yistaḥmil ?ēh maʕrafš*, that is also written in CEA and appears between quotation marks, reflects the reaction of the narrator to what the group of characters said. The following phrase, *wirabbina ǧafūr raḥīm*, meant to encourage Ḥasan to show mercy, still in CEA, is again reported through the collective point of view of the group of characters. The protagonist narrator then resumes the point of view; the last phrase is a direct speech in CEA of one of the characters (Ḥasan), reported by the narrator and thus does not change the point of view.

f. وعندما شعر أن هذا القرار أسعدهم جميعا قرر أن يحرق قلوبهم.
And when he felt that this decision made them happy he decided to **make them upset** (lit. "Burn their hearts"). (ṢĀṢĪ 2007, p. 7).

The report in MSA by the narrator turns in the last phrase into a report in CEA that reflects the character's feelings.

g. فهو مدرك أنها حريصة على سمعتها ولا تحب أن يراها أحد معه فيخبر بتوع الجرائد الذين يتصيدون الاخبار!!
He knows that she is very careful about her reputation and does not want anyone to see her with him, who would then report to the **journalists** who are hunting for news. (ḤAYR ALLĀH 2007).

The omniscient narrator reports in the third-person in MSA, except for the word *bitūš* (plural of *bitāš*, "of"), which often in CEA is used to denote a profession. *Bitūš il-garāyid* (lit. "Those of the newspapers") means "journa-

lists”, but the second word appears here in its MSA form *garāʿid*, and thus a mixed expression is created. With this one CEA word the point of view moves for a short while to that of the character.

- h. كانوا يشنون لواعج الشكوى لعدم تمكنهم من حضور حفلة المطربة الكولومبية العالمية ”الوتكة“
شاكيرا تحت سفح الهرم، وهي الحفلة التي دفعوا فيها من دم قلوبهم وقوت عياهم ٧٠٠ جنيه ينطح
جنيه.

They were transmitting ardent complaints for not being able to attend the concert of the world-famous Colombian **good-looking** singer Shakira at the foot of the pyramids, which was that very concert **for which they had paid from the blood of their hearts and the food of their kids 700 hundred pounds in hard cash**. (FAḌL 2008, p. 107).

Wataka is a CEA word denoting a good looking woman, and *dafaṣ fīh damm-i ʿalbu* (lit. “Paid for it the blood of his heart”) is a CEA expression meaning paying a lot of money or all of the money one has. Both reflect a change of the point of view from the omniscient narrator to that of the collective group of Shakira’s fans.

- i. كان الدكتور متأثرا بالبرنامج إلى حد أنه أعاد لنا تجسيد شكوى سيدة هاي من خلل اجتماعي حدث في ليلة
شاكيرا الليلاء عندما قام الكادحون الذين دفعوا ربحهم جنيه بس بالدخول إلى مكان الناس الكلاس الذين دفعوا
سبعمئة.

Al-Daqrūrī was so moved by the program that he repeated for us the personification of a complaint by a **high-class** lady about a social disorder that occurred during the dark night of [the singer] Shakira, when the hard-workers **who paid four-hundred pounds only managed to enter the places of the high-class people** who paid **seven-hundred**. (FAḌL 2008, p. 108).

The point of view switches here twice from the omniscient narrator to the character, al-Daqrūrī.

The protagonist’s name in this story, al-Daqrūrī (or al-Daʿrūrī) deserves special attention. I have shown this story to several Egyptians, none of whom identified the name’s origin and were surprised to find it out when reading the story. This name, which does not exist in Arabic or in Egypt, alludes to the word *midaʿʿarāti* (from the verb *daʿʿar*, “to lean, to press”), which in CEA denotes a frotteur, a man who leans or presses himself against women, usually on crowded buses, in order to get some sexual satisfaction. Without explicitly using these two CEA words, *daʿʿar* and *midaʿʿarāti*, it appears that al-Daqrūrī

is such a frotteur; only Egyptians who know these words can grasp the real meaning of the protagonist's name.

- j. أما الأب فينفرد بالغرفة الثانية وحده، بما مروحتان للصيف ودفاية للشتا ويا ويل اللي يحرك المراوح ولا الدفاية من مكانهم... يطوله حزام الأب الأسود، أما هم فلا مال معهم للمراوح أو الدفایات، كفايا يقضوا اللبس والأكل والشرب. أبوها صلد، قد قلبه من حجر صوان.
As for the father, he alone has the other room in which there are two ventilators for the summer and a heater for the winter, and **woe unto anybody who moves the ventilators or the heater from their place, the father's black belt will reach them**. As for them, they have no money with them for ventilators or heaters, **it's enough that it suffices for cloths, food and drink**. Her father is hard, his heart is carved out of granite. (SAWWĀ 2010, pp. 13-14).

Here the point of view switches between the omniscient narrator and the protagonist; this is clear due the use of CEA.

- k. يومين ثلاثة، لا يفعل فيهما شيئاً يذكر إلا الاتصال بالرقم، أحيانا يجد الخط مغلقاً وأحيانا مشغولاً ولكنه لا يمل المحاولة، إنما قضية حياة أو موت حايضل وراها لحد ما ترد عليه.
For a couple of days he does not do anything significant except for dialing the number. Sometimes he finds out that the line is closed and some other times busy, but he never tires of trying, it is a matter of life and death, **he will continue calling her until she answers him**. (ḤAYR ALLĀH 2007).

The first phrase, which is a CEA expression, may be regarded as either an element of *Fuṣḥāmmiyya* or as a report from the protagonist's point of view. The last phrase is clearly reported from the protagonist's point of view.

5. Conclusion

Egyptian literature has changed considerably during the last decade, especially in the last five years. More than ever before, CEA has become a literary language, and the writing of texts entirely in CEA or in MSA mixed with CEA in the narration has noticeably increased and spread.

Since the conclusion of my studies on *Fuṣḥāmmiyya* (ROSENBAUM 2000) and on changing the point of view through the use of CEA (ROSENBAUM 2008a), these two styles have become much more common and evolved into typical characteristics of written prose in Egypt.

The abundant examples quoted above are meant to convey the scope of their use in contemporary Egyptian writing. Obviously, these two styles are intentionally used by Egyptian writers who enjoy the freedom of taking stylistic choices based on the use of two varieties, a freedom that is enabled by the new literary norms that more than ever encourage the use of CEA in written literature. The examples quoted here, all taken from literature published in Egypt in the last five years, clearly demonstrate this trend in current Egyptian literature.

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