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Dr Nancy Hawker's book presentation and conversation with Professor Deborah Cameron in preparation for the launch of:

***The Politics of Palestinian Multilingualism: Speaking for citizenship* (Routledge, 2019) by Nancy Hawker**

Dialogues Seminar, 25 June 2019

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To research the politics of Palestinian multilingualism, I set out to record how Arabic-speakers in Israel discuss politics. In early 2015, when I did my fieldwork, I had two research questions in mind: Since Arabic is an official language of the state (as it was then), why don't bilingual Palestinian and other Arab politicians simply speak it, on official state platforms? Why do they only speak Hebrew? And also, if the tradition of Arabic political rhetoric pulls these politicians towards a formal register in 'pure' Arabic, but the people whose votes they are trying to attract speak a mixture of Arabic and Hebrew, what variety and register of discourse do the politicians adopt on the campaign trail amongst Arabic speaking voters? My hypothesis was that there were some minority-majority power dynamics operating vis-à-vis the Jewish Israeli majority, and some class power dynamics taking place within the Arabic-speaking community, and that the outsider/insider demarcation would be significant, in a situation where social segregation is the norm.

The data from Palestinian politicians' election trail in 2015 was collected and analysed, revealing patterns that had not been academically processed before, such as the implicit interactional principle that does not permit the addressing of a Jewish Israeli in Arabic, or the style of demonstratively proclaiming a phrase in Arabic on a public platform where only Hebrew is expected (and the consequent outcry). Patterns of speech found in the occupied West Bank (Hawker, *Palestinian-Israeli Contact and Linguistic Practices*, Routledge 2013) were found also in Israel, such as the use of Hebrew borrowings to display expertise, or of codeswitched phrases to denote humour. However, these patterns contradicted scholarship that had found Arabic use in Israel to be disappearing: this frame was abandoned early in the fieldwork. Nevertheless, arguing for a re-framing required additional information, and so I also searched through the archives of Knesset records – official transcripts and documentary videos – to find historical uses of Arabic by politicians.

Another source of information was representations of Palestinian multilingualism in cinematic productions. While Palestinian productions, such as *Avoda Aravit* or *Wajib*, use multilingualism to discursively represent nuanced identities, often humorously, putting the Israeli-Palestinian conflict in the background, the successful Israeli production *Fauda* follows an Israeli undercover commando unit, and uses multilingualism to depict "passing for" a member of the enemy group. I also devised a rapid anonymous survey conducted in three shopping centres, to test the tacit principle that Jewish



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Israelis are not to be addressed in Arabic. The test confirmed that the principle was in operation, but that the anonymous setting of the shopping centre mostly allowed for the repair of any violation of the principle with an apologetic switch to the dominant language, Hebrew.

The analysis supported what we knew already: that in the governing institutions of Israel, Arabic is suppressed. This practice crystallised in the early years of the state: there were points in history where it might not have gone in the direction of suppression; some activists in the 1960s had campaigned for some kind of minority Arabic-speaking official state platform to be maintained. Another finding, more surprising, in relation to insider/outsider dynamics, was that Arabic-speakers who also speak Hebrew make linguistic choices that result in the avoidance of Arabic in situations where Jewish Israelis are also present. These two elements form the sociolinguistic habitus of the Palestinians and other Arabs in the area controlled by Israel. When speaking Arabic, to give their propositions authority, their discursive strategies mobilise multilingual repertoires, including codeswitching and borrowing, for rhetoric effect and style. The analysis moves away from scholarship that has been concerned 'language endangerment' which has channeled concerns about political problems. The Palestinian multilinguals are performing the aspirations of an emergent middle class elite. On the political stage, this elite challenges the ethnorepublican political structures of Israel, as well as ethnonationalist campaigns, with different inhabitations of citizenship that envisage liberal equality, dignity and autonomy. Under conditions of late capitalism, multilingual language skills are re-packaged as marketable resource: this creates value, but in a contested way, with ambivalent opportunities. With new evidence from recent and historical political discourse, this book is about how speakers of an institutionally marginalised language engage with the political system multilingually.

The introduction of the book presents the political context for the book's evidence, as recorded in interactions between politicians and engaged citizens during the 2015 election campaigns in Israel. The analysis leans on political distinctions of systemic elements that are ethnorepublican, which manage and marginalise linguistic diversity, ethnonationalistic, which exclude identities constructed as 'other' including through linguistic difference, and liberal, which provide for equality and political access of different groups. The cross-disciplinary approach using methods from critical ethnography and discourse analysis reframes the existing scholarship on Arabic in Israel, which has mostly examined the potential or nonexistent language shift away from Arabic of speakers who have also been exposed to Modern Israeli Hebrew.

In Chapter 1, we see how Palestinians and other Arabs in the areas of Israel and the Occupied Palestinian Territories face authorities that communicate with them in Hebrew only. In the early years of the Israeli state, established in 1948, some interpreting was provided in the parliament and in the courts in order to manage the limited inclusion of Palestinians and other Arabs in political and legal processes as a minority, as a practice aligned with the one-nation-one-language logic. Such interpreting provisions disappeared around the middle of the 20th century. Arabic became restricted



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to in-group communication in contained and segregated communities, and to parallel Palestinian institutions with limited authority. The institutional suppression of Arabic within Israel has been challenged since 2010 with Arabic-speakers' strategies of increased audibility on Zionist political stages. This challenge, in turn, has been countered by military-educated Jewish Israelis speaking Arabic in verbal attacks on Palestinian and other Arab propositions. This chapter explores negotiations around the devaluing of a 'minority' language in a political system that is formed to reflect the one-nation-one-language norm, as evidenced in institutional discourse practices.

Abstract of Chapter 2: Navigating Hebrew- and Arabic-speaking settings

In Chapter 2, we examine a context where social segregation is the norm, resulting in meetings of Palestinians and other Arabs together with Jewish Israelis posing a problem for establishing a language of communication. The evidence collected in political gatherings during the 2015 Israeli elections shows that the presence of one Jewish Israeli at an otherwise Arab event, or even of a person whose identity is unknown, triggered the preference for avoiding Arabic. This also included situations in which the non-Palestinian or Arab interlocutor demonstrated knowledge of Arabic. Strategies for resolving the communicative choices entailed switching to Hebrew, and signposting and justifying switches to Arabic; these strategies come as a legacy of colonial-like and military power relations. This chapter presents new evidence of the intrusion of broader socio-political power dynamics into the immediacy of language choices in 'mixed' groups.

Chapter 3 deals with Arabic-only settings. Here, Palestinians and other Arabs express their ideas of the common good. These ideas are mediated by layers of life experiences in concrete social contexts of varying degrees of marginalisation and precarity. Their citizenly engagement is not limited by their legal categorisation by Israeli authorities. To give their propositions weight, speakers mobilise a range of discursive strategies that index ideologically aligned sources of authority. These discursive authorities lie in nuanced understandings of nationality, conflict and class that are not binary, abstract and determining. Discursively, these nuances are expressed in code alternation, codeswitching, and borrowing, with and from Hebrew, and the referencing of different Arabic registers and varieties. This chapter examines stylistic combinations mobilised for authority in political discourse.

Chapter 4 looks at the sociolinguistic conditions of the third generation of Palestinians and other Arabs socialised under Israeli systems, who have now come of political age. Their multilingual voice comes with a repackaging of language skills as a marketable resource under conditions of late capitalism, with its attendant rise of the service and knowledge economies, and the hegemony of consumerism. In evidence from shopping centres – a space presented as 'shared for Jews and Arabs' – where Palestinians and other Arabs are employed in precarious jobs and where they engage in leisure shopping, it appears that the accumulation of multilingualism amongst members of the minority social group is still taken for granted. The success of Palestinian cinematic productions is



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another element of the commercialisation of the multilingual voice, but the most successful production is one where Jewish Israeli soldiers speak Arabic. The linguistic offerings of late capitalism are ambivalent, and this ambivalence causes anxieties expressed as a reinforcement of language purist positions. This chapter looks at some economic interactions that see language as a resource.

In the Conclusion, we consider that the Palestinians and other Arabs who are expressing their ideas on citizenship within the Israeli systems do so from a position at a juncture of the political economy and ethnic or national identity. This position is that of the aspiring Palestinian and other Arab middle class whose cosmopolitanism is expressed multilingually. To make sense of that situation, the discipline of sociolinguistics relies on political analysis, and also contributes to it, by showing how language practices serve to negotiate the relationship between class and nationality. While sociolinguistics has demonstrated the constitutive role of language in forming ethnic and national distinctions, it is still working on its approach to 'class'. Cross-disciplinary readings would be helpful in finding directions on the issue of integrating analyses pertaining to the political economy into sociolinguistics.