

Dr Yousef Barahmeh

Assistant Professor of Linguistics | Specialising in Language Politics, Media and Communication, Discourse Analysis, and Cultural Narratives in the Middle East and North Africa

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RESEARCH PROFILE

Linguist specialising in the history and languages of the Middle East and North Africa, with a focus on language politics, media and communication, discourse analysis, and identity formation in postcolonial contexts. My research examines how linguistic practices intersect with nationalism, political humour, and media discourse, particularly in Jordan and the broader MENA region. I work across Arabic and Tamazight-speaking communities, with regional focus on Jordan and Algeria. Methodologically, I draw on critical discourse analysis, linguistic ethnography, and sociolinguistic approaches, integrating oral narratives and archival materials to explore how language mediates state formation, cultural production, and modes of belonging.

EDUCATION

- **University of Portsmouth, UK**
PhD in Linguistics, 2020
Specialisation: Language of humour in Jordan
Thesis: *Carnavalesque Politics and Popular Resistance: A Bakhtinian Reading of Contemporary Jordanian Political Humour*
Supervisors: Dr Maggie Bowers, Prof Graham Spencer, Dr Natalya Vince
- **University of Central Lancashire, UK**
MA in English Language and Literature, 2012
Dissertation: *The Poetry of Mahmoud Darwish: A Study of the Three Developmental Phases of His Poetic Career* (Published by LAP, 2012)
- **Yarmouk University, Jordan**
BA in English Language and Literature, 2006

PEER-REVIEWED PUBLICATIONS

- Barahmeh, Y., & Fras, J. (2025). Choosing Jordanianness: The Dialogic Construction of Jordanian Identity Discourse on Nationhood and Belonging, Special issue on “Nationhood in the Middle East: Jordan as a Case Study,” *Revue des mondes musulmans et de la Méditerranée*, 157 (1/2025), 199-216.
<https://doi.org/10.4000/149vc>
- Barahmeh, Y. (2024). The Collective and Individual Expressions of Humour in Social Media Spaces: Insights from the Socio-Political Context of Jordan after the 2011 Arab Spring. *The European Journal of Humour Research*, 12(2), 1–17.
<https://doi.org/10.7592/EJHR.2024.12.2.879>
- Barahmeh, Y. (2023). Identity Politics and Ethnic Humour in Contemporary Jordan. *The European Journal of Humour Research*, 11(3), 72–87.
<https://doi.org/10.7592/EJHR.2023.11.3.786>
- Barahmeh, Y. (2023). Are Jordanians (Still) ‘Humourless’? *The European Journal of Humour Research*, 11(1), 201–211.
<https://doi.org/10.7592/EJHR.2023.11.1.751>
- Barahmeh, Y., & Fras, J. (2023). ‘Every One of You Is Now a Soldier’: War Metaphors in Jordanian Official Discourse During the COVID-19 Pandemic. *Contemporary Levant*, 8(1), 87–99.
<https://doi.org/10.1080/20581831.2022.2140938>
- Barahmeh, Y. (2023). Laughing at Revolutionary Times: The Socio-Linguistic and Pragmatic Functions of Jordanian Political Humour After the Arab Spring. *Contemporary Levant*, 8(1), 100–114.
<https://doi.org/10.1080/20581831.2022.2105053>

RESEARCH PROJECTS

Linguistic and Discourse-Focused Research

- **Language, Humour, and Far-Right Discourse in Post-Arab Spring Jordan**

Analyses on the discursive construction of far-right ideologies in Jordanian political humour after 2011, focusing on linguistic strategies that reflect and reproduce authoritarian and nationalist tropes.

- **Hybridity and Language Ideologies in Postcolonial Algeria** (w/ Dr Imene Medfouni, Middle East University, Jordan)

Explores language ideologies and educational language policy among the Chaoui Imazighen, tracing how linguistic hybridity can shape identity and cultural memory in post-independence Algeria.

- **Mediated Language and Neutrality Discourses in Jordanian Media** (w/ Dr Jona Fras, University of Edinburgh, UK)

Examines discursive shifts in Jordanian media coverage of regional and international wars (Palestine, Iraq, Syria, Ukraine, etc.), analysing how language can be used to negotiate neutrality, nationalism, and state positioning.

Planned and Ongoing Linguistic/Discourse Projects

- **Language, Youth and Social Transitions in 1950s–70s Jordan**

Uses oral history and discourse analysis to investigate how youth in post-independence navigated education, mobility, and modernity, focusing on the linguistic practices and identity formation.

- **Discourse and Crisis Management in Contemporary Jordan**

Analyses how language and state discourse frame regional instability, refugee flows, energy and water scarcity in Jordan, focusing on the role of rhetorical strategies and political language.

- **Jordanian Media Discourse on the Syrian Regime Transition**

Investigates how Jordanian media discourse constructs narratives of the Syrian crisis and Assad's fall, focusing on metaphors, framing and ideological positioning in public language.

SELECTED MEDIA AND FEATURES

- “Researcher Spotlight” – Australasian Humour Studies Network, March 2025
- Research Featured in the British Society for Middle Eastern Studies (BRISMES), 2023, 2024
- Book Feature: The Poetry of Mahmoud Darwish, *Ad-Dustur* (Jordan, 2012)

RESEARCH & TRANSLATION COLLABORATIONS

- Philosophizing Between Worlds: Abdelkader Beyond the Western Canon, Brown University, United States (December 2024 – Present).
- Social Networks and Schooling Outcomes Among Refugees and Host Students, Columbia University, United States (February – June 2022).
- Beyond Metaphor: Women and War, Exhibition Essay, Apexart, New York, United States (April 2021).
- Making Feminist History Visible: Women's Archives and Records, FiLiA Podcast Series, United Kingdom (July 2021).
- Generation Independence: A People's History, University of Portsmouth, United Kingdom (July 2019 – January 2020).

TEACHING EXPERIENCE

- Isra University, Amman, Jordan
Assistant Professor of Linguistics, 2020–Present
Courses: Linguistics, English Literature, Translation, Contrastive Grammar, Critical Discourse Analysis
Roles: Thesis examiner, curriculum designer, quality assurance committee member
- Technical and Vocational Training Corporation (TVTC), Saudi Arabia
Senior English Language Instructor, 2013–2016
Courses: ESP, Technical English, Communication Skills
- Ministry of Education, Jordan
English Language Teacher, 2008–2011
Taught English at primary and secondary levels

Professional Experience

- Northwest Armed Forces Hospital, Saudi Arabia
Nursing Interpreter, 2007 – 2008
Provided interpretation services between patients and medical staff, ensuring effective communication in medical settings.

CONFERENCES & WORKSHOPS (Selected)

- Beyond Binaries: Negotiating the Shifting Politics of Imazighen and Tamazight in Post-Postcolonial Algeria, Postcolonial Temporalities: Space, Time and Identity in the Maghreb, University of Edinburgh, UK, 19–21 June 2025.
- From Language Shifting to Hybridity: Views about Tamazight in the Scientific Higher Education of Postcolonial Algeria, Global Linguistics and Local Identities: Exploring Cultural Hybridity Conference, Gulf University for Science and Technology, Kuwait, 15–16 April 2025.
- No Sharp Turns: Neutrality in Jordanian Media Discourse on the 2022 Russia-Ukraine War, British Society for Middle Eastern Studies, Lancaster University, United Kingdom, 1–3 July 2024.
- 'Every One of You Is Now a Soldier': War Metaphors in Jordanian Official Discourse During the COVID-19 Pandemic, British Society for Middle Eastern Studies, University of St Andrews, United Kingdom, 4–6 July 2022.
- Political Humour, Neoliberal Reforms, and Popular Resistance in Jordan After the Arab Spring, Workshop on the Politics of Everyday Contestation in the Arab World, American University of Beirut, Lebanon, 17–18 June 2022.
- Carnavalesque Politics in Jordanian Political Humour After the Arab Spring, On Laughter, Institute of Advanced Studies, University College London, United Kingdom, 10–12 July 2019.

- Carnavalesque Political Humour in Jordan After the Arab Spring, Workshop Politics and Popular Culture in the Middle East: Power and Resistance Post–2011, University of Warwick, Coventry, United Kingdom, 7–8 May 2019.
- The Use of Humour in Jordanian Society After the Arab Spring, International Society for Humour Studies, Tallinn University, Tallinn, Estonia, 25–29 June 2018.
- The Politics of Humour and Satire in Post-Arab Spring Jordan, British Society for Middle Eastern Studies, King's College, London, United Kingdom, 25–28 June 2018.
- Jordanian Humour and the Arab Spring, Arab Centre for Research and Policy Studies, Doha, Qatar, 24–26 March 2018.
- Carnavalesque Satire in Contemporary Jordanian Satirical Literature, 16th International Bakhtin Conference, Fudan University, Shanghai, China, 6–10 September 2017.

ACADEMIC SERVICE

- Peer Reviewer for:
 - Cambridge Review of International Affairs (2024)
 - Politics, Religion & Ideology (2024)
 - Contemporary Levant (2023)
 - European Journal of Humour Research (2023–25)

PROFESSIONAL MEMBERSHIPS

- British Society for Middle Eastern Studies (BRISMES)
- International Society for Humour Studies (ISHS)
- Réseau Interdisciplinaire de Recherches sur l'Humour (France)
- Rethinking Francophone Africa Network, University of Portsmouth

LANGUAGES

- Arabic: Native (Fluent – reading, writing, peer review)
- English: Fluent (Academic – reading, writing, peer review)

REFERENCES

- Dr Natalya Vince – Associate Professor of Modern History, University of Oxford | natalya.vince@univ.ox.ac.uk
- Dr Maggie Bowers – Senior Lecturer in English Literature, University of Portsmouth | margaret.bowers@port.ac.uk
- Dr Khalid Alnajjar, Associate Professor of TESOL and Teacher Education, Head of English Language and Literature Department, Isra University, Jordan | khaled.alnajjar@iu.edu.jo