Growing up we have so many factors that help us develop into the people we are. In development, communication is necessary and the influential factors are family and peers. However our families influence undeniably outweighs that of peers.

Most of what we learn comes to us at a young age. Since we are still developing rapidly across a range of domains all these new things around us go straight to our frontal lobe. We absorb all that is around us like a sponge. When we are young we spend most of our time with our family from when we are born up until we are between the ages 18-22+. Growing up my parents would speak arabic to me and my siblings would speak english to me. My family's language would grow on me and although my dad spoke to me in english as well and he had a heavy accent, i did not develop his accent, thankfully, and i'd say that is because my siblings spoke very well english and their influence had a much greater impact than my fathers.

Life around us is always changing but our family stays stagnant. Our parents and siblings will always be the same. We do indeed get influenced by our peers, however the lack of our friends always being the same for years results in a weak connection and impact on us.

Over the past decade I've developed many dialects both in Arabic and English. These dialects are a result of the cultural differences and linguistic differences we have here in our city. I myself speak a few dialects of Arabic, I can’t say I speak all very well but my understanding is enough for me. The arabic i grew up with is Yemeni Arabic, however even within the different cities in Yemen the language might change a bit, more specifically just a few words that are different. I have many friends who are from the north side of Yemen and they have a different ending to action verbs. My parents notice when I speak like them.

Other than the different dialects within Yemen, the Arabic language also changes throughout the different middle-eastern countries all the way to Egypt and even Morocco. The differences between the many different dialects are only very slight, if you could speak Arabic well and understand it well you would probably be able to understand the many different versions of Arabic. The only difficult dialect would be Moroccan since it is both Arabic and French, well to me at least.

            Sometimes when speaking Arabic with other Yemenis I notice a difference in our dialects and in our speech. I sometimes ask my mom why a specific object is called so in our dialect but it is called something else in our language. Sometimes it's clear why a word is labeled so. For example, the word for specific type of bread we make often in my dialect is *mataf,* meaning it consists of many folds. To make this bread it requires multiple folds. I’ve noticed that for some names, even though they may be written one way and understood in formal arabic in one way in conversational speech we always say it differently. For example, the name “abu bakr” we always call them, phonetically “bubak.” Or in the name “luza” (deriving from the almond) we always instead say “laza” even though we say the almond by the proper name. There are other names I’ve noticed we all unanimously shorten - *abdelfatah* becomes *fatah* and abdelaziz becoming *aziz.*

I remember being very young in Arabic school, maybe 11-12 years old. My teacher who was from Jordan was speaking to me in Arabic, and i had no clue what she was saying, the only words i understood were “kayf alhal” which translates to “how are you”, and “asalamu alaykum which is “peace and blessings upon you”. Everything else she said went in one ear and out the other. Those two phrases she said are universal in a way througout the whole Arab world, as well as the muslim world. Any muslim weteher African, Chinese, or even Italian would understand those two phrases because although they are arabic they are more associated with the Islamic religion. Its beautiful because I have so many customers who come in, some even for the first time, muslim, non muslim, who come in and say “asalamu alaykum” as if its just “hey wassup”.