English at the center of the periphery: 'Chicken nuggets', chronotopes, and scaling English in Bahraini youth

WAFA AL-ALAWI iD

University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, USA

ABSTRACT

With the spread of English in Bahrain, 'chicken nugget' emerged as a term aimed at English-dominant, typically private-school-educated youth. Drawing on data from Bahraini youth, I show how participants orient to different timespaces as they negotiate their identities relative to the 'chicken nugget' figure of personhood. Applying discourse analytic methods to participants' metacommentaries, I demonstrate how they utilize scaling to elevate this label to a fractally recursive bundle of discursive processes, deeming a wider range of people as chicken nuggets depending on the chronotopic conditions of different timespaces. I further show how speakers evoke different exogenous and endogenous styles of English to allow for complex identification processes: the English of chicken nuggets is excessive and exaggerated, as opposed to English as a necessary communication tool in neoliberal contexts. Thus, this article has implications for our understandings of fractal recursivity, English use in globalized contexts, and the sociolinguistics of identity. (Scales and scaling, chronotope, center-periphery, English/Englishes, authenticity, bilingualism, Bahrain, Arabic)*

INTRODUCTION

The spread of English in a variety of forms, functions, and indexical values has been and continues to be a global phenomenon, especially now in post-modern contexts (Bhatt 2001; Blommaert 2010). The consequences of spread are visible in the post-colonial context of Bahrain, where English has been integrated into the daily lives of its inhabitants. Yet, within the Bahraini educational system, English is unequally distributed in terms of the availability of and access to both single-sex Arabic-medium state schools, and co-education English-medium private schools. While a choice between free and paid education is already an indicator of socioeconomic/class difference, this distinction has also led to a split in the bilingualization and socialization of Bahraini youth.

The somewhat recent term of 'chicken nugget' emerged roughly around 2010 as indicated by a Twitter search. The term is used to define a particular youth identity category: the 'chicken nuggets', which is commonly associated with private English-medium school education. As Al Hasan (2013) puts it, 'chicken

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nuggets' are 'a generation of individuals born since the 80s and 90s who have generally adopted English as their first language and have—until recently that is—lingered at the margins of social and cultural life within their countries'. The term adheres to the somewhat global utility of food as a racial metaphor to describe people who are not white themselves but appear to be closer to 'white culture' (and the English language, in this case) than their own—or at least the metaphor reduces them to that. Thus, the 'chicken nugget' *figure of personhood* (Agha 2005), as I show here, acts as a vehicle for many anxieties surrounding English in the globalized context of Bahrain. It provides a meaningful and useful way of exploring discursive debates over legitimacy, the complex interplay of the role of English as a desired commodity and an inhibitor of authenticity, and the strategic attempts to position one's identity somewhere credible on the spectrum.

While past scholarship on world Englishes has focused primarily on large-scale national distinctions (e.g. Indian English, Nigerian English; cf. inter alia Kachru 1986, 1992; Bhatt 2001), this article investigates the internal scalar-chronotopic manifestations of English use within such contexts. Specifically, I argue that these different micro-discursive distinctions are evoked in speakers' routine practices to make room for new Englishes (Mesthrie & Bhatt 2008) to emerge in the margins. I thus propose that exogenous/endogenous models of English use are utilized in debates about 'chicken nugget' orientations where participants evoke, evaluate, and scale these various endogenous (local orientations) and exogenous (global-standard orientations) 'types' of English in localized discursive debates. As a result, different global and local dynamics are creatively scaled leading to different English representations and distinctions. By shifting between and invoking different styles of English, speakers are thus able to claim local identities and obtain social (and economic) capital as English users, while simultaneously resisting English hegemony and its iconic instantiation in the 'chicken nugget' figure of personhood.

I situate this figure of personhood (chicken nuggets) in a discourse of heightened contrast to investigate how state school youth, that is, those who do not typically adhere to the definition of 'chicken nugget', use it to construct and negotiate their identities relative to those they recognize as chicken nuggets. Specifically, I focus on the metapragmatic reflections of three young Bahrainis who have graduated from single-sex Arabic-medium state schools in Bahrain, and later pursued a bachelor's degree in English at a public university in Bahrain as well. I draw on participants' metacommentaries to present 'chicken nugget' as a figure of personhood that (dis)appears depending on the (real or imagined) people involved in the participation framework at different timespaces (Agha 2005, 2007). In my analysis, I view the multitude of different identity encapsulations across scales as *chronotopic* (Bakhtin 1981; see also Agha 2007; Blommaert 2015, 2017). That is, identities and acts of identification are understood and performed in relation to particular time-space configurations through a process of *scaling* (see Canagarajah & De Costa 2016; Carr & Lempert 2016; Gal 2016; Catedral 2018; Djuraeva & Catedral 2020). I focus on how participants dynamically scale personhoods and the

sociolinguistic behaviors and anxieties associated with them by attaching them to various microscopic and macroscopic chronotopes/timespaces in their discursive acts of identification. I thus illustrate how a wider range of people could be discursively identified as chicken nuggets depending on the chronotopic understandings and relations associated with particular scales.

In what follows, I elaborate on the theoretical and analytical concepts that I draw from. I then provide an overview of the background of the study, focusing on the 'chicken nugget' figure of personhood. Next, I present the methods applied in collecting and analyzing my data along with some background information about the participants. Finally, I provide my analysis of these data and present my major findings and contributions to existing and future research.

BILINGUALISM, CHRONOTOPES, AND SCALES

In bi-multilingual settings, language use is loaded with the realities of said settings. The interlocutors' choices and attitudes are intertwined with their political realities, language ideologies, and views on the world and themselves (Pavlenko & Blackledge 2004; Hall & Nilep 2015). Additionally, globalization has set in motion a mobility of linguistic resources, people, and contexts (Jacquemet 2005; Blommaert 2010; Wortham & Reyes 2015; Lo & Park 2017). This mobility has been said to set off certain anxieties about the status of familiar aspects of social life including language(s) (Park & Wee 2013; Hall 2014). As a result, recent sociolinguistic scholarship has put considerable efforts towards refining our understandings of context in the age of globalization and mobility. Such efforts have utilized the notions of scales and chronotopes to incorporate elements of time and place in sociolinguistic inquiry.

Originating from Bakhtin (1981), chronotopes are defined as times and places intrinsically connected and occupied by certain actors—that is, fused bundles of time-place-and-personhoods (Agha 2007; Lempert & Perrino 2007; Blommaert 2015). They are spatiotemporally organized 'invokable chunks of history' (Blommaert 2015) that guide the production and evaluation of discourse (see also Agha 2007). Chronotopes are mediated by scales as their 'scope of communicability' (Blommaert 2015), meaning that a chronotope is more discursively productive if invoked at the appropriate scale. As such, scales give structure to chronotopes by ordering them in terms of scope/spread and value/distinction along horizontal and vertical axes, enabling us to discuss chronotopes as being larger-, smaller-, higher-, and lower-scale (Blommaert 2015; Karimzad & Catedral 2021; see also Agha 2007; Goebel & Manns 2020; Sanei 2021). Note that while all chronotopes exist on both a vertical and horizontal axis, my discussion of them as lower- and higher-scale and/or smaller- and larger-scale aims to highlight these chronotopic distinctions (in terms of value and distribution) that become relevant in the analysis.

The interaction of these differently scaled chronotopes guides and constrains the construction and evaluation of identities (Blommaert & De Fina 2017; Karimzad & Catedral 2018; cf. Irvine & Gal 2000). For instance, within the scope of this research, private

schools and state schools in Bahrain can be viewed as examples of chronotopic contexts, a place and time that is populated by actors with certain roles, identities, and norms of behavior. Within these larger-scale school chronotopes, the classroom may be viewed as a smaller-scale chronotope where, as Blommaert & De Fina (2017) illustrated, the front and back regions of the classroom may be recursively regarded as even smaller-scale chronotopes with different behavioral scripts.

Scales allow people to rationalize different identity projections by matching elements of social life to various scales in what is known as *scaling*. This process is utilized to construct and/or align with scales by matching semiotic and sociolinguistic information to the scales deemed most appropriate for their communicability, meaning that scales cannot be assumed a priori. Participants may manipulate or conform to scalar conditions to achieve different discursive ends and identity claims in a coherent, scalar manner (Canagarajah & De Costa 2016). For instance, my participants may project or restrict certain discursive and linguistic behavior that may identify them as (non)chicken nuggets depending on their scalar perspectives. However, while scaling is indeed an agentive process, it remains mandated by larger-scale and more enduring power relations (Karimzad & Catedral 2018, 2021). In what follows, I draw on this line of scholarship to discuss the utility of a scalar-chronotopic system in tracing the dynamic shifts in contexts and the particular acts of identification that these shifts trigger.

SITUATING 'CHICKEN NUGGET' IN THE BAHRAINI SOCIOLINGUISTIC CONTEXT

Despite the presence of various languages, English and Arabic are the two dominant languages in Bahrain. Following its independence from the British in 1971 and with the assistance of acquired oil wealth, Bahrain has undergone rapid modernization transforming it demographically and sociolinguistically into what can be described today as a dual linguistic culture (Findlow 2006). With its colonial history and geopolitical position, Bahrain has made considerable efforts towards employing contemporary neoliberal policies to incorporate and privilege English in its market (Abou-El-Kheir & MacLeod 2017; Barnawi 2017). These policies have focused on education as a platform to expand the economy through processes of 'Englishization', targeting higher education as well as implementing English classes at the first year of schooling. Consequently, English is regarded as a valued commodity in the region's economy that is closely tied to better professional and social mobility. The spread of English is further accelerated by the island's small size of approximately $300m^2$ and large expatriate presence comprising about half the population. As a result, Bahraini youth identities have been shaped alongside these processes of modernization and Englishization, making English a major part of their social lives, identities, attitudes, and behavior.

With regards to Arabic, it has maintained its status as the national language in this dual linguistic context. Yet, as its role has been overshadowed and associated

with government bodies and at-home use, there have been some growing anxieties about the role and future of Arabic in the region (Al-Issa & Dahan 2011). What makes the situation more complicated is the *diglossic* nature of Arabic (Ferguson 1959)—that is, the role of Standard Arabic is restricted to certain domains such as education, news reporting, literature, academic writing, and religious practice. In addition, the local dialects used in everyday life are also being eclipsed by the growing presence of English. This situation has evidently brought on dual modes of indexicality, where Arabic indexes national values of faith, tradition, and authenticity, whereas English is tied with modernization, status, professionalism, and secularism (see Findlow 2006).

Private schools following Western curricula are a popular choice for both expats and nationals in Bahrain. Both tuition-free, single-sex, Arabic-medium state schools and co-education, English-medium private schools are widely available to Bahrainis. A choice between the two is an indication of social class as well as cultural values. However, what further complicates this choice is that many Bahraini families of different socioeconomic backgrounds may favor private schools due to the privileged status of English locally and globally (Park & Wee 2013). Inevitably, this has led to markedly different levels of English and/or Arabic competence, socialization, and identity formation in Bahraini youth. That is, on one hand, state school youth (SSY) are exposed to English as a foreign language through a limited number of courses, with Arabic as the medium of instruction for all other subjects. On the other hand, private school youth (PSY) are not only exposed to English as the medium of instruction, but they are also significantly more likely to use it outside of the classroom to communicate with their non-Arabic speaking classmates. Today, many young Bahrainis are not only fluent in English, but some consider it their first language.

As it relates to 'chicken nuggets' (CN hereafter), the integration of English in the realities and identities of young Bahrainis has been associated with a disconnect from *Bahraininess*. This has led to the emergence of the CN label to characterize and poke fun at young Bahrainis whose linguistic and identity repertoires are highly characterized by the use and perceived ideologies of English. Although very little has been published on the origins of the label, a Twitter search suggests that it can be traced back to late 2010, and can be described to have been invented by youth, for youth. The term seems to adhere to other existing racial food metaphors (e.g. see Rudwick 2008) making its definition 'brown on the outside and white on the inside'. More manifest within the label itself is also the notion of Westernization through referencing an American food that is popular with young people. While no clear evidence exists as to whether the term originated as a racial metaphor or simply as a reference to foreignness through foreign food, it appears that actual understandings and applications of CN —as supplemented by my ethnographic work—favor the latter.

Alongside its direct linguistic and characterological implications, the label is also linked with other indexical values: CN indexes private school education, which in turn is associated with a higher social class and less traditional cultural values. Therefore, as also mentioned earlier, the choice between private and state education is not

arbitrary as it is influenced by socioeconomic and cultural differences. Characteristics of contemporary Bahraini society, such as social class, are often described and perceived along the lines of sectarian difference (e.g. see Holes' (1980, 1983, 1986) research on sect-affiliated language variation in Bahrain). The Arab Sunni Muslim community—along with the ruling tribe of Al-Khalifa—has been associated with inhabiting mostly urban neighborhoods and occupying influential and military employments. By contrast, the Arab Shia Muslim community (also known as the *Baharna*) are more concentrated in villages and are less represented in the military, police force, and other decision-making positions (Khuri 1980; Lawson 1989). This is often reflected in the perceptions—and to an extent the realities—shaping the discourse surrounding private versus state school education as well as the CN personhood. Specifically, it is commonly considered that the more urban Sunni and expatriate communities (not including low-paid migrant laborers) are more likely to not only opt for but also afford private school education and pursuing higher education abroad—typically in the UK and North America, as opposed to the more conservative and less affluent rural Shia community.[1] As a result, the indexical weight of English and Arabic often extends to private school versus state school education, and who among SSY and PSY gets viewed as a 'chicken nugget'.

METHODS AND PARTICIPANTS

The data for this research come from my larger ethnographic study in Bahrain beginning in 2018. Data comprise audio-recordings of approximately forty hours of minimally structured interviews and naturally occurring conversations, which were supplemented by my ethnographic notes and observations. In this article, I focus on the metapragmatic commentaries of one group of three young bilingual Bahrainis, aged nineteen to twenty-five, taking place on multiple occasions. Two of my participants are siblings (Reem and Hassan), and all three are SSY, that is, received their education in single-sex Arabic-medium state schools. They later pursued a bachelor's degree in English at a local university where one of them was still a student during data collection. I share a similar background with these participants, having received my education at a state school in Bahrain and having later majored in English at the same university. Moreover, having attended some classes together at the university, I had met and maintained a friendship with Reem and Sarah (all names used are pseudonyms) prior to the data collection process, whereas I first met Hassan when the first interview was conducted.

I focus on the aforementioned group due to particular excerpts that allow for clearer depictions of the discursive patterns, which were nonetheless found across the broader set of data. Applying a discourse analytic approach, the data were then transcribed keeping with the conventions of conversation analysis tradition (see the appendix). I then analyzed the data to examine the discursive role of CN in participants' understandings of their own smaller- and larger- scale positionings and personhoods. It is also relevant that the participants were not initially asked about

'chicken nuggets', yet they employed the term extensively in their metalinguistic commentaries leading to the data described and analyzed in the following sections.

THE SCALAR-CHRONOTOPIC (UN)SETTLING OF 'CHICKEN NUGGET' ORIENTATIONS

In the following sections, I present and elaborate on data showing how participants construct, reconstruct, and negotiate their identities, as they position themselves relative to 'chicken nuggets'. I specifically focus on how, by means of discursive scaling, different styles of English and identity constructions are invoked and chronotopically organized across different scalar-chronotopic conditions.

"*I can even imagine what a chicken nugget looks like!*"

I start with this excerpt to broadly highlight the larger-scale process of discursive differentiation from the CN identity as a whole, that is, 'we' are not like 'them'. Together, the three participants provide a collectively agreed upon chronotopic depiction of CNs and then proceed to differentiate themselves from it. In this process, the English of CNs is presented as having its own (unnecessarily) exaggerated style. This process of differentiation, however, cannot be maintained across different time-space frames as we see in later excerpts.

(1) I: Interviewer; S: Sarah; H: Hassan; R: Reem

1 I: hū yaʕni wiŝ wiŝ wiŝiji fi bālkum lēn tismaʕūn **chicken nugget**?	'So like what what what comes to your mind when you hear **chicken nugget**?'
2 S: madāris xāṣːɑ=	'Private schools='
3 I: =[ḡērɑ	'=[What else'
4 H: [(hahaha)	'[(hahaha)'
5 S: ī yaʕni sīda lēnitḡūlīn **chicken n-** [madāris xāṣːɑ↑	'Yeah like the minute you say **chicken n-** [private schools↑'
6 R: [atxayːal aŝkālhum baʕad ((…)) yaʕni aħis kilːa mū mitħajbāt chi ṭalaʕāt **mix** (.) [əṣbayːān banāt	'[I can even imagine what they look like ((…)) like I feel they all don't wear hijab and hang out in **mix**ed (.) groups [boys and girls'
7 ((joint laughter))	((joint laughter))
8 S: [sīda sīda awːal kilma **oh my go:::d**↑,= ((exaggerated American accent))	'[right away right away the first word is **oh my go:::d**↑,= ((exaggerated American accent))'
9 R: =mmm ((in agreement))	'=mmm ((in agreement))'
10 S: **Can you believe tha::::t**↑,=	'**Can you believe tha::::t**↑,='
11 R: =ī	'=yeah'
12 S: **No gir:::l**↑	'**No gir:::l**↑'

In this example, we get a clear description of the spatiotemporal nature of the CN figure of personhood and the various indexicalities that are associated with it at different levels of semiosis. In lines 2 and 5, private schools are invoked as a chronotope populated by CNs, which distinguishes them from the SSY participants. Therefore, the CN personhood is presented as being tied to the timespace of high school education. While Sarah is the only person that refers to private schools as a distinct feature of CNs, the other two participants align positively with her characterization. Reem immediately follows with a more visual description of CNs' social life, drawing on a dominant indexical image portraying CN circles as having women without hijab hanging out in groups of friends including both men and women (line 6). Her use of the word "even" in "I can even imagine what they look like" (line 6) implies that she agrees with Sarah and is merely adding more details to the image Sarah is painting. Hassan's alignment is shown with laughter (line 4), then the three conclude this collective act of differentiation and disassociation from CNs with shared laughter in line 7. In order to (re)construct such higher-scale chronotopes, the three strategically engage in scaling to connect with what, or rather who, is spatially, temporally, morally, linguistically, and sociopolitically 'near' (i.e. each other) and disassociate from who is spatially, temporally, morally, linguistically, and sociopolitically 'far' (i.e. CNs; Carr & Lempert 2016). In other words, the three construct a collective in-group identity that acts as 'us' as opposed to 'them'.

More specifically, notice that in their construction of this collective identity, 'us' is only defined tangentially in relation to 'them'. The latter is described as the private-schooled CNs who do not adhere to prevalent cultural norms, while 'us' gets tangentially constructed as being the opposite. For example, Sarah identifies private schools as the predominant distinction separating the group from CNs but does not directly comment on CNs' English capabilities. Specifying private schools as being populated by different people and practices allows for the unified act of differentiation that followed. Yet, Sarah's choice of "private schools" (lines 2 and 5) does not mean English competence is irrelevant in this comparison. But, as linguistic competence alone is not sufficient to set them apart from CNs, it gets embedded within the higher-scaled chronotope of 'private schools'. This alludes to English being integrated into the life trajectory of CNs from an early age rather than simply being a linguistic tool or a university major choice. It also alludes to class differences and the broader identity distinctions that exist along the lines of behavioral scripts associated with different social groups. Invoking this chronotope further protects the group from aligning with CNs as it situates the emergence of the CN personhood in the PAST timespace of schools, private schools in particular. Already having graduated from state schools, the participants emerge as both spatially and temporally distant from CNs.

Further, as Reem constructs a chronotope of CN men and women hanging out, Sarah adds more *resolution,* that is, semiotic and ethnographic detail, to this chronotopic image (Karimzad 2021) via mimicking exaggerated English speech. While

this chronotopic image is set in the present, the participants still utilize specific elements of distinction that assist in differentiating themselves from CNs. For example, it is not switching to English alone that is evaluated but a precise style of English that is reminiscent of Valspeak (Donald, Kikusawa, Gaul, & Holton 2004; lines 8–12). As English is part of my participants' repertoires in the present, focusing on a particularly exogenous style of English alludes to a gap in personae and Westernization rather than English use alone. Further, the indexical values associated with this particular English make it appear like an 'unnecessary' style of English rather than a necessary and unavoidable linguistic tool in neoliberal contexts. Overall, by scaling different chronotopic elements higher (e.g. school education) or lower (e.g. a specific style of English speak), the participants emerge as everything CNs are not.

"*I don't know if they were chicken nuggets or not, but they were well-off*"

Here, I provide another example showing how indexical values associated with CN are implied, inferred and scaled in youth discourses. I also show how such indexicalities may be utilized in certain identity projections. Specifically, I show how Sarah expresses her identity more dynamically by manipulating her linguistic behavior employing a particular 'bad' English output.

(2)　I: Interviewer; S: Sarah

1 S: ani mɑrːɑ kint gɑ̄ʕdayːa **group** (.) mādri **chicken nugget** aw lɑ bas kilhum yaʕni chi ʕindhum flūs u kint kilːa bilʕarabi ((joint laughter))	'Once I was hanging out with a **group** of people (.) I don't know if they were **chicken nuggets** or not but they were all well-off and I was sticking to Arabic ((joint laughter))'
2 S: baʕdēn mādri ŝinu ṣɑr↑ inːa kinːa nilʕab liʕbawkānat bilingilēnzi inːa niŝrɑ̌ħ ŝiwkint bilʕamāla gɑ̄ʕda (.) yaʕni (.) gɑ̄ʕda ɑrāwīhum inːa **my English is very bad** yaʕni kint maʕsā gɑ̄ʕda ɑxɑrbuṭ bilʕamāla (.) fanoʕilːi ṭālɑʕoni gitlēħum ī mitxɑrjamniʕdādi	'Then I don't know what happened↑ we were playing a game in English like we had to explain something and I was intentionally (.) like (.) pretending that **my English is very bad** like I was terrible messing up everything intentionally (.) so they kind of stared and I told them yeah I only finished middle school'
3 I: yaʕni wē?=	'what does that mean?='
4 S: =inːa leŝ xɑrāːb↑ kint bilʕamāla gɑ̄ʕda asɑwːi rūħi habla māʕruf atħachːaː (.) inːa	'=like why it's bad↑ I was intentionally pretending to be dumb and not know

aguṭ kilma kilma brūħɑ yaʕni kil kilma fi ṣob (.) u ga3adawiṭālʕūni bnaḍratil:i hāyiŝfīħa yaʕni chi titħach:angilēnzi ((whispered imitation)) agūl:ēhum ī tɑrɑ mātkal:am ingilēnzi ʕadil lan:a mitxɑrjamniʕdādi (.) fatuʕrufīn aħis in:a ṣār ʕindhum **stereotype** in:a oh baħrāniy:a mitxɑrjamniʕdādi fayumkin tirkɑb ((…)) kint bilʕamāla yaʕni fil:iʕba **you know you know this one up from down** ((mimicking 'dumbed down' English)) chidi kint aħtach:a

how to speak (.) like pausing after each word and messing everything (.) and they were looking at me like what's wrong with her why is she speaking English like that ((whispered imitation)) I told them yes I don't speak English very well I only finished middle school (.) so kind of like had this **stereotype** like oh she's *Bahraniya* and only finished middle school maybe the story fits ((…)) I was being intentional in the game **you know this one up from down** ((mimicking 'dumbed down' English)) that's how I talked'

In this excerpt, Sarah narrates her identity practice in an interaction with 'potential' CNs. English and social class are evident as higher-scale indexicalities associated with a (non)CN identity and thus utilized in Sarah's narrative. She invokes these indexicalities (English and social class) to explain her linguistic behavior of pretending to speak 'bad English' (line 2). First, she states that some of her companions may have been CNs because they were well-off, implying that the CN identity is indexical of higher social status. Conversely, in line 4, she explains her behavior by signaling her identity as a *Bahraniya*. Bahraniya (feminine form for a Bahrani person) refers to a member of the Baharna people as discussed above. Thus, Sarah infers the group would also make certain indexical assumptions with regards to her English competence based on her peripheral position as a Bahraniya.

Sarah manipulates these indexical conditions by demonstrating low proficiency in English to shift the scale and indexically match her English with her social positioning. Sarah can then be described to be occupying a doubly peripheral position with regards to the larger-scale imposition of English on the peripheral context in question as well as its smaller-scale association with affluence and access to better education and opportunities. Her anecdote demonstrates her complex understandings of the positionings of English in contemporary globalization as she not only links English to social status but academic success as well. Sarah thus uses a particularly scaled English based on a model of 'good and bad English' where 'bad English' is associated with peripheral identities. Karimzad & Catedral (2021) discuss such acts as attempts to challenge dominant social tropes, where participants seek to *rechronotopize,* that is, transform the prototypical images through which they are imagined, since Sarah later reveals to her companions that she had tricked them (not shown in excerpt).

By agentively employing the higher-scale power dynamics mandating her peripheral position, in order to gain momentary power in a lower-scale interaction, Sarah reproduces the very same power structures that have put her in that position in the first place (cf. Bourdieu 1991). However, I would like to make the argument here that in addition to being lower-scale, these reproductions of power structures are also restricted in terms of scope to the specific time and place of their occurrence (i.e. they are lower- AND smaller-scale). Therefore, discussions of power should avoid discussing small-scale and large-scale power dynamics as existing in a cycle since such smaller-scale manifestations cannot extend largely enough to play a considerable role in reinforcing the larger enduring realities.

"*Reem is turning into a chicken nugget!*"

Whereas difference was constructed in relation to the out group in excerpt (1), that is, 'us' versus 'them', this section includes three excerpts illustrating various smaller-scale in-group distinctions (Bucholtz & Hall 2004). The scalar-chronotopic nature of the CN personhood is further illustrated in these examples, as participants in their scaling practices push themselves and/or each other into the category through fractally recursive patterns (Irvine & Gal 2000). Further, excerpt (3) illustrates the unfeasibility of scaling exogenous/endogenous English distinctions at a home context where different Englishes do not carry different discursive values, de-legitimizing all English and not particular versions of it.

(3)   R: Reem

R: filbēt tʃaw:adna yaʕni ʕalaṭūlelʕarabi (.) sāʕāt abḡi (.) sāʕāt fī kilma ansa ansa ŝinubilʕarabi ambi agūlha bilingilīzi bas aħāwil gad māgdar inːi aðːakːarha bilʕarabi bas ʕaŝān māṭlaʕ anil**chicken nugget** bēnhum	'At home we're used to only using Arabic (.) sometimes I want to (.) sometimes there'd be a word I'm forgetting in Arabic and I want to say it in English but I try as much as I can to remember it in Arabic just so I don't look like the **chicken nugget** among them'

This excerpt shows Reem's response to my general question to participants about their linguistic practices in relation to English and Arabic and where/when they use the two. Reem's interactions with the other participants operate within a particularly scaled *chronotope of normalcy* (Blommaert 2017; Karimzad 2020) that allows for the use of English without necessarily being labeled a CN. By contrast, my participants have all shared with me that they do not use English to communicate with other family members at home, meaning these normalcies are not maintained across scalar conditions.

This excerpt shows how Reem's bilingual resources become immobile in the chronotopic context of 'home'. This chronotopic context can then be described

as a lower-scale 'center' that she orients to by suppressing her bilingual competence and only using Arabic as she reports. English, by contrast, may be viewed as a 'placed resource' (Blommaert 2003) that simply has no place in Reem's household, feeding into the notion that multilingualism is not what is owned, but what is enabled across scalar orders. Reem also cannot invoke English features for different purposes the way she does outside of her home since all English is deemed illegitimate and various Englishes do not come with various meanings. It is evident that while CN is mostly a youth label that is not as easily accessible or invokable for Reem among family at home, its indexical values are not immobile. This is illustrated by Reem recognizing the possibility of being perceived as a CN should she accidentally switch to English at home. CN can then be re-imagined as a vehicle for a multitude of anxieties about English which extend beyond youth settings even if the label itself does not. However, these anxieties and indexicalities associated with them get evaluated differently across scalar-chronotopic conditions, which is why Reem appears to be protected from the CN label in excerpt (1) unlike in this excerpt. More specifically, the chronotopic understanding of authenticity—as exclusively attached to Arabic—is less idealized/essentialized among the participants allowing for the use of English. Yet, this understanding of authenticity is scaled higher within the timespace of home, pushing English to the periphery. As a result, Reem reports having to make an effort to avoid emerging as a CN at home by avoiding English. Excerpts (4) and (5) elaborate on the scalar-chronotopic complexities of this notion of 'emerging as a CN'.

(4)   I: Interviewer; H: Hassan; R: Reem

1 I:	inta wiŝ taʕrīfuk lal **chicken nugget**?	'what's your definition of a **chicken nugget**?'
2 H:	(.) **chicken nugget**.	'(.) a **chicken nugget**.'
3 R & I:	(hahaha)	'(hahaha)'
4 I:	yaʕni wiŝ wiŝ yaʕni hal binːisbalēk Reem ((his sister)) maθalan **chicken nugget**?	'like what like for example is Reem ((his sister)) a **chicken nugget** to you?'
5 H:	((he smiles)) [(hahaha)	'((he smiles)) [(hahaha)'
6 R:	[(hahaha) ʕādi gūl	' [(hahaha) it's okay say it'
7 H:	lɑ aħisha ʕādiyːa yaʕni binːisbaladirāsatha aħisːa ŝi ʕādi	'no I feel like she's fine like considering her major I think it's okay'

This example shows how in-group adequation—compared to excerpt (1)—is not maintained and smaller-scale acts of distinction take over (Bucholtz & Hall 2004), namely between Hassan and his sister Reem. Throughout my larger dataset, Reem code-switches to English more frequently than her peers, while Hassan appears to prefer using mostly Arabic. In his metalinguistic commentary,

he tells me that he does not see the need for English beyond specific chronotopic contexts like ordering at a restaurant or conversing with non-Arabic speakers. When Hassan is asked here to comment on his understanding of what a CN is, he simply says "a chicken nugget" (line 2) implying that the label is self-explanatory. When I ask him if he sees his sister as one, he smiles before engaging in laughter with her implying that he does (lines 5 and 6), despite the fact that they share a similar education and family background. Reem understands his reaction and tells him to "say it" (line 6). This unspoken agreement between the two siblings that one of them can even consider the other a CN shows how the label can be fractally deployed across different scale-levels to encompass more or fewer people. Reem, however, is less concerned with the possibility of emerging as a CN here as opposed to at home, illustrated by her laughter and her telling Hassan that it is okay to "say it". This is not surprising, especially considering Reem appears to constantly be code-switching around her brother, as opposed to suppressing her English at home as discussed in excerpt (3). Therefore, this smaller-scale family chronotope involving Reem and her brother does not generate the same anxieties about emerging as a CN for Reem as the larger-scale family chronotope. As Hassan clarifies "she's fine like considering her major" (line 7), he invokes her life trajectory as it specifically relates to education as a justification for Reem using English, whereas that was not extended to private-schooled youth in excerpt (1). Essentially, utilizing a purposeful English for career ambitions over an intrusive English integrated into one's identity at an early age sets the two CN invocations apart. A similar English distinction is discussed in the following excerpt. Overall, while Hassan does not explicitly define his sister as a CN, the possibility is invoked through his laughter in line 5 and saying that "considering her major I think it's okay" (line 7). Another example of the fractal recursion of CN is discussed in the following excerpt.

(5)   I: Interviewer; S: Sarah; R: Reem

1	I:	iħna baʕad **already** nitkalːam ingilīzi (.) yaʕnilħīn kilna bēnːawbēn baʕaḍ nitkalːam ingilīzi=	'but we **already** use English (.) like right now we're using English with each other='
2	S:	=bas nuʕruf nitkalːam ʕarabi ʕadil↑	'=but we can also speak Arabic well↑'
3	I:	hmm?	'hmm?'
4	S:	bas nuʕruf nitkalːam ʕarabi ʕadil↑	'but we can also speak Arabic well↑'
5	I:	yaʕnintūn mātchūfūn rūħkum **chicken nugget**?	'so you don't consider yourselves **chicken nuggets**?'
6	S:	lā lanːa luḡatilʕarabiyːa baʕad yaʕni (.) yaʕni agdar (.) yaʕni agdar astaḡni ʕanilːuḡa lingilēnziyːa layom kāmil uwadabːur rūħi bilʕarabi brūħa ((…)) yaʕni muxːi agdar atarjima oh ilyom bas	'no because Arabic is also my language like (.) like I can (.) I can give up English for a whole day and get by with just Arabic ((…)) like I can translate my brain oh today I'm only using Arabic or I'm

ʕarabi aw halmakān bas ʕarabi ilːi ħatːa bilḡalaṭ māȳiħtāj agūl **yes or no**

only using Arabic in this place so even by accident I don't need to say **yes or no**'

7 I: okay   'okay'

8 R: ani dākilyom bilḡalaṭ badal mā agūl ħagːumːi ī gilt lēha **yeah**,=

'the other day instead of saying to my mom ī ((Bahraini Arabic for yes)) I said **yeah**,='

9 I: =(hahaha)   '=(hahaha)'

10 R: =ūːː (hahaha) kāniŝːi wājid **awkward** yaʕni,=

'=and (hahaha) it was very **awkward**,='

11 S: =ī fa Reem **she's turning into a chicken nugget** ani lalħīn miṣṭilba

'=yeah so Reem **she's turning into a chicken nugget** I'm still standing my ground'

In this example, Sarah expresses her identity as part of the in-group 'us' as she starts with "we can also speak Arabic well" (lines 2 and 4) invoking an ideology of bilingualism as two monolingualisms. She then descends from the collective 'we' to the personal 'I' (line 6) when describing her linguistic autonomy and her ability to "give up" English if need be. She again employs monolingual ideologies invoking the idealized notion of the mother tongue in saying "Arabic is also my language" (line 6). Finally, she authenticates her bilingual practices over Reem's by use of the impersonal 'she' (line 11). These scale-jumps using deictics (cf. Blommaert 2010, as cited in Goebel & Manns 2020) shift the scale as initially the larger-scale differentiation from CNs is invoked through the use of 'we'. Later, the switch to 'I' shifts the scalar orientation from the HERE and NOW to a chronotopic context involving only Sarah and her linguistic behavior in keeping English and Arabic as distinct resources. When this shift is not taken up by Reem, the in-group 'we' is no longer of use when there is no coherent 'they' to stand against (see excerpt (1)). Thus, Sarah discursively narrows the scope of her spatio-temporal orientation, creating smaller-scale identity differences between 'me' and 'her', where she is not a CN but Reem emerges as one.

More specifically, Sarah chronotopically attaches Arabic to certain times and places in describing when/where she uses Arabic, for example, "today" or "in this place" (line 6). Similar to the English distinctions discussed in excerpts (1) and (4), the English of the in-group here is presented as the more meaningfully and strategically employed English that can be 'switched off' as opposed to the intrusive English of CNs, infiltrating every aspect of their lives. Reem's inability to fully 'switch off' her English even through an accidental single-word switch puts her yet again closer to being recognized as a CN. While excerpt (1) illustrated the out-group English as being 'unnecessary' in terms of style (Valspeak-like imitation), it is further judged here as being excessive in terms of frequency of use as well, that is, CNs speak just like and as often as one might expect from exogenous English varieties jeopardizing their authentic Bahrainiess.
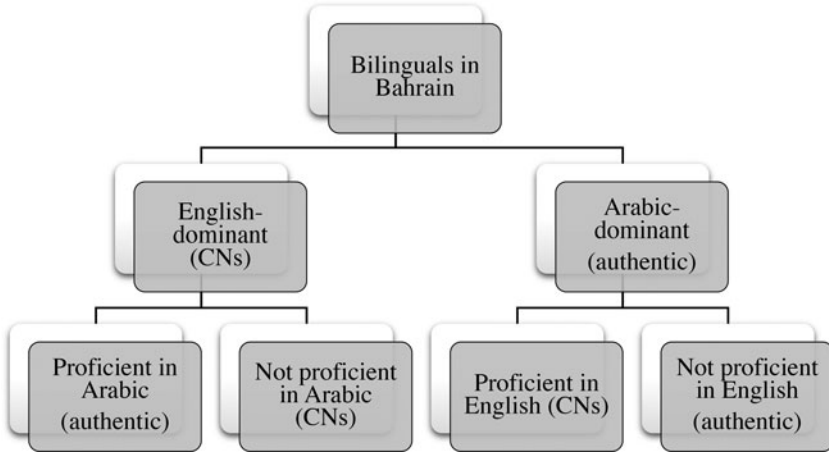
FIGURE 1. The fractal recursivity of 'chicken nugget' (parentheses added to highlight the two iconized images at play).

The last three excerpts provide more insight into the complexities of navigating the affordances of sociolinguistic hybridity in bilingual and translocal contexts (cf. Catedral 2021). However, what is striking is the movement of the CN personhood across scalar orders to highlight in-group differences in a fractally recursive manner (Gal 2016; Irvine & Gal 2000). In excerpt (1), we saw how the three participants collectively stood as a group of non-CNs against the CNs. Yet, emerging as a CN is deemed possible in different chronotopic contexts: between Reem and her family at home (excerpt (3)), then between her and her brother (excerpt (4)), and again in opposition to Sarah in excerpt (5). To sum up, these examples reveal that what is understood as a static identity category that iconizes inauthenticity is discursively defined and redefined based on who is involved in the time-space frame that accommodates the interaction—that is, it is chronotopically organized (see Blommaert & De Fina 2017; Karimzad & Catedral 2018). Various acts of authentication and denaturalization therefore follow in different degrees and across multiple scales (Irvine & Gal 2000; Bucholtz & Hall 2004) as illustrated in Figure 1. Hence, it is not surprising that the most English-dominant participant (Reem) was more prone to emerging as a CN.

"*By the way chicken nugget is a racist term!*"

Since the first conversation and before the next example was recorded as a phone conversation, eight months had passed during which Reem had moved to the United States for a nine-month teaching assistantship at a known university. Excerpt (6) illustrates how Reem's experience in the US exposes her to new indexical orders (Silverstein 2003) under which the CN label may be perceived

differently. Sarah and Hassan (who both had not had any study abroad experience) engage in a discussion with Reem concerning the legitimacy of the CN label within and across scalar conditions: the US (center) and Bahrain (periphery). Refusing to have the higher- and larger- scale center of the US mandate local discursive practices, participants orient to different locally understood 'centers' to legitimize CN uses and understandings.

(6)   I: Interviewer; S: Sarah; H: Hassan; R: Reem

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1 I: ɑxer marːa baʕad hɑɣelmawd̪ūʕ ja ṭarīh fi nuṣːilħachi ilːi hū mawd̪ūʕil **chicken nugget**, lamːa tismaʕūn kilmat **chicken nugget** wiŝiji fi bālkum yaʕni,

'so last time, the term **chicken nugget** came up in your conversation, what comes to mind when you hear the term **chicken nugget**,'

2 R: **by the way it's a (.) it's a racist term** hɑ↑

'**by the way it's a (.) it's a racist term** ha↑'

3 I: lēŝ?

'why?'

4 R: txayːalay sɑwːɑw liyːi sālfa ʕalēh hni ani

'imagine, they gave me shit for it here'

5 I: lēŝ? (.) minhu ilːi sɑwːaliŝ ʕalēh sɑːlfa?

'why? (.) Who gave you shit for it?'

6 R: **(I was supposed) to present** kint ((inaudible)) alħīn fi **coffee hour** māl jāmiʕatna faħaṭːēt **term chicken nugget** ilːa ʕād siʕlatni (.) **my supervisor** kānat itchūf el**presentation** ilːa tgūlːīyːi **what do you mean chicken nugget? why do they call them chicken nuggets?↑** ((mimics strict tone)) gilt lēha inːa yaʕni **(we as) Arabs we're not typical white but because chicken nuggets are brown from the outside white on the inside** fa-**that's why↑ they're called chicken nuggets** ilːatgūlīyːi <u>shīlīh</u> ((mimics strict ordering tone)) gilt lēha lēŝ ilːa tgūlīyːi **because basically you're giving an indication that only white people can speak English, <u>can speak proper English</u>**= ((continues to mimic strict tone))

'**(I was supposed) to present** I was ((inaudible)) in the **coffee hour** here at our university so I included the **term chicken nugget** and she (.) **my supervisor** was seeing the **presentation** and asked me **what do you mean chicken nugget? why do they call them chicken nuggets?↑** ((mimics strict tone)) I told her like **(we as) Arabs we're not typical white but because chicken nuggets are brown from the outside and white on the inside** so **that's why↑ they're called chicken nuggets** and she told me <u>remove it</u> ((mimics strict ordering tone)) I asked her why and she said **because basically you're giving an indication that only white people can speak English, <u>can speak proper English</u>**= ((continues to mimic strict tone))'

7 H: =inzēn mū hāda maʕnātil **chicken nugget** (.) mālēh daxal yaʕni

'=okay but that's not the definition of a **chicken nugget** (.) that has nothing to do with it'

8 R: baʕad hayilːi ṭalaʕ fi **Urban Dictionary**

'well that's what came up in **Urban Dictionary**'

9 H: idantīn rāɣħa ʕala muʕjam mu rāɣħa ʕala muʕtaqadātiŝ baʕad hāyintīn ḡabiyːa

'well if you relied on a dictionary not your own beliefs then you're dumb'

---

10 R: ŝinuyaʕnī [**what do you** 'what does that mean [**what do you**'

11 S:　　　　[ithāwaŝaw ithāwaŝaw　　　　　　　'[fight, fight, fight
　　　ithāwaŝaw ((humorously))　　　　　　　　　　((humorously))'

12 R: chɑb↓ ((humorously))　　　　'shut up↓ ((humorously))'

13 H: (hahaha) **chicken nugget** igūlūnha ħɑɡːil　'(hahaha) **chicken nugget** is used for
　　awādim māl madāris xāṣa [xāṣalːi kilːa　private school kids [especially those who
　　bilmɑrːa māyitħachːon ʕarabi　　never speak Arabic'

14 R:　　　　　　　　　　[ī lēŝ lēŝ=　　　　　'[yes <u>why? Why?</u>='

15 H: =laʔanːa ṣār chidi=　　　'=well it just happened like that='

16 S: =laʔanːa māyuʕrufūn yitħachːon ʕarabi=　'=because they don't know how to speak Arabic='

17 H: =dalāyʕa lā ħatːa lo yuʕrufūn ʕarabi **why**　'=they're brats, even if they know Arabic
　　no I can't drink this, I can't drink that　they would say **why no I can't drink**
　　((mocking tone)) [hɑːyilːiysamːuːna　**this, I can't drink that** ((mocking tone))
　　chicken nugget　　[that's a **chicken nugget**'

18 R:　　　　　　　　[ī bas lēŝ yaʕni **chicken**　'[Yeah but like why **chicken nugget**
　　nugget madāris xāṣa iŝmaʕnaynādūnhum　private school kids are called **chicken**
　　chicken nugget　　**nugget**'

19 S: ṭalaʕat hī brūħha　'It just happened like that'

20 R: hāyi**d:efinition** alħīn lo ani gilta　'this **definition** if I'd used it in the
　　fili**presentation and people went and**　**presentation and people went and**
　　googled it bichūfūn inːa yaʕni　**googled it** they would see this **definition**
　　hādad**:efinition** ((referring to brown on　((referring to brown on the outside/white
　　the outside/white on the inside)) inːās　on the inside)) people now use the
　　alħīn timŝi ʕala ŝinu ʕindhum il**internet**　**internet** for everything'
　　yaʕni
　　((…))　　((…))

21 R: **because it's the US** fa **it's dealing with**　'**because it's the US** so **it's dealing with**
　　racism all the time　**racism all the time**'

22 H: inzēn tigdarīnitgūlīn idɑtiʕʕīn　'okay you can in your **presentation** give
　　presentation ilmaʕna fil **beliefs**　them the definition according to our
　　mālnaħna wilmaʕnalːi biyiṭlaʕ fi **google**　**beliefs** and the definition they would see
　　idā sɑwːaw **search**　if they googled it ((some switches in the
　　　　original script were not necessary for the
　　　　translation))'

23 R: txayːal yaʕni agūlːēhum isamːūnhum　'imagine me telling them that they're
　　chicken nuggets because they go to　called **chicken nuggets because they go**
　　private schools (.) doesn't make sense　**to private schools (.) doesn't make**
　　　　sense'

24 S: ī bas hāy filbaħrēn chidinfakːur hāy　'okay but here in Bahrain that's what it
　　maʕnāhɑ　means'

25 R: mādri (.) ani ṣarāħaqtanaʕt (.) inːa ṣij **why**　'I don't know (.) honestly I was
　　chicken nuggets specifically　convinced (.) as in **why chicken nuggets**
　　　　specifically'

This excerpt presents an exemplary case of the immobility of certain resources across scalar orders. Reem's experience of being in the US leads to the construction of new understandings and uniquely linking them to the notion of what constitutes a CN. Thus, she interrupts my question about CNs to tell me that it is a racist term (line 2). The interruption, along with the insertion of "by the way" suggests that she was presenting the statement as indisputable. When asked to clarify, Reem recounts being warned by her supervisor about the racist connotations of equating 'proper' English with whiteness (line 6). These new understandings within the timespace of the United States lead Reem to rechronotopize—that is, update her spatiotemporally organized understanding of CN (Karimzad 2020; Karimzad & Catedral 2021).

Reem's peers refute this evaluation presenting various characteristics of CNs (e.g. private schools, not speaking Arabic and/or not speaking it well, specific English speech styles). This sets in motion a process of cross-chronotope (dis)alignment (Agha 2007; Perrino 2007; Koven 2019) as participants juxtapose various chronotopes operating at different scales of situatedness (locality). For example, participants employ spatiotemporal deixis to reference larger-scale timespaces (Bahrain and the US) and the smaller-scale timespace of private schools. In this process, the three seem to scale and orient to different centers further complexifying center-periphery dynamics as they may be contested, reordered, and even inversed. As the CN label shifts, it summons ideologies and histories of racial linguistic discrimination in the US, whereas in Bahrain it indexes private school education (line 13), bratty and/or fussy personae (line 17), and the inability to speak the so-called mother tongue (lines 13 and 16)—in addition to indexicalities discussed in previous analyses (e.g. class). A clear example of these indexical collisions is illustrated in Reem's unsuccessful attempts to (i) introduce the term to her supervisor in the US, and (ii) reintroduce it as racist to her Bahraini peers.

By contrast, Hassan and Sarah maintain that CN must be situated in and mediated through the local scale as its 'scope of communicability' (Blommaert 2015). As such, the 'immediacy' and 'relevance' of the Bahraini context are discursively invoked idealizations to compensate for the smallness in scope of local/peripheral indexicalities. Their scaling practices show that Hassan and Sarah rely more on this notion of the immediate context (of Bahrain) and the "beliefs" associated with it (lines 9 and 22), while Reem orients more towards invoking higher-scale ideologies of race and racism in the US. As discussed earlier, there is no evidence as to whether CN had originated as a racial metaphor or as an employment of the food as an index of English, youth, and Westernization, and my ethnographic data shows the term is mostly discussed in terms of the latter. Particularly, Hassan's depiction of CNs "I can't drink this, I can't drink that" (line 17) is more linguistic (speaking English) and characterological (fussiness) than racialized. This again acts as another example of showing how the English used by CNs is judged as unnecessary since they use it "even if they know Arabic" (line 17).

Moreover, Hassan emphasizes the importance of not only relying on the online definition of CN, but also local understandings and applications of it (line 22). In

other words, he negotiates an in-between scale (cf. Çağlar & Glick Schiller 2011; Canagarajah & De Costa 2016) that can accommodate multiple chronotopic elements and orient 'chicken nugget' towards different centers—that is, making it *polycentric* (Blommaert, Collins, & Slembrouck 2005). However, Reem resists the invocation of 'private schools' on the basis that it "doesn't make sense" (line 23), doubting the practicality of its scope and value in challenging the higher-scaled indexical order associated with the powerful chronotope of the US. Overall, this example further highlights how the vertical and horizontal ordering of chronotopes is not static and is constantly altered through scaling. Specifically, certain higher- and larger- scale understandings can be minimized or rejected when projected onto a smaller- and lower-scale (periphery) context. However, as discussed earlier, the dominance of certain hierarchical orders, including racist/xenophobic 'standard' English ideologies, and the marginalization of peripheral contexts, is still at work regardless of the fact that these understandings might be scaled differently momentarily.

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

In this article, I have utilized a chronotopic and scalar approach to the analysis of identification practices among Bahraini youth. Focusing on participants' positionings relative to CNs, I have demonstrated the different chronotopically organized semiotic elements associated with this identity category and how these semiotic elements are scaled differently depending on participants' immediate spatiotemporal orientations. This, as shown, dynamically (dis)qualifies different people as CNs at different interactional moments and in relation to different people.

My analysis has further demonstrated that while speaking English is the most salient defining factor for CNs, it is not any English but rather particular versions of it that are invoked in the discursive construction and evaluation of CNs. These scalings work within understandings of the position of language(s) in a complex indexical order and its links to various aspects of social life such as family, education, and social class. Specifically, identification acts with regards to English in marginalized and globalized contexts do not necessarily draw on higher-scale, idealized understandings of English that function as an ideological center in the globalized world. Instead, they may evoke and juxtapose particular lower-scale manifestations of English, highlighting different Englishes or English features as endogenous or exogenous. That is, instead of focusing on the INEQUALITIES that legitimate more privileged English-speaking groups (Tupas 2015), speakers invoke the QUALITIES that legitimate their own English practices. For instance, English when attached to CNs is evaluated as orienting to a more exogenous imaginary, that is, exaggerated in both style and frequency of use, as opposed to a necessary tool of communication in neoliberal contexts. Participants may also evoke a more endogenously oriented English output that can be 'switched off' to differentiate themselves from CNs. As such, it is through scaling English that speakers (e.g. Reem) may move closer or further from being identified as CNs.

A scalar-chronotopic approach also has implications for the discussion of center-periphery relations in the sociolinguistic studies of globalization. My analysis has shown that the center-periphery is an ever-changing project in which peripheral subjects evoke, scale, orient to, and maneuver different elements of center-periphery dynamics. For example, while a large-scale center, English—e.g., scaled as 'bad English'—may be deployed in accounting for one periphery (lower class) within another (Bahrain). Therefore, I argue for the importance of investigating the fractalities of what we regard as the periphery in our sociolinguistic inquiry. Comparably, while Arabic is conceived of as the language of the periphery (compared with English) at a larger scale-level, it is also the language of the smaller-scale center of home where scaling English is not viable because all English is foreign to this particular context. To contest and/or align with these center-periphery recursions, the center-periphery framework in and of itself becomes a scaling project—of centering and peripherizing so to speak. In this process, participants may foreground or minimize different contrasting center-periphery idealizations such as multilingualism/hybridity versus monolingualism/authenticity to meet various discursive ends. To this end, I align with similar works that have attempted to complexify our understandings of the center-periphery trope in the age of globalization (cf. Woolard 2018; Hall 2019; Wang & Kroon 2019).

Such an approach is also useful in nuancing discussions about fractal recursivity and hybridity. CN in and of itself is a fluctuating personhood that may be a vehicle for different degrees of anxieties about English and its implications in peripheral contexts. As the level of, need for, and frequency of English use is not a predictable phenomenon, the label may end up attached to various types of people with different linguistic capacities and behaviors in both macroscopic and microscopic time-space configurations. As such, I argue that while fractal recursivity has been mostly discussed in terms of scale, it can also be traced in key chronotopic unfoldings of interaction, and may therefore be effectively investigated through scalar-chronotopic applications.

Finally, I hope this study contributes to understanding the various applications of the CN figure of personhood that has proven to be highly utilized and useful to the discursive practices of youth in the sociolinguistically undertheorized context of Bahrain.

APPENDIX: TRANSCRIPTION CONVENTIONS

regular font	Bahrani Arabic
bold	English
<u>underline</u>	emphatic stress
((…))	intervening material has been omitted
(.)	brief pause
(hahaha)	laughter
(( ))	transcriber comment
[	speaker overlap

=	contiguous utterances
,	utterance signaling more to come
.	utterance final intonation
?	utterance signaling a question
↑	rising intonation
↓	falling intonation

NOTES

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[1]Urban/rural, city/village, and conservative/modern in modernized Bahrain are not clear-cut distinctions nor do they fit into standardized understandings of such distinctions. They are traditionally and historically held notions of 'little communities' that maintain their differences despite either being in close proximity and/or being easily accessible to one another by use of modern transportation (e.g. see Khuri 1980).

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Address for correspondence:
Wafa Al-Alawi
University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign
Department of Linguistics, MC-168
707 South Mathews Avenue
4080 Foreign Languages Building
Urbana, IL 61801, USA
wsa2@illinois.edu