

IM19gur

D = Danna, I = Owens, G = interviewee

<I> ismak mine

“your name.”

<G> ana uşumi xursa başıir,

“My name’s Xursa Bashir”

<I> wildook ween

“Where were you born?”

<G> ana wuldooni fi turaab manguno,

“I was born in Mongono.”

<I> inta arabi

“Are you arab?”

<G> ana arabi, nafartí himeedi, wulaad himeet,

“I’m Arab, my clan is Himedi, Wulad Himedi.”

<I> are both of your parents arabs

<G> ammi haw abuyi kulu arab, humma kulla wulaad himeet bas, abuyi amma, saalmiye, haw abú kan himeedi, ammwi kan amha haw abuuha kulla wilaad himeet, misil da, (0:42)

“My mother and father are both Arab. They are both Wulad Himedi. My father, his mother is Salamat, and his father is Himedi. My mother, her mother and father are both Himedi, like that.”

<I> inta gaayid fi maiduguri

“Do you stay in Maiduguri?”

<G> gaaid fi maiduguri, d’awwál aloom siniini bəşawwan ašara, fi maiduguri hineen, misil da,

“I stay in Maiduguri. Today I’ll have been here ten years, in Maiduguri.”

<I> gabul

“Before.”

<G> gábu! da, gaaid fi turaab hana manguno bas, manguno da marte distrikt da bas bakaanna, da bakaan baladna, misil da,

“Before that, I stayed in Mongono. Marte, that district is our place. That is our home.”

<I> tilkallam luqaat yatu

“What language do you speak?”

<G> luqití l arabiyye di bas, al bannaŋfi baha, kan misil, balaa ʔarabi da hausa balkallam, wo baɾno kula balkallam, bas,

„My Arabic language, that I’m using, and like other than Arabic I speak Hausa and Kanuri as well.”

<I> keef alallemta

„How did you learn it?”

<G> naʔam, luqit borno da maa aniina daarna di zaata úşumha borno, borno steet, da bas ad daliil, humma boŕno humma borno, wo aniina l arab da maʔáahum towwa kula gaadiin sawa, da bas ad daliil alallamná, yaalna s suqaar doola kula, kan gammo da, buguumu be l boŕno, wo be l hausa, da bas, daliil al magad aj jamí bas, misil da,

„Ya, The Kanuri language, isn't our region itself, its name ,Kanuri', Borno State. That's the indication, they are Kanuri, they are Kanuri and we Arabs are with them. We've lived together from before. That's the reason we learn it. Our young children, when they grow up, they grow up with Kanuri, and Hawsa. That's it. The reason is living together.”

<I> hawsa da
“And Hawsa?”

<G> hausa humma jo jeyye, fi t tijaara haw fi ke bas, dada da humma min maq̄iib, haw aniina kulla kan min şabá kan lllammeena hini cat, suugna bígi waahid, haw daarna waade da bas ad deliil alallamna kalaamhum da, (2:05)

„Hawsa came here from another place, for business and the like. They are from the West, while we are from the East and we met here.”

<I> indak bagar
„Do you have cattle?”

<G> indí bagar, kuure z zamaan naşág tisʔe sana ana zaati, saari be l bagar tisʔe sana, fí min butta t taaba, butta t taaba di, jam wulgo, kan şaayafna şeef, ninşi nişayif qaadi, taarfa ş şeef, kan xarrafna, gammeena da mən qaadi da turaab marte, manguno, nįji le gaajiram, gubiyo naxarrif hine, haw kan şaayafat kan narəd naşayaf fi c caat, da tisʔe sana ana şayif fi d door, baʔad al wakat da raddeet jiiit gaʔád fi l hille, da bas,(2:53)

“I have cattle. I myself nomadized for nine years, moving with cattle for nine years, from Butta Taaba, near Wulgo, where we spent the hot season, we'd go and spend the hot season there, you know the hot season, then we'd spend the rainy season and leave there in Marte, Mungono, and we'd come to Gajiram, Gubio and spend the rainy season there, and then when it was the hot season we'd return to Lake Chad.¹ That was nine years ago, I'd spend the hot season in the camp, then came and stayed in the city.”

<I> keef al munshaaq
“How is nomadisim?”

<G> al minşaaq, al minşaaq, ninşaq da maa saayiriin baş, aŕab bas, ille al bakaan nugood fiia, yoomaat sitte fi, haw bakaan an nugood fiya doora kula fi, ha kan şaayafna ş şeef maşeena le qaşim at caad da misil natum tałaata şáhar, hádar al xariif bíji wo ş şeif tałaata şáhar walla araba şáhar da fi c caat, haw kan xarrafna numuruk le l xariif barra kula fi turaab gubiyo aw gaajiram, kulla natəm şahareen walla tałaata, dadda l xariif kan faat kan naddalla ac caat, da bas, (3:29)

„Nomadism, nomadism. We nomadize isn't it just moving about. Just Arabs. Where we stay, sometimes six days, sometimes a week. And when we spend the hot season, we go to the shores of Lake Chad and spend three months, until the rainy season comes and we go out to the rains in the area of Gubio or Gajiram and spend two months or three, then when the rains have passed, we decamp at Lake Chad.”

<?> usbu wahid aw tineen dugo timşu bakaan taani
“One or two weeks, then you go to another place.”

<G> da kan misil gammeena minn ac caat, haw hádar nuwaşşil bakaan al maxaraf, hádar nuwaşşil gubiyo da, daadda mbenbeen da bakaan waaid da an nugood fiya doora kula fi, ha kan gammeena nimşi le l bokaan an

¹ See TV70aGulumba-Aja n. 6 and TV112 n. 45, for “Chad”. In this context, Lake Chad.

nugood fiya taalaata yoom fi, kan gammeena taab?iin sarit al bagara bas, bakaan da kan gaš, šiya, al bakaan gaš kan fiya fi, nanjamma fiiya, haw al bukaan kan fiya gaš maafi kan daadda aagibiin le giddaam, (4:00)
 „Like when we leave Lake Chad, and before we reach the place for spending the rains, before we reach Gubio, then between that [time] sometimes we stay at a place a week, and when we get up we go to another place and stay for three days. When we leave we just follow the cattle to pasture, where there is grass. Wherever there is grass we rest there. And if there's no grass we go on ahead.”

<I> ha keef taarif ween al gaš
 “How do you know where there's grass?”

<G> al gaš da maa fi l xala, fi l kadaadi, tawwa kula aniina kan nadoor nazal,² diiraan nazalna da, aniina gaadiin bas naas tineeni, aw taalaata binšu giddaam, binšu bušuufu l fala, bukaan da inda gaš, ad door gaa?id bas, kan gammo daada binšu le l bakaan, (4:20)
 “Isn't the grass in the bush? In the bush. Before when we wanted to make a camp, where we were encamped, we stay [in them] and just two or three people go on ahead and look for the pasture area, a place where there's grass. The camp that was there before gets up and moves to that other place.”

<I> binšu be l rijile
 “Do they go on foot?”

<G> binšu be xeel, binšu be xeelhum, binšu bišuufu l bakaan da, yamm buruddu búju kabiir ad door buguulu leyya bakaan al ke, al buud'a l ke di indaha alme, how indaha gaš, haw fi l bakaan da ziraa?aat maafi, ha daada bisiiru le l bakaan da, (4:34)
 „They go on horseback. They go with their horses. They go and look at the place. When they return they come to the head of the camp and tell him the place is like such and such, a pond that has water for instance, and it has grass, and there are no farms in the area. So then they go to that place.”

<I> intu kam
 “How many are you?”

<G> fi daar waade aniina katiiriin, an naas ad door al waahid, misil, fiya naas, ad door al waahid fiya naas ašara fi, ad door fiya naas talaatiin kula fi, ad door al fiya naas arabaiin fi, ad door fiya naas xamsa kula fi, naadum be ?iyaala be axayaana bas door kula fi, how naadum kan be jamaa?ita katiiriin kula fi, amma l arab induhum kabbaariye, misil ad door ta?arfa, ad door da bakaan al mahalla l diiraan deel da, ha diiraan ašara, ibga leehin šeix waahid, kan zamaan aj jangal da, ha da bas ad daliil, humma ke da malaayiin, wo arab da ma katiiriin sayyaariin da, katiiriin,
 al yoom kula katiiriin, waadiin, ac caad, waadiin bimšu lee c caad, waadiin bimšu le yaare, waadiin bimšu bišaayufu fi yaare, haw kan xarrafat kan bumurgu min al yaare, doola l bušaayufu fi c caat, kula bumurgu minna c caat, cat biju bəllaago hine, turaab hana dambua, təraab hana gəbiyo, haw təraab hana gaidam, gaajiram da bas bakaan al xariif da, ha kan raddo šeef doola bimšu, al yaare, haw doola kan buduxulu fi c caat, bas, arab da katiiriin malaaniin fi najariya aye, (5:48)
 „In one camp we are many. The people in one camp are like in it, one camp has ten people in it, another has thirty, one might have forty. There are also camps with five people. And a person with his family and brothers might make a camp, and a person with many people around him also exists. But the Arabs have a leadership. Like the camp you know it, the place of these camps, ten camps, they might have one Sheix, when there was the cattle tax. And that's the evidence that they were many. Aren't there many Arabs nomadizing. There are many.
 Today as well they are many. Some in Lake Chad, some go to Lake Chad, others to Yare,³ some go and spend the hot season in Yare, the others go and spend the hot season in Lake Chad, then they all come and

² Unclear exactly what consturciton is intended here.

³ In Northern Cameroon.

meet up here, in Damboa or Gubio or Geidam, Gajiram, during the rains. And they return in the dry season, some to Yare, some to Lake Chad. There are many Arabs in Nigeria, yes.”

<I> šunu taab al minšaaq
„What are the problems of nomadism.“

<G> al minšaaq, inda táʔab, inda táʔab illa siiru wo anzulu⁴ mata kula naas ɗiifaan da bas daliila, taʔaba da, táʔab gade aaxar maafi, ille s sayyaariin bas naas saayriin, kan mášo nazalo fi l xala, daadda bubanno leəm kawaazi dugaag dugaag ke, wo bihalbo labanəm bišarbu, haw humma naas ad diraan kan akilum be siyaada l hallaal aniina šik, akulum humma qaadi xafiif, an nadum kan ákal fájir da, gade ju maa bukurba walla širib leya lában walla sawo leya akəl be lebana, kula daadda gade l leel kan ja kan gade kula busawwu leəm al ákil kula humma šabuuriin, be hana al hallaal da šik, da bas, (6:29)

„Nomadism? It has problems. It has problems. Just moving and camping. All the time people are strangers [to where they are]. That’s the main thing. Otherwise there’s no problem. The nomads just people moving. If they go and camp in the bush, then they build themselves small houses, and they milk their milk and drink it, and the people of the camps, their food and that of city people is different. Their food there [in the camps] is little. If a person eats at dawn, he’s not hungry again or he might drink a little milk or some meal with milk, then when night falls they make themselves food. They are patient. [Compared] to ours in the city, its just different.”

<I> tisow šunu baʔad al xidime
“What do you do after the work?”

<G> fi l minšaaq da, baʔad al bagar da, arabi da kan saayir fi l minšaax, ille xidimt al bagara bas, ha l hallaaliin al gaadiin, hiraata, haw sárah, xədaməm tineen, haw tijaara, hinna ɗalaata xidám⁵ al arab fi d daar di, (6:55)

„In nomadism? After the cattle. If an Arab is underway nomadically, his only work is the cow. The villagers have farming and pasturing, two types of work, and business. They are the three [types of] work of the Arabs in the region.”

<I> al bagar tabiihin
“Do you sell the cattle?”

<G> al bágar da, kan misil al wúdur al karaɓhum n naas, ʔyaalak, ayaaniin, aniina l arab hineen ke biiʔu l bagar bilheen maana aarfinna, misil iyaalak, induhum, ma induhum kasaawi, haw misil jangal, yoom aj jangal kan misil hana l bágar da ja, taazil leek ejjaal⁶ tineen walla ɗalaata, walla ɗiraan aššayyaban, ɗiraan al kəbəran deel da buwaduun bibiiʔuun, ha búju bukuɗbu guɗshum da induhum, biyaakulu, bišarbu fiya wo busawwu wuduɗum,

„The cattle, if a need should arise, your children are naked, we Arabs here, selling⁷ cattle we don’t know it much, but like your children have, don’t have clothes and like the cattle tax, like the day to pay the cattle tax has come, you take out two or three calves, or bulls that have grown old, and they come and take their money. That exists. They eat and drink from it and they fulfill their needs.”

<G> amma l bagar ke hinna l hanaata ke da, maa bibuuʔin kan ma ɗiige da, naadum ke bibí bagara hintá fi s suuq da maafi, ille ibiiʔu t tiraan deel bas, (7:41)

„But like the cattle the female cows, they don’t sell them if their isn’t something pressing. A person just sells his cows in the market, that doesn’t exist. They’ll only sell the bulls.”

⁴ Note the imperative construction (see TV44a n. 4).

⁵ < *xidámm*, *fišall*, one of the broken plural forms in Nigerian Arabic.

⁶ For this speaker from the western area, irregular raising of *ʕa > *ʕe.

⁷ The imperative conditional, noted in TV44a n. 4; also n. 4 above.

<I> tabiihin ween

“Where do you sell them?”

<G> fi maidugurí, bibii?uun fi maiduguri, humma siyaad ad diraan da bibiiyuuyin, at tujjaar kan bušuuluun kan binšu beya l maq̄ib, misil da bas,

“In Maiduguri, they sell them in Maiduguri. They the nomads of the camp they sell them. Traders then carry them and go to the southwest. Like that.”

<I> inta mašeet fi Najeriya

“Did you travel in Nigeria?”

<G> ana mašeet, fi n najeeriya, mašeet bəkənne leegos mašeet, aáh kaduuna mašeet, kan pataakot kula mašeet, fi n najeeriya šiya kaddeet, kano kan be baḏəṇa al beet kula waahid, (8:08)

“I traveled, in Nigeria, I went to places, Lagos I went to, Kaduna, Port Harcourt as well. I’ve traveled a bit in Nigeria. Kano and the inside of my house are one and the same place.”⁸

<I> le tijaara walla

“For business?”

<G> aah, nuwaddi t tijaara bas, tijaara,

“We take care of business, business.”

<I> inta hasa taajir

“You’re a businessman?”

<G> hasa da, hasa da suuk bas, as suuk da, lamma šúgul katiir indina aniina, kan indi kontrak ke, kan ligiina kontrak min al haakuuma nasawwiiha, naxadamha, ow ke kula kan saplaai kan kaare ke kula kan minn al maq̄ib kula nišri niijiib kula kan šiyašiya nibeyyi, da bas šinee?inna hineen di, (8:39)

„Now, now just the market. When we have many types of business, if I have a contract, if we got a contract from the government, we do it and work it, like supplying or [delivering] goods, from the south even we buy and bring them, even if just a little, we trade. That’s just our trade here.”

<I> inta mašeet balad arabi

“Have you gone to Arab countries?”

<G> balad al arabiya maa mašeet yoom waaid kula, ana ille mašeet sana waade ingila, bee rafiigí marḏaan, mašeet šiŋta fi ingla, haw mašeet ziyaara paaris, mašeet jaaneeba, wo gabbál jiiit gade maa mašeet ween kulla, ille s suudiya arabiya, da mašeet, hajjeet, kuṛa ṭalaata arba kula le l hajje da mašeet, haw ac caat kula mašeeth, amma le daar al uṛubba l aaxiriin ke kaman, misil libiya doola, haw maq̄arib doola, doola ke maa mašeet leəm, (9:14)

“An Arab country I never went not even one day. I just went one year to England, where I had a sick friend. I went and visited him in England. And I went on a trip to Paris, and I went to Geneva and returned and never went anywhere again. Except Saudi Arabia, I went and did the pilgrimage, three times, even four for the Hajj I went. And I went to Chad as well. But to other European countries, like Libya, or the Maghreb, these I didn’t go to them.”⁹

<I> inta darast fi sangaay

“Did you study in a Quranic school?”

⁸ I.e. he knows Kano well.

⁹ Interesting geo-political categorization in this paragraph. Saudi Arabia, for instance, is prominent for its religious association, not politically as an Arab country.

<G> arabi šiya šiya ke, gareet arabi šiya,
 “Arabic a little bit, I studied Arabic a little.”

<I> ween
 “Where?”

<G> hine bas, fi nijeeriya hineen bas, (9:25)
 “Just here, in Nigeria here.”

<I> tuktub arabi
 “Do you write Arabic?”

<G> aa maa nuktuḅ, nígir šiyašiya,
 “No I don’t write it, I read a little.”

<I> kalaam naṣaara
 “English?”

<G> kalaam naṣaari maafi, ana kalaam naṣaari kan indi fi da ke a, nugood hine ana kula nimši nugood fook qaadi, bəkaan an naas al gaayidiin walla nugood tiit hineeni, (9:43)
 “English, no. If I knew English, [do you think] I’d be sitting here or I’d go and stay up there where the [important] people are rather than sitting down [here] at the bottom here?”

<I> al arab bilaaxado ambeenathum
 “Do Arabs intermarry?”

<G> humma l arāb bilʔaaxado mbeenaatum, biyaaxudu nafarum, naadum da bišiil biyaad’i lee, waldaxú, intu axayaan, tišiil bittak ʔaaṭa le wald axuuk, haw kan naadum qeer ke kula šaba hu da dugut aniina beya daarna waade, aw axayaan, hu da, da waladi, al waagif da, haw da, wal hana muusa daggaš, humma t tineen doola da, mma hu dada ašaliya nafarum waahid, al yoom kan busawwu wúdur kula yíju yuguulu le amṣa kan budooru bit kula min ahal amṣa kula, biyaad’ú bit, how ana kula kan badawwir min áhal amṣi kula kan bašiil baad’i le ʔiyaalí, misil da bas al arāḅ da, misil da (10:35)

„The Arabs marry from amongst themselves. They marry their ethnic group. A person takes and gives [a daughter] to the son of his brother; you’re brothers. You take your daughter and give her to the son of your brother.¹⁰ And if another person, like now we and him are in the same camp or brothers, that’s it. This is my son, the one standing here, and that one, the son of Musa Daggash. Those two, his mother, their clan in Asaliya the same. If today there’s an occasion that they come and say to his mother that they want a girl from the relatives of his mother, they’ll give him a daughter. And me if I want from my mother’s relatives I’d take and give her to my son. Like that the Arabs are, like that.”

<I> biyaaxudu min gabiilaat taaniyaat
 „Do they marry other tribes?”

<G> mi katiir, mən borno mi katiir, waade waade ke biyaaxudu mən borno, maa katiiriin bilheen bilheen, biyaaxudu, misil mi katiiriin, ana zaati burnaayiye fi beetí fi, ana kula axád burnaayiye, amma fi l arab

¹⁰ The speaker only specifies that traditionally marriage was with a relative. Wald axú could be a first cousin, but also an extended cousin. Effectively, because villages are patrilocal, it will be more common to marry from the father’s side, though marrying on the mother’s side of the family is not disallowed. The example which follows illustrates the point. The speaker says that he may well marry his son to a daughter of Musa Daggash, a prominent Maiduguri Arab (recorded in IM1), legitimizing such a marriage via his son’s *mother*, who is of the same clan as Musa Daggash.

katiiriin tahaziphum, išəriin kula, maa tilga naadim áxad burnaayye, ille tilga waahid waahid, waahid dugo biyaaxut, mina l gabiila l aaxar, haw kan minn al hausa kula, ille waade waade ke, mi milxalbid'iin bilheeni, humma borno da biyaaxudu minn al arab, al hausa kula budooru minn el arab, amma humma l arab ke, amšu aaxudu min borno katiir da, maa busawwu, mi katiiriin, (11:29)

„Not a lot. From Kanuri not a lot, just here and there they marry from Kanuri. Not many at all marry. There are not many. I myself I have a Kanuri [wife] at home. I married a Kanuri woman. But Arabs if you counted twenty of them you won't find one who married a Kanuri. You'll just find one here and there who married, from another tribe. The same with Hawsa, just a few. They aren't mixed much. Those the Kanuri marry from the Arabs and the Hawsa as well want Arabs. But the Arabs, like go and marry from Kanuri, they don't do it a lot, not many.”

<I> tilkallam beha be yatu luqa

“What language do you speak with her?”

<G> barnaaiye fi indi, hi arabiyye marra waahid, hi tawwa kulu abuuha zaata, fiizaani, amha bas burnaayiye, abuuha fiizaani, minn l fiizaan dugo ja, haw axad amha, wilitha, haw ana yoom dawwartaha, aad'ooha lei, hassa da tilkallam arab marra waahit, (11:53)

“The Kanuri wife, she's Arab. She as well her father was from the Fezzan, but her mother was Kanuri. Her father is Fezzani, from the Fezzan then he came and married her mother and she gave birth and when I asked for her, they gave her to me. Now she speaks Arabic fluently.”

<I> wa l 'yaal

“And the children?”

<G> al ?iyaal kula bilkallamo arab, walatha hu da dugut bas marák hu kula, aš šeix maafi seiyi, bilkallam arabi, kula arab, haw hausa, humma bəlkallamo nasaara kula, šugul maaəm aarfinna maafi,(12:07)

“The children also speak Arabic. Her son just went out now. The Shex's¹¹ not around? He speaks Arabic, all Arabic and Hawsa and they speak English as well. There's nothing they don't know.”

<I> mixed marriage, if man non-arab

<G> bilkallam, kan naadəm ajami haw áxat arabiyye, dadda hi tilkallam fook lasana da bas, tilkallam hausa kan axadat hausaayi tilkallam foog al hausa, kan axadat bornaayi tilkallam borno, šaan aniina fi daarna hineen kan yaatu kula biyarfa l kalaam borno, amma humma¹² waade waade dugo bəsəmo kalaamna, “He'll speak, if a non-Arab¹³ marries an Arabic, then she'll speak his language. She'll speak Hausa if she marries a Hausa and if she marries a Kanuri she'll speak Kanuri. Because we in our region here everyone knows Kanuri, but they [Kanuri] only here and there know our language.”

<G> šaan aniina bas, kalaamhum da alallamnaa, humma kan lasanum da maa bilga kalaamna ajala, burnaayi alkallam kalaam al arab, ajala da maa bubga fi najeeriya, šaan al aGalabiya n naas binnaffu be kalaam borno, aw benaffu be kalaam al hausa, fi l bərni daaxal, fi l madaniya da, kan barra, fi d diiraan da naas kullu bilkallamo kalaam arab, kalaam al hausa kula šiya , amma n naas aj jo fi l birni daaxal da, kan arabi kula bənáffi be kalaam al hausa, haw bənaffi be kalaam borno, bas, ašaan da bas banaadna zaata kula, kan humma axadoohin da, benaffan be kalaamhum humma bas, (13:16)

“Because we just learn their language. They don't pick up our language quickly. As for a Kanuri, learning Arabic quickly doesn't happen in Nigeria. Because the majority use Kanuri, and Hawsa inside the city, in the city. In the countryside in the cattle camps they speak Arabic, even Hausa is rare. But people in the city, even

¹¹ The name of the son.

¹² Note that *humma* can be taken to refer to *kalaam borno* “the Kanuri language” or “the language of the *Kanuri*”. ‘Borno’, as well as other ethnic designations, refers to both ethnicity and language.

¹³ = *rad'd'aani*.

an Arab will use Hawsa and Kanuri. Because of that, our daughters, if they are married, speak their language.”

<I> haw al ‘yaal
“And the children?”

<G> al ʔiyaal al humma wilooohəm, kan wilooohum, hausaayi wílid mən arabiya, walla keef, ha kan hausaayi wílid al arabiyye da, kan al bəkaan maahum arab katiiriin da, al kalaam bimáni,¹⁴ bugum hausaayi bas, ha kan fi l bukaan arab katiiriin da, daadda bugum be l hausa haw bugum bel arab, šaan dugut beetí da, ammahaatum kulla arabiyaat, burnaayiye waade jaat daxalat fi libbiyum, yom jaat daxalat fi libbuhum bas, bígat arabiyye,

„The children when they’re born, If a Hawsa is born of an Arab mother or what? And if the Hawsa who gives birth to an Arab, if in the place there are a lot of Arabs, that language will prevail. He’ll just grow up Hawsa. And if the place has a lot of Arabs, then he’ll grow up with Hawsa and Arabic. Like now in my house, the mothers are all Arab and one Kanuri came and entered it. When she came she became Arab.”

<G> `yaali arab, walatta kula yom wulidta bas arabi, ha kan bittina dasseená fi lub hausa da, humma kulla hausa, kan wuldat iyaal da dadda buguumu hausa bas cat bilkallamo hausa, haa kan axatha bornaayi, kula kan wəldata da hi arabiya, haw walatha bugum, kalaam borno bas, ille buguul axawaalí, arab, amma lasana da bugum bornaai bas, (14:26)

„My Arab children I gave birth to, as soon as they are born they are Arab, and if we put our daughter in a Hawsa household, if she gives birth the children will grow up Hawsa and all will speak Hawsa and if a Kanuri marries her, likewise if she gives birth her child will grow up speaking Kanuri, and he’ll just say, my (mother’s) uncles are Arabs, but he grows up Kanuri.“¹⁵

<I> juduudhum arab ma bilkallamo kalaam al arab
“Are there those in Nigeria whose ancedstors are Arab who don’t speak Arabic?”

<G> fi, fi n najeeriya fi, daa ad daliil, yam humma min, da tədawwir daliila walla keef, walla humma fi, aa humma fi,
“There are, there are. The reason, when they ... Are you asking the reason or what, or whether there are, there are.”

<I> taguul humma arab
“Do you call them Arab?”

<G> humma, aniina ke da maa naguul leəm aṛab, humma buguulu, aniina arab, aniina ke da ma n naguul arab amma humma buguulu aniina aṛab bas, kan as salsala jaat da, buguulu aniina juduudna arab, da baṣ, (15:01)
“These, we wouldn’t call them Arab. They’ll say they are Arab but we don’t call them Arab, but they say it. If the lineage is asked [comes], they’ll say our ancestors are Arab.”

<I> would you marry your daughter to arab who doesn’t speak Aṛabic?

<G> aywa, hassa kula bitti aad’eeetaha lee, how axti bit aṃṃi, bit abuuyi, yani raajil aaxar, ana indí bineyye ad’eeetaha lee walatha, bas

¹⁴ Mana ?? = prevail.

¹⁵ Throughout the texts there is an ambiguity as to ‘non-Arab language’ and ‘non-Arab’. In this passage, *amma lasana da bugum bornaai bas*, literally means that the grandson will grow up speaking Kanuri, though obviously what is also intended is that he will grow up Kanuri, not Arab. A *rad’d’aani* is at one and the same time, a non-Arab, and someone who speaks a language other than Arabic. The related verb *rad’an* only means “speak non-Arab”, not something like “act like a non-Arab”.

“Yes. Now as well my daughter I gave her to him, and my sister, the daughter of my father, that is a step father. I just have a daughter I gave her to her son.”

<repeat question>

<I> inta taad’ bittak le naadim ma bilkallam kalaam al arab

“Would you give your daughter to a person who doesn’t speak Arabic?”

<G> hine, ma bilkallam luqa arabiya biyaad’uuha, al biyaaḍu kula fi, al maa biyaaṭa kan fi, al biyaata kula fi, misil da, mi ana, an naadum al biyaḍ’u kula fi, an naas ke hineeni da, naadum mu juduuda buguulu aniina juduudna aṛab, haw mi aarif kalaam al arabi, ha kan ja dawwar bittak taata leyya fi borno hineen da, fi n najeeriya hineen da, bas (16:04)

„Here, he doesn’t speak Arabic, they’ll give her. There are those who would and those who wouldn’t. There are those who would. Its like that. Not me personally. There are people here who do, people here, a man whose ancestor they say they Arabs, and he doesn’t know Arabic. And if he comes and wants your daughter you give her, here in Borno, in Nigeria.”

<I> fi naadi arabi hineen, al hayaa (naadi not understood)

“Is there an Arabic club here?”

<G> kuloob, al kuloob, haya fi, al hayá kloob fi, hana al arab fi, al hayá da, kuloob hana l aṛab, haw niit al hayaa?, al arab, as sayyaariin al baṛra, humma yaa dugut kula gaadiin fi haal at tawwa, haw axayaanəm waadiin, jo gaado fi l madaniyya fi l mudun, fi l baraani, fi l bəṛni, humma axayaanəm al fi birni doola da lammo ɾaaṣəm, gaalo aniina kula axayaanna l baṛra doola da, kan maa sayyeena leena daliil haw fatteena raaṣum da, as sarha zaata kula tiriid al ilim, al hiraata tidoor al ilim, haw naasna maəm aalmiin, ille saayiriin fi d diraan da, aniina kula niseyi leena daliil, ha daliil da nəṣawwi šunu nulumm raaṣna nifattiš leena kuloob, allammo bala daliil maa bukuun, da d daliil hana al haya,

“Club, the Club. There is Haya, the Al Hayá club, for Arabs. The Haya is a club of Arabs. And the purpose of the Haya, the Arabs nomadizing in the countryside, they are living just like they always did. And some of their brethern came and stayed in the city in the city, the cities, in the city.¹⁶ Their brethern in the city joined together, and said, our brethern in the countryside, we should do something and enlighten them. Pasturing cattle itself requires knowledge and farming does but our people are not educated. They just nomadize in the camps. So we should do something and what we did was get together and found ourselves a club. Getting together without a reason is not possible.”

<G> aniina kulla hana al haya, aniina kulla l aṛab allammeena, haw lammeena qašimna, haw dawwarna rejista hiil al haya, haw ligiinaaha, haw hassa da nadawwir nəfattih, nafahhim raaṣna, raaṣ ahalna l baṛra, haw iyaalna l hine fi l hille ke kula kan šunu kula an niyye l gaaʔimiin fookka di, kan šunu kula šoqol al dasseena fi galbina be niyye waade nuguun fooga, da bas maʔanaaha le l haya, (17:49)

“We of the Hayá, all us Arabs joined together and we unified [joined our mouth] and we tried to register¹⁷ for the Hayá and we managed to. And now we want to enlighten, to make educate ourselves, our brethern in the countryside and our children who are here in the city, the purpose we are associating for. Whatever we resolve to do [put in our heart] it is with a single purpose.”

¹⁶ The sequence of synonyms, *gaado fi l madaniyya fi l mudun, fi l baraani, fi l bəṛni, mudun* < Arabic, *birni* < Hawsa, is perhaps a recognition on the part of the speaker of the ambiguous designation of “city” in Nigerian Arabic. The basic term, *hille*, is any settled abode, opposed to *door* “nomadic camp”, and can designate anything from the villages where many of these recordings were made, all the way to Maiduguri or Lagos.

¹⁷ *dawwarna rejista hiil al haya*. A literal translation might expect that they looked for the Haya registry. In fact, this is a frequent codeswitching strategy in which the English ‘verb’, rather than Arabicized, is put in verbal noun or nominal form after an ‘empty’ Arabic verb. *Sawwa* “do” is the most common, though here *dawwar* is used (see Owens 2002).

<I> min zamaan
 “Is it old?”

<G> al kəloob da zamaan, naas al arab ad daxalo fi l birni hine, šiya, şumma şuqul gede, misil, muşammiyinna, gwange soşal kloob, gwange soşal kloob arab naas šiya maəm katiiriin, wára da l arab al búgo katiiriin, lammoona gaalo keef, aniina nudowwər, kuloobna t tawwa da nahayyí da nisawwi keef, aniina gulna kan tudəwwuru tahayyú da, daadda nəxaşşis leyya uşum gade aaxar, dugo nigayyima anjadiidiye, hu al hayá, soşal kloob dugut al yoom al had'deená da, dahaaba, hu dahaaba gayyamna (18:34)

“The club, before, the Arabs who entered the city here, their problems were a little different, like, we called it, ‘Gwange Social Club’, ‘Gwange Social Club’. The Arabs were few, not many, then afterwards they became many. We got together and said, look, we want, we want our former club to rejuvenate it and what will we do? We said if you want to rejuvenate it, we should have a new name, and then found it anew. That is the Hayá Social Club now. Today, what we founded, we just established [it] recently.”

<I> inda bakaan
 “Does it have a place?”

<G> inda imaara fi, indana, taWWa, al gaḅuḷaani inda faḅaaʔa fi, al faḅaaʔa di, maa náfat, dugut šareena leena faḅaaʔa kabiire, haw indina niyye nidoor nabəni, nədoor niseyyi seketeeria hiil l jeneral seketeeriya hiila, al kabiire haw nudowwur waḅaa min da kan, sakateeriya hiilna kammalat, kan nuhud' goolil lokal gamant kula nudoor nuhuṭ leena fiha ofis, da l niyyit al hayá, (19:02)

“It has a building. Before, the first has an open area. The land didn't suffice. Now we bought a bigger area and we intend to build. We want to make ourselves a Secretariat, for the General Secretariat. A big one and after that we want when the Secretariat is finished, we want to put [one] in each local government we want to put an office. That is the purpose of the Hayá.”

<I> al arab billammo katiir fi mayduguri¹⁸
 “Do Arabs get together a lot in Maiduguri?”

<G> al arab katiir, humma l aḅab, bəkaan waahid da kan fi š šunu da, misil, fook šunu da bəllammo da, bullammo da kan kaan wúdur walla keef, ah, al aḅab da humma da, ad daliil al arab ke l arab ke billammo fiya humma kula fih, amma aniina misil masal hine fi nayjeriya hine fi borno hineeni, maşamman fi borno hineeni, kan wúdur kaan misil uşum, lee hana mine kulla kan burnaayi, arabi, kan hausaayi, kula nəllamma fiya, ha kan šúqul bigi niyyinna hana l arab ke nudoor nəllamma fiya kan aniina be raazna kan nəllamma, fi ɾaaşna,

„The Arabs are many. The Arabs, in one place, why, like, why do they gather? They gather when there's an occasion or what do you mean? The Arabs. There has to be a reason the Arabs get together, but we like here in Nigeria, in Borno, especially in Borno, if there's an occasion, like a naming ceremony, for anyone, a Kanuri, an Arab, a Hausa, then we gather for it. But if there is a special purpose, then we Arabs will get together for ourselves.”

<occasions, munasaabaat>

<G> misil al iit,
 “Like the Eid,”

<D> fiilin sukuwa
 “a public gathering point”

¹⁸ *munaasaabat* not understood by the interviewee.

<G> fiilin sukuwa da kan bala daliil da, kan bala d daliil ke da, ma bəllammo, daliil ille misil kan lumma dugut misil hana l hayá da, misil huda da bullammo, haw kan misil dalaal, hana sana, aw daliil waahid, bəllammo, amma saakit ke da maa bəllammo, (20:34)

“a public gathering point, without a reason, without a reason they don’t get together. Only if there is something like al Haya, for this they get together, or for dancing or a certain reason, they get together. But for no reason they don’t.”

<I> kan simiit arabi bilkallam, teerif min bakaan yatu

“If you hear an Arab speaking, do you know where he’s from?”

<G> baarfa, kan alkallam, fakka gašima alkallam da, an naadim da kan lubba ngumaati hine fi j jeereeye, kula lisaana baʔarfa, kan foog ragabt ac caad, təraab marte kula lasana maʔaruuf, haw kan naadim sayyaari hana d diraan, kula lasana maʔaruuf, hu arabi bas, amma lasana šiyya, tafriɣa šiyya fi, min lasana bas, hassa ana lasani da kula ke hana waadiin šik, farg, da bas, (21:17)

„I know it. If he speaks, just opens his mouth. That person is from the middle of Ngumati here in Jeeree, I’ll understand his dialect, or next to¹⁹ Lake Chad, Marte the dialect is obvious. It’s just Arabic, but the dialect differs a little, from his dialect. Now me, my dialect is different from others. There’s a difference.”

<I> keef naas baama

“What about the bama accent.”

<G> naas təraab baama, da kan mi mašeet lee naadim təraab baama ke da ma binʔarif lei, humma kalaamhum gušaar gušaar, bišiiluu gušaar gušaar ke, kan bilkallamo da humma arab, kalaamum bəlkallumó gušaar gušaar, haa da kan mi humma ke da maa binʔarif, šaba ana ke da, kan gul balkallam kalaam hana təraab gulumba, naas təraab gulumba, təraab baama, kan gul balkallam kalaamhum da, maa bukuun lei, ma bagdar baʔarfa, inda tafriɣa be hanaana šiyya, kan gaaló ana kula basəmaʔ, arab, kullu ʔarabi bas, masal ana naguul, angliiz kula buguul šik šik sei, walla keef, (22:06)

„People from Bama. If it isn’t the case that I went to a person in the Bama area, it wouldn’t be understandable to me. Their speech is very short. They carry it short ???. When they speak, its Arabic, but their speech is fast, and if not [among] themselves, it isn’t understandable. Like me, if I said I speak the language of Gulumba, of the people of Gulumba or Bama,²⁰ if I said I speak their language, I couldn’t. I can’t get it. It is different from ours a little bit. If they speak I’ll understand, its also just Arabic, like I say, English differs as well, right?”

<I> [X]

<G> amma ngliiz bas, tafriɣa fi sei, misil da bas, al arab kullu waahid, aniina axayaan, haw hassa, kan misil waladí ana da bas, wilitta haw kəbər fi təraab banki, aw təraab gulumba, išiiil al lasan d’aaka iguum beya, waladi ana wilitta bas, lasani ana be haná hu yunfarugu, kan kəbər fooga da, da lasan bas, humma kulu arabi, haw, amma l lasan kan bīji šik, bas, (22:44)

„But English also is different. Its like that. Arabic is all one, we are brothers, and now, like my son, if he were born and grew up in area of Banki or Gulumba, he’d learn that dialect and grow up with it. My own son, our dialects would differ, if he grew up with it. Its just a dialect, though its Arabic, but the dialect differs.”

<I> bilkallamo luqa al arabiye nadiife fi təraab yatu

“Where do they speak Arabic best?”

<G> al luqa l arabiyya, kweese, haa da ke da maa bəbga, al lumma aniina be l arab maa bulummina ke da má, al ke da, ana kan gul aniina haadi kalaamna nađiif da maa bubga keef, al kalaam hana l arab ke s seme da, al arab as sayyaariin, humma bas kalaamhum as seme da, kalaam arabi š šaafi da, šiila min al arab as sayyaariin, haw jiiba, fook təraab hana, humma n naas al arab ke da ma kulla sayyaariin al gaidiin fi l hallaal kula

¹⁹ *ragabt ac caad* “the neck of Lake Chad = beginning of, shores of, next to.”

²⁰ See TV69-71.

sayyaariin bas, ille ana naguul, kalaam ke, haw šiia anfáſal da, kalaamna aniina misil tēraab hana gulumbá, tēraab kaala balge, haw tēraab ngalá, humma ke lasanum wahattum, haw aniina l faḍalna hana tēraab hana konduga, tēraab marte, arḍi manguno, haw le s sayyaariin hine d diiraan kula lasanna waaid, bas aniina, fi hanaana ke da, humma buguulu leena aniina l qawaalme, haw al qawaalme kan humma bas al lasanum an naḍiif da, da bas fi l arab, (24:09)

“Arabic, good. If [you ask] like that, it’s not a good question. [? Isn’t it just about meeting Arabs?]. Like that. If I didn’t say, ours was the best it wouldn’t make sense? The best Arabic, the herdsman. Theirs is the best. The purest Arabic, start from the nomads, and continue on to the area where the nomads are staying in the villages as well there are nomads. But if I say, a dialect is singled out, our dialect like of Gulumba, Kaala and Ngala, their dialect is different, and we, of Konduga, Marte Mongono and that of the herdsman of the camp, our dialect is the same. So for us, they say about us we are Qawlme, and the Qawalme have the best dialect. That is the Arabic.”

<I> mine al qawaalme

“Who are the Qawalme?”

<G> al qawaalme da wulaad qaanəm, wulaad sarraar, wulaad mahaarəb, wulaad himeet, humma kulla hum, nafar ašara tineen, humma l gawaalme da, fəlaan, fəlaan da ašara tineen, humma baš al gawaalme, (24:27)

“The Qawalme are the Wulad Qanem, Wulad Sarrar, Wulad Muhareb, Wulad Himed, all of them are twelve clans, the Qawalme. Such and such twelve, they are the Qawalme.”

<I> tisannad’ ar raadiyo

“Do you listen to the radio?”

<G> ar raadiyo kan bilkallamo baššannad’a, waqut waqut baššannad’a, hadar beeti da kasarta da maa šaṇṇaṭṭa, maa indii ḥəkaan ali nagood naššannaṭa, tawwa talabišin wa r raadiyo kula nugood nišiifa, proogram da ana nisima katiir kula hanaana hana n najeeriya da bas, hana d diyaar al barra da katiir kula ma nəššannaḍ’a, ille c caad, haw hineen bas, (24:56)

„If they speak on the radio I listen, sometimes I listen. Before my house was renovated (I broke it and built it) I didn’t have a place to sit and listen to it. Now television, radio, I sit and watch it. I listen to a lot of programs about Nigeria, about the rural areas I listen to them. Just Chad and here [Nigeria].”

<I> be kalaam al arab

“In Arabic?”

<G> be kalaam al arab, kalaam al arab hineen ke, ninnaffi beyya da, šaan ac caad ahalna fiya katiiriin, katiir kula aniina naššannaḍ’a hu, yo, wagit waahid al qaahira, haw le ke doola kula nəgood naššannaḍ’ barnaamijəm, há, misil da, (25:20)

“In Arabic. The Arabic of here, that I use. Because in Chad there are a lot of our brethren, and so we sit and listen to their programs. Sometimes Cairo and the like we listen to. Its like that.”

<do you understand cairo dialect>

<G> šiia šiia, hana kayro da mi katiir šiia šiia, hu kula kan jalasó da, nilfaaham misil mufaahama tag di, bas kan hu naadim hana qaahira ja, máša le burnaayi da ma yilfaahamo, maša le hausai ma yilfaahamo, kan jaani ana beya nilfaaham, ana l baguul, hu bafhama al lasan da šik, ba?iid, amma ana nuwaššifa leya hu kula bəfhama, haw al buguula ana kula bafhama, amma mbeenaatum faraga, bilheen bas, mi misil hana n najeeriya, misil gul leek himeet, wo qawaalme, wo ke, a?a, mi misil da, kayro, haw najeeriya da lasanum ba?iid, amma aniina nifama, humma kula bufhamo minnana, misil da, (26:02)

“A little bit. Cairo not a lot, just a little. If they speak it, we understand each other like a basic understanding. If a person from Cairo comes and went to a Kanuri, they wouldn’t understand each other. If he went to the Hawsa he wouldn’t understand. I say, I understand the dialect is very different. But if I explain to him he’ll understand and what he says I’ll understand. But there’s a difference between them, a big one. Not like

[within] Nigeria, like I told you, Himed and Qawlme and the like, no. Not like that. Cairo and Nigeria, their varieties are very different, but we understand and they understand us as well. Its like that.”

<I> al magad barra be mayduguri da keef
 “Compare life in Maiduguri with that in the countryside.”

<G> aš šuqul albaddal, agoot tiit, agoot tiit, yam ana gaayid barra, kan al yoomi ana l fakkarta da yam gaayid barra da, áhala minna l yoom, áhala mən magadii dugut da, yam aniina gaaidiin barra, indina bágar, yam da bərni, maa bígi misil da, maafi wataayir, maafi šai, aniina l aṙab, indina bágar, indina xeel, indina qánam, wágit da, barra aniina ahalá minn al bərni, indina dalaal ad dalaal taʔarfa, dalaal sukwa hana l xeel da, barra fi s sawaga, nimši niddaalal foog al xeel, haw al wágit hana ʔamsat nijí le l beet, haw al banaat baqannan, aniina nigallib, be xeelna, ad diiraan gaadaat, kan bigiina úsur šaba saaʔinna di, bágar dúʔun ɗuʔun biján, nillagga bagarna, náhalib labanna nišarba, haw gaadiin, nafizna raagde, šugul ke, kan al bágar jin šabʔaanaat da gade ma indana kalaam, jawaadak nađiif šabʔaan, gammeer rukub fooga ɗarabta da ille bugum bæddaalal bas, aniina ma indina kalaam, há,

šúqul ja bígi fark, yam gaaydiin barra, zamaan amma mi al yoom fa, zamaan, barra áhala min al birni, haa beyya hu da bas, az zamaan ja albaddal, al yoom jiina gaʔadna, fi l bərni, ow be magadna fi l birni da kula, ana zamaan, al yoom maani barra, kan alfakkarta l barra da, ahalá min al yoomna l gaaid beyya fi l birni da, indí wataayir, haw dawa alla idiss al baraka indi iyaal, haw ke kula, magadna z zamaan ana l basmaaʔ ke fi jildi fi halaatí da, faayit hana l birni, yoom ana gaayd misil waladi da, maani haam be šai, abuuyi fi, ammi fi, jamaaʔiti fi, bagarna kan sarahan jin wugufan da nukuddihin keee nišiihfin bagar šabʔaanaat, jawaadak nađiif waagif, ma lammaak fi šai, haa al yoom ye jiina fi l bərni, kan indak muliyon waahid, tudawwir mulyoon tineen, kan indak mulyon tineen, tudawwir ʔalaata, haw jaari, maa tigiif tišiif, aš šuqul al alla aadʔaak leyya, taakul fiya, tišarab beyya, təraggəɗ agalak, mágad hana l barra yam ana gaaʔid, mi aloomi n naas, ana ke fi nafsí da, yom gaait barra da ahalá min magadi hana l birni da, bas, (28:52)

“Things have changed. ‘sit down, sit down’.²¹ When I was a nomad, when I think about it when I was staying in the countryside, it was better than today. It was better than my current situation now. When we were staying outside, we had cattle, and the city wasn’t like now. There were no cars, nothing. We Arabs had cattle, horses, sheep. At that time, the countryside was better than the city. We had dances, you know dances? Entertainment involving horses. We’d go and perform on horses and on market days. We’d come home, and the girls would sing, we’d gallop horses. The camps were there. In the evening like at this time, herds of cattle would come back and we’d meet the cattle and milk their milk and drink it, and we’d stay and our souls were rested. Like that when the cattle came back satiated, there wasn’t any other problem. Your horse was satiated, you’d mount it and slap it and it would get up and gallop. We didn’t have any problem. [Now] things have changed. Since we stayed in the countryside, before, but not now. Before the countryside was better than the city, but with these [things] the times have changed. Today we’ve come and stay in the town and our situation in the city as well, before I was, today I’m no longer in the countryside. When I think about [the times] in the countryside, they were better than our day staying in the city. I have cars and look right here may God bless²² I have children and everything. Still I feel that our situation before was nicer, better than the city. When I was of the age of this son of mine, I didn’t have any cares. I had my father, my mother, my people. Our cattle went out to pasture and came back and stayed. We went about around them and we’d see the cattle fat, your horse standing clean. Nothing bothered you. But today now we’ve come to the city. If you have one million, you want two million. If you have two million you want three, and you’re running up and down you don’t stop and look about at what God gave you, like what you eat, drink, that should calm your senses. The situation of the countryside when I was there, not today, me as I perceive it, it was better than my situation in the city today. That’s all.”

<I> tamiš tugoot taani barra
 “Do you want to live in the countryside again?”

²¹ Addressing his young son.

²² *alla idiss al baraka* Lit. “May God enter into [X] his blessing”.

<G> nimši wagit wagit, hassa jiiit min baŕra, mašeet manguno, haw mašeet azzeet, fi naadim waahid abu bígi maafi l lawaan manguno mašeet le l maʔaza, haw jiiit, qaawinna hillinna s saqayre di, kula n naas šatto le l birni gaaidiin, waqadna da bas, humma jo le l xariif gaadiin fi z ziraaʔaat, nazál, wagúf šuftuhum kee, alaanas maaam, misil minti ašara ke haw dugó agab jiiit, alyoom kula di jeiti min baŕra (29:30)

“I go occasionally. I just now came from outside. I went to Mongono and went to a funeral. A person died, the Lawan of Mongono I went and gave sympathies and came back. Our village our small village. Everyone split up and went and are staying in the city. Now they come for the rains and are in the fields. I went down and saw them and talked with them like ten minutes and then I came back. Today is when I came back.”

<I> indak beet barra

“Do you have a house outside?”

<G> indí beet barra fi, abuyi zaata l wəlidni kula baŕra,

“I have a house outside. My own father is there.”

<D> naas šaba aniina l arab da, mine be luqquta sei, mine kula bilkallam (29:54)

“People like us Arabs, each one has his language, right? Each one speaks [it].”

<G> naʔam, mine kula bilkallam

“yes. Each one speaks it.”

<D> há, šaba, dugut naas hana Ngumaati, haw be naas al balge da, inta taarif, taarifuhum humma doola šik da keef

“Like, now people from ngumati and people from Balge, you know, do you know them how they are different?”

<G> šik da min lasánam, (30:05)

„Different according to their tongue.“

<D> haa humma naas al balge buguulu keef ambeenaat ...

“And they the Balge people how do they speak amongst themselves?”

<G> ha humma kan bəlkallamo da, kan waahid bilkallam buguul leek hu, bəsaŕwi ke, haa da bas, aaha, hu, da kalaamhum humma, aniina fi kalaamna kan hu, di maafi, hu kan, naadim al balge ke báda bəlkallam da, taʔarfa bas, kan fakka qašima, (30:28)

„If they speak, if one of them talks he tells you ‘hu’, he does like this. This ‘hu’, if a Balge man begins to speak, you just know it, that he’s from Balge.”

<D> haw humma buguulu caal, keef, gusaar gusaar da, humma kula

„And they say ,caal‘, how is it very fast as well?”

<G> kan ma fakkartihin da, maa bíji lee raasi, (30:39) humma kula, hu da l baleek beyya šunu aḅi, hu da inta bəsaŕww beyya šunú aḅwuyi, inta bəsaŕww beyya šunú, hu da abuyi inta l baleek beyya šunu, da kalaamhum humma,

„If I don’t think about them, I don’t have it in my head. They, ‘hu da baaleek beyya šunu aḅi’ ‘What is your problem with it my father?’;²³ ‘hu da abuyi inta baleek beyya šunu’ ‘This thing what is your problem with it my father?’ That is their language.”

<D> kan arabi min ngumaati buguul keef (30:58)

„And how do the Ngumati Arabs speak?”

²³ See IM50XAM n. 20 as a possible textual example.

<G> hu da, maa gul leek guṣaar, inta hu da abba, tasaww beya šunu šoqolak da, kan xalleeta minnak, mi axeer a, yawwá, hu inta hu da l baaleek beyya šunu aḅwi, humma kan ajala bas, maa bigi šik a, inta abba hu da, tasoww beyya šunu, ma t̄axalla minnak, maa bigi fáarak, a ah misil da bas,
 „This one, they don’t speak fast, ‘inta hu da abba, tasaww beya šunu šoqolak da’, You, this thing father, what are you doing with this matter of yours? Why don’t you leave it?’ Isn’t that different? Just like that.”

<D> dugut kan arab ke humma ke šaba ašara ke laammiin, ma bilkallamo, inta kan raaʔeet̄əm be eenak ke da, taarif, an naad̄əm de balgaay, aw d’aaka min ngumaati d’aaka ajere haw ke (31:31)
 „Now if the Arabs are like ten and get together and don’t speak. If you see them with your eye, do you know that person is from Balge and the other from Ngumati and that one is from Jeere and so on?”

<G> binʔarif,
 “It’s known.”

<D> ha keef
 “How?”

<G> da kula daliila da, induhum furuut̄ fi, an naas dugut t̄eraab gulumba induhum fruut̄, aw kan m̄ən lubassum, aw kan min haalum kula, kula binʔarfu, min haalum ke bas kula, an naadum da šifta min damma ke, min alaamta kula naadum hana turaab angumaati šiila min hine ke ke wadda le daarna da, kan šif damma taʔarfa, kan naadum turaab gulumba da kan šifta da walla min fruuda, haw kan ma leya fruut̄ kulla min damma, min alamta kula tišiiifa taʔarfa bas, aw naadum al balge huda kan šifta da, hádar bilkallam bas, kan šifta da, naadum da naadum balge da taʔarfa, (32:10)
 „The evidence for that, they have ritual scars [on the face]. The people of Gulumba now they have scars, and from their clothes and they way they are. They’re known from everything. A person you just see his appearance (his blood), from his sign as well that he’s a person from Ngumati, take it from here up to our place. If you just see his appearance you recognize him. If a person is from Gulumba you see it, from his scars and if he doesn’t have scars, from his appearance, from the signs you see him and known him. A person from Balge if you see him, before he speaks, if you see him, that person is a person of Balge, you know it.”

<D> ha duggut naadim da biḡeri kalaam al arab, bilʔallam kalaam al arab, duggut šunú ke inta tidoora hu ixud̄d’ aḡəla leyya
 „And now a person who studies Arabic. He wants to learn Arabic. What do you advise him?”

<G> fi kalaam al arab da, le ilkallam kalaam al arab, al hu aḡəla leyye ke da misil niizam šunu,
 „For Arabic, so that he speaks Arabic, what he has his mind on, like what sort of plan?”

<D> šaba dugut, kalaam hana l arab naad̄əm kan ma bis̄əma al arab dugo budoor bilkallam kalaam al arab da, fi hanaana hana maiduguri da, fi t̄eraab hana borno da, naad̄əm b̄əxud̄d’ aḡəla ween tišiiif keef, (32:41)
 „Like now, Arabic, if a person doesn’t understand it and wants to speak it, ours of Maiduguri. Borno, where should a person go to, what do you think?”

<G> kan bidoor bilkallam kalaam al arab da, da maa ille kan, šaba dugut majáalasáta, fa mufaahama leyye, šabá leena di, haw kan arabi ke kula, kan budoww̄ər hu bulga kalaam misil hu da da, dadda šabaak inta da, inta wadd d daar di, haw lasanak arabi hana ad daar da, daadda hu, misil, mata kula inta beyya da, tijaal̄əsu, misil magadii ana da, daadda laarafna da, yoom yoom ke, budoor b̄əšiifek, aah ana kula kan inta ma t̄ t̄imiš lei kula, ke laamanna ana kula bamši leyya, fi l jalsa, fiyya hu da, al kalaam billági, šaan hu mi bayyaai how šarraay, kan tawwa bayyaay haw šarraay baguul leyya, im̄ši le suug al bagar, kan hu bitaajir, haw bidowwir kalaam al arabi da, baguul leyya im̄ši ibaayi l bagar, fi suug al bagar da bilkallamo kalaam al arab, hu kan ta arabi sayyaari baguul leya ámiš la d diiraan, amma kan fi l b̄ərni hineen da, ille kan budoww̄iro l arabi haw l luqqa al arabiya hiil najeriya hineeni b̄ədaww̄əra da, ille alaaman iyaalhum iyaal al arab bas, maʔnaatak inta keef, (33:50)

„If he wants to speak Arabic, unless like now like this guy’s conversation, his understanding of it like this one of ours,²⁴ if Arabic, if he wants to get the language like this, so like yours now, you are a son of this region and your dialect is Arabic of the region, so like, whenever you and him speak together, or like myself right now, so we get to know each other. Occasionally he wants to see you. Me as well even if you don’t go to me [regularly], we become friends I as well go to him, for conversing. In this way the language will be acquired. Because he’s not a trader (seller and buyer). If he were I’d tell him, he should go to the cattle market, if he’s doing business, in the cattle market they speak Arabic. If he were once a herdsman I’d tell him ‘go to the cattle camps’. But if in the city here, if he just wants Arabic and the Arabic language of Nigeria here, he should befriend their children, the Arab children. What do you think?”

<I> fi l beet tilkallamo ay luqa
“What language do you speak at home?”

<G> fi beeti hine, nilkallam aṛabi, baṣ,
“At home here we speak just Arabic.”

<I> be rufugaanak
“With your friends?”

<G> rufugaaní, rufugaaní hineen da katiiriin, rafiigi kan hana arabi, nalkallam be l aṛabi, kan hausaayi nilkallam be l hausa, nitabaa fook hanaa bas, (34:16)
“My friends, my friends here are many. If my friend is Arab, we speak Arabic if Hawsa we speak Hawsa. I follow whatever his [language] is.”

<if your friends speak diff langs>

<G> kan misil da arabi, haw da boṛnaayi, haw da hausaayi, humma borno da, ma idooru aniina kan humma gaadiin da nilkallam kalaam al arab da, ma idawurú, ma idawurú, iguulu á, á, kanuri manaané, ma idawuru, iguulu nilkallam be kalaam boṛno bas, kan walanna dugoo, bittina aateenaaha le burnaai haw wuldit kula, hu mi wald axunna, wal bittina, kan gaa?id ma?áana dugo kan jimna kalaam al arab kula, buguul aah, alkallamo leena kan humma, aniina ?ašara arab kula kan hu burnaay waaid da, daadda nilkallam borno bas, šaan hu, da gaḷba ya iyaaba, da bas, (35:18)

„Like if Arabic, and Kanuri and Hawsa, they the Kanuri don’t want us, if they are present, that we speak Arabic. They don’t like it they don’t like it and say, ‘no, no, only Kanuri’. They don’t like it. They say we should just speak in Kanuri. If we give birth, our daughter we give to a Kanuri and gives birth, isn’t he²⁵ the son of our brother, the son of our daughter? If he stays with us then even if we bring out Arabic, he’ll say, ‘ah!, speak to us [in Kanuri]. If they, even if we are ten Arabs and he is one Kanuri, then we should just speak Kanuri. Because his heart, he’s refused it. That’s it.”

<I> fi suug
“In the market?”

<G> fi s suuk, á, misil as suuk, bəkaan kan mašeet lee ?arabi tíšər minna, tibaayi, katiiriin minnuhum kula, al arabi al, kan ille mašeet lee suug al bagara, kan tədoor kalaam al aṛab da, amma kan mašeet fi s suug ke min jam da ille kan tibaayi da walla hausa, walla borno bas, walla našara, bas, kan fi s suuk kabiir da, ille kalaam borno, (35:45)

„In the market? Like in the market the place you went to an Arab and you buy from him, you buy, they are many, then Arabic. If you went to the cattle market and you want Arabic, but if you went to the market for any old reason, then you bargain in Hawsa or Kanuri or English. If in the big market [Monday market], just Kanuri.”

²⁴ Referring to the present interview.

²⁵ I.e. a male child.

<I> fi l xidime

“At work. (šuyul not understood)”

<G> fi š šaqalá, kan fi l xidime da, kan ambeenaadna misil dugut hu da kaafinta, hu da fooman, kaafinta, hu arabi, nilfaaham be l árāb, xaddaamiin kan jo ke bəxadamu kula, kan arabi da nilkallam leyya haai, sawwi misil da be l arab, kan burnaai nilkallam leya be arab borno, kan hausai nilkallam leya be hausa, bas,
 “At work, if at work, if there are among us now like a carpenter, the foreman, a carpenter and he’s Arab, we speak Arabic. If workers come to work, if Arab we speak to him in it, ‘do like this’ in Arabic. If Kanuri we speak to him in Kanuri and if Hawsa we speak to him in Hawsa. That’s all.”