

**Identities Constructed in Mubarak's Speeches**

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**Abstract**

*Mubarak and/or his speechwriters pay more attention to the image they want to portray of the president to be viewed by the public. A number of identities are established, although some of them receive more emphasis than others. Among these identities are the democratic; the humane; the wise politician; and the nation unifying president. Sometimes, it is in the interest of a politician to present himself as multi-faceted person so as to appeal to a diverse audience. However, this paper argues that the goal is not to draw a number of identities, but a complex identity. The overall image of the president is that of an omniscient president who knows all the facts and realizes all the needs of the masses as well as all their interests. The paper relies mainly on Ruth Wodak's discourse-historical approach.*

**Key Words:**

Mubarak – identity – Political discourse – self-reference

# Identities Constructed in Mubarak's Speeches

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## 1. Introduction

This paper shows how President Mubarak attempts to establish his identity or aspects of identity. First, the researcher deals with Mubarak's personal character in order to show features of his personality as a member of the Armed Forces and links that to his political history before 1975. The analysis deals with deictic expressions, especially self-reference in the speeches. Mubarak uses 'I and we' to refer to himself. However, he also uses 'we' in different situations to serve different purposes.

The main objective of the study is to show how Mubarak attempts to depict his identity in the eyes of his audience. How President Mubarak's speeches perform specific social functions and what these functions are, establish the main questions to be explored in the current linguistic analysis.

## 2. Data and Methodology

Due to the large number of speeches delivered by President Mubarak, the collected data are downsized to include only those he delivered before the joint session of the Egyptian parliament. The downsize process of collected data is governed by specific criteria such as frequency, intertextual influence and redundancy. As we mentioned before, there was an annual meeting to which the president called members of the People's Assembly and those of Shura Council as well, to inaugurate the annual session of the assembly.

The paper adopts Ruth Wodak's Discourse - Historical Approach. The main linguistic tool I use to examine identity construction in Mubarak's speeches is deixis, especially the pronominal use of self-reference. Intertextuality among speeches is another tool that helps show the historical dimension which affirms that all human texts are not completely original but each forms a connection in a string. In constructing his/her identity, a politician may use instances from previously made texts by himself or others.

The methodology of the current paper attempts to analyse Mubarak's speeches by focusing on three aspects: first to identify the main topics of the texts, i.e. the topics tackled by the president such as

economic reform, democracy, internal affairs and Egyptian relations with other countries. Then we focus on nomination strategies, i.e. we show how Mubarak refers to himself using mainly personal pronouns, yet in some instances he uses other words such as ‘Egypt’ or ‘the president’. We, also, show the features he attributes to himself to strengthen a certain claim he makes or an identity he establishes. Finally we focus on discourse representation. When the president introduces himself as democracy advocator or as defender of the poor, he gives justifications or reasons for such a description. For instance, the analysis will introduce the general setting to the readers to be aware of the who, where, when and why. Then, it will focus on the process of nomination or reference, by which we will come to know the president’s ways of reference either to himself, using pronouns, e.g. ‘I , we’ or other words, e.g. Egypt, or to others be it the audience or absent persons, e.g. ‘you, they’. It will move afterwards to shed light on the way Mubarak presents himself, i.e. the attributes he gives to himself.

### **3. Mubarak’s Identity**

Mubarak was a commander in the Air Forces, who spent most of his life in military service and even after becoming the president he has remained in the same neighborhood where he used to live during military service; i.e. Heliopolis (cf. Springborg, 1989, p. 27). However, as a military mentality, Mubarak is a genius. According to Cox (2003, p. 13), Mubarak’s military mentality has been one of the reasons behind the air surprise attack in the October 1973 war, without which “Egypt could never have crossed the Suez Canal”. Cox goes further to claim that without that successful air strike led by Mubarak, “26,000 Egyptians would have died” (ibid., p. 70). Yet, his way of living, i.e. staying in the same place with the same friends, has some bad effects on his character because he does not have a charismatic character, as that of Nasser, nor does he feel comfortable and fluent in front of cameras, as Sadat did (Springborg, 1989, p. 24).

As for his political activity, Mubarak has not indulged in politics before or after the 1952 revolution. However, he has been in contact with many politicians then. For instance, while working as an instructor at the Air Force Academy, Mubarak “trained Hafiz el-Assad, the future president of Syria” as well as Sadat’s brother, Atef who was “a member of the Revolutionary Command Council” (Cox, 2003, pp. 52-53).

Mubarak indulged directly in politics for the first time in 1975, when Sadat appointed him vice-president. His military background made him strict, punctual and always ready for hard work and discipline (Cox, 2003, p. 76). In 1981 and after the assassination of Sadat, Mubarak became the president. At that time, Egypt was totally in debt. Egypt’s

debts at the beginning of Mubarak's presidency were around \$25 billions "which was ten times greater than at the beginning of Sadat's presidency" (ibid., pp. 89-90). The majority of the people were leading a tough life and in dire need for the basic necessities.

The internal arena in Egypt was a stage for disorder following the assassination of Sadat and the growth of Islamic fundamentalism. However, in his treatment of internal affairs, Mubarak had a different approach from Sadat. During his first years, Mubarak "did not plan lavish military extravaganzas" such as parades (Cox, 2003, p. 98). Also, he differed from Sadat in adopting a "conciliatory tone. He released political prisoners...and reinvigorated...political liberalization" (Springborg, 1989, p. 23). Ironically, prisons were later on filled with prisoners and detainees, especially during the 1990s when Egypt witnessed a vehement wave of terrorist attacks. The 1990s also witnessed the same old problems of overpopulation, debts and poverty (cf. Al Awadi, 2004).

Over the long years, Mubarak's character has not changed. The president is a man who "is...tough...and...intensely private" (Cox, 1989, p. 116). Mubarak's concern for privacy is "manifested in part by his reticence to discuss aspects of his youth and upbringing" (Springborg, 1989, p. 26). Springborg, furthermore, believes that Mubarak's place of living is a private thing and "Egyptians have no idea of what the presidential home looks like" (ibid., p. 26).

Following is a closer look at Mubarak's speeches to find out how his identity is constructed using self-referencing.

#### **4. Self-reference in Mubarak's Speeches: Analysis**

In all of the selected speeches, Mubarak refers to himself using both the first person singular pronoun 'I' and its various derivatives, as well as the first person plural pronoun 'we', in many instances. However, 'we' may cause some confusion with regard to whom it refers. Sometimes, it denotes an inclusive 'we', which includes both the President and an undefined audience who can be MPs, the government, or the people of Egypt. In some other instances, 'we' may sound exclusive, i.e. referring to Mubarak alone, which is similar to a royal 'we'. According to Wodak (1999, p. 45), there is a difference between speaker inclusive and speaker exclusive 'we' and between addressee inclusive and addressee exclusive 'we'. Both types can be found in Mubarak's speeches (c.f. Dunne, 2003, p. 74). The royal 'we' is of the type addressee exclusive as it excludes anyone else but the President. The pronoun 'we' may be used in a paternalistic way. This use of 'we' is speaker exclusive and refers only to the addressee. For instance, in a

parent-child discourse, we hear ‘now we’ll go to bed’ (cf. Wodak, 1999, p. 46).

On a grammatical basis, the pronoun ‘we’ includes both the speaker and the addressees. However, when used in politics, it may still have the same grammatical function or other rhetorical effects, such as referring solely to the speaker. It may be used on a politician’s part to tell his people that any action is not the responsibility of the politician alone. Therefore, the shift from ‘I’ to ‘we’ is quite important in political discourse. In fact, in their use of pronouns, politicians need to be sensitive “in developing and indicating their ideological position on specific issues” (Wilson, 1990, p. 46).

As mentioned before, Mubarak uses both ‘I’ and ‘we’ to refer to himself. However, he uses ‘we’ in some instances in its inclusive form, i.e. to include others with him. This second use of ‘we’ is there to distance the President from a certain responsibility or a specific political action, and to mitigate his personal involvement so as to make it a public responsibility.

In his speech on 26 April 1982, for instance, the president makes several instances of self-referencing using the first person pronoun ‘أنا’ ‘I’ and its variants. Mubarak delivers that speech on the day of celebrating the withdrawal of Israeli troops from Sinai and raising the Egyptian flag. The idea of liberation and protection of Egypt’s dignity and of complete authority dominates almost the first half of the speech. After talking about the peace process between Egypt and Israel and the efforts exerted to build more routes for cooperation and end any dispute, especially that over Taba, he confirms his determination on regaining Taba as a part of the Egyptian soil. Then, he emphasizes that the liberation of Sinai is related to internal challenges and responsibilities. He quickly refers to investment projects, especially in productive and developmental sectors. He draws the main framework of the state, which offers security, equality and protection to all citizens. On the other hand, citizens must abide by the law and carry out their commitments. In addition, he emphasizes the notion of freedom, but the one that seeks group interest not individual benefit. The President persists in his personal position on democracy and freedom referring directly to himself.

As a new leader, Mubarak is in need to establish a more democratic image of himself so that he may win his people’s solidarity and, hence, legitimacy. Mubarak shows how different he is from his predecessors in an implicit way. He asserts that *ومن هنا كان اصراري على اتباع أسلوب الحوار مع الجميع* (Hence Springs **my** insistence on pursuing the method of dialoguing with all), which implies that he is an open-minded person with a mentality oriented towards dialogue, not clash. This style

of Mubarak is also supported by his early years' decisions of releasing political prisoners and convening with them.

Another implicit hint made by Mubarak is that he is different from his predecessors, who grabbed all power in their hands. Mubarak stresses that he does not seek to monopolize authority, which he translated in calling upon Egypt's experts and academics to convene in 1982 to discuss and come out with solutions to the most pressing problems

القرار) لاصدار الاستئثار في راغب غير السلطة تركيز عن تماما عازف (وإنني

(and **I** am totally abstaining from centralizing authority, **I** have no desire in monopolizing decision-making). This is, also, supported by his repeated assertion that he will seek consultation from those who have knowledge, whenever he needs.

In his 1982 speech, Mubarak uses authoritative discourse in order to show himself as one who defines and sets limits and duties. In order to emphasize this aspect, he uses emphatic particle such as 'لقد' /laqad/ and 'إن'/?inna/. This authoritative style is evident when the President says (لقد كنت وسأظل دائما) (**I** have been, and **I** will always be) and (الأسلوب الديمقراطي هو خير ضمان لحماية المسيرة) (democratic style is the best guarantee to protect the movement). His authoritative style is clear also when he speaks about those who demand instant changes; he responds showing how unreasonable they are (دون أن تكون عملية التغيير محكومة ومصحوبة بالضوابط) (while changing process is not controlled or accompanied by regulations).

Mubarak, also, uses a nationalistic style in his discourse. He makes use of words such as (جماهير الشعب – شعبنا – العمل الوطني – المواطن) (citizen-national work-our people-masses of the people). The use of such nationalistic terms enables him to be patriotic and loyal to the people. When the President secures solidarity with his people, he wins their legitimacy as well.

In this speech, Mubarak refers to his personal attitude towards democracy and freedom in the Egyptian society. He mentions his personal ideas and philosophy about democracy and the regulations that must control freedom. In doing so, he refers to himself using the first person singular 'أنا' "I", e.g. (وإنني عازف تماما) (and **I** am totally abstaining from). He, also, uses the first person singular possessive variant to refer to himself, e.g. (لا ينال من اصراري) (this does not affect **my** insistence), (ومن هنا كان اصراري) (hence springs **my** insistence). Furthermore, he uses first singular verb forms, e.g. (لقد كنت وسأظل) (**I** have been, and **I** will always be), (كما أن الفلسفة التي أؤمن بها) (in addition, the philosophy **I** believe in).

When the President talks about responsibility or cooperation to reach a certain aim, he shifts to ‘نحن’ ‘We’ first person plural, e.g. (فلا بد أن نتعاون في ) (responsibility is shared among us), (والمسؤولية مشتركة بيننا) (We must cooperate to reach the agreed upon goal). He uses ‘نحن’ ‘we’ to mitigate his personal involvement. Therefore, the responsibility is collective, while stances, philosophy and enthusiasm are personal. This is where the shift from ‘I’ to ‘we’, i.e. personal vs. Impersonal, becomes evident.

In the same speech, Mubarak associates himself with being an enthusiast of, believing in, insisting on and consolidating democracy via referring to himself using first person singular pronoun. Mubarak insists on appearing as a consolidator of democracy, which he refers to as ‘صرح’ الديمقراطية (the edifice of democracy). This denotes a very strong well-built structure. He implies that he is the builder of that edifice and even the founder of the concepts of dialogue, consultation and cooperation in the Egyptian political life. He confirms such an attitude by stressing that (وإنني عازف تماما عن تركيز السلطة) (and I am totally abstaining from centralizing authority), which has an implied hint, as mentioned before, to his predecessors who had all the power in their hands.

In fact, a president in Egypt has absolute power. He has the power to issue decrees, propose and veto legislations. That is why Ayubi (1989, p. 2) refers to Egypt as “a presidential state...[where] the president is the dominant political and governmental authority”. Sadat, for instance, used to assume a number of posts to strengthen his powers, such as being president, prime minister, Supreme Commander of the Armed Forces, High Chief of the Police Forces....., etc. Mubarak, on the other hand, shows no desire in monopolizing power, yet he has kept a number of posts for himself, such as Supreme Commander of the Armed Forces, High Chief of the Police Forces, and head of the National Democratic Party. Therefore, ironically, Mubarak is merely changing things through words but not in reality. In fact, he is the center of the state and source of all powers. This is supported by the fact that the President does not provide any details of the decentralization process of authority or its application schedule. He also responds to those voices who keep calling for immediate wave of changes towards democracy by explicitly showing that they seek personal interests, not the interest of the whole nation, as he does (والانشغال الزائد بالقضايا الذاتية) (getting more involved in personal issues).

By the year 2005, Mubarak has been in office for 24 years, during which he has been repeating his belief in democracy and freedom and making promises of more steps on the way. Therefore, he needs to give evidence that he has fulfilled his promises to support freedom and more

democratization. He gives instances of the bases he founded for democracy in Egypt and the freedom enjoyed by parties and the press.

In his 2005 speech, Mubarak stresses the democratic aspect of his identity by referring to himself using the first person singular subject 'أنا' and its possessive variant (إنني أطلب) (I demand), (وتأسيسا على اقتناعي) (on the basis of **my** conviction). He, also, uses first person singular verb forms to refer solely to himself (أقول مرة أخرى) (once more **I** say), (التي أتقدم) (that **I** present). Furthermore, he uses first person plural pronoun to refer to himself (نجحنا خلال المرحلة الماضية) (**We** succeeded during the last stage). However, in some instances he uses 'we' in its inclusive form to include others with him, e.g. (في حياتنا السياسية) (to **our** political life), and (على طريق الإصلاح السياسي وتجربتنا الديمقراطية) (on the way of political reform and **our** democratic experience). This can be seen as an attempt to stress his success in establishing a democracy that benefits all the Egyptian populace and to assert that it has never been achieved before (غير مسبوقة) (unprecedented). This assertion is repeatedly used to make it irrefutable that Mubarak is the founder of Egypt's modern democracy.

To stress this attitude, he enumerates the institutional structures he established to nourish the democratic process (محكمة دستورية - دستور - حرية الإعلام والصحافة - حزبية تعددية - قضاء مستقل - constitutional court - independent judiciary - party plurality - freedom of press and media). The counting of these institutions acts as an implied hint that they have not existed before, and that it is he who created or at least vitalized them.

Furthermore, he makes clear that his reform program and constitutional amendments are meant to benefit all people, not an individual interest, which can be seen as an implied criticism of those who call for change seeking only their individual interests. He goes on to make an implied promise that these amendments will make true all the people's hopes and aspirations of more freedom, more rights and, above all, more democracy (كي تأتي اقتراحات التعديل الدستوري التي أنقدم بها محققة لأمال) (so that the suggestions of constitutional amendment which **I** present may fulfill the people's hopes and aspirations). He makes another implied promise of more reform when he hails his amendment of article 76 of the constitution, and asserts that it will lead to more steps on the way towards more reform and democracy (وفتح الباب) (and opened the door before more steps of reform).

Thus, Mubarak associates himself to 'saying, succeeding in, having convention in, demanding and presenting more democratic reforms in Egypt' via referring to himself using the first person singular

and plural pronouns. He, also, focuses on showing his personal role in establishing the Egyptian democracy and makes an implied comparison to his predecessors to show how different he is from them. Such an opposition makes him more distinguished than previous presidents, and consolidates his independent identity.

In addition, Mubarak emphasizes his leadership by referring to himself mostly using the first person singular pronoun. He, also, pays great attention to his image as a pro-democracy leader and founder of dialogue among all Egyptians.

In his December 2005 speech, when the President, for the first time in Egypt's political history, competes in multi-candidate elections and wins, he addresses the joint session to inaugurate a new parliamentary session and to sketch out major milestones of the forthcoming stage. Mubarak accentuates his landslide success in the presidential elections and emphasizes that he has been elected by the people with their free will. These elections are related to the democratic process and the unprecedented freedom and interaction in the Egyptian political life. Furthermore, he expresses his insistence on moving forward on the route of reform be it political, economic or social, and on achieving the aspirations of the masses.

Afterwards, the President stresses his position as president of all Egyptians to whom he is responsible to fulfill their needs and asserts the leader aspect of his identity. However, he associates his responsibility with the parliament as a collective responsibility and shared job to achieve his promised program by clarifying that this goal is a shared responsibility to achieve constitutional and legislative reforms. Emphasizing that Egypt has already achieved democracy and founded its frames through constitution and law, he refers to the amendment of the constitution articles, which he called for, as an important step on the way of political reform.

When Mubarak talks about the achievements and progress accomplished, he stresses the leader in him. As in the previous examples, he makes another use of authoritative discourse, as he is the one who knows all the facts and has all the statistics and numbers ( مرة أخرى أقول إننا ) (لا نبدأ من فراغ) (Once more I say that we do not start from point zero). He, also, uses the emphatic particle 'لقد' to stress his authority ( لقد جاء تعديل المادة ) (٧٦ من الدستور ليمثل خطوة واسعة) (The amendment of article 76 of the constitution represents a wide step). Instances of nationalistic discourse are also present. He refers to ( لآمال الشعب - نواب الشعب - حقوق المواطنين ) (citizens' rights - people representatives - aspirations of the people - interests of the nation) so as to obtain his audience solidarity.

In addition to emphasizing the democratic aspect of his identity, Mubarak focuses on the aspect of being a wise politician, who is keen on protecting Egypt's dignity and sovereignty. For instance, in his speech in November 1985, at the beginning of a new parliamentary session, he stresses the democratic practices enjoyed by everyone in Egypt, both protagonists and antagonists. In order to draw himself closer to the people, he makes use of a historical event that happened on November 13, 1918, when Saad Zaghloul submitted a petition to the British representative in Egypt to show him how the Egyptian people were willing to sacrifice themselves for the sake of their country. Also, he links that event to other events of sacrifice, such as the 1952 revolution and the 1973 war against Israel, all of which share the idea of maintaining Egypt's full authority and sovereignty. In fact, Mubarak uses such historical references to show that what Egypt witnesses today, under his rule, of social reconstruction and economic reform are as vital as those other events, in which all Egyptians had participated and exerted their efforts.

Moreover, the President tries to defuse any attempts and plans of disunity or disintegration among Egyptians, and, at the same time, refutes any allegations of corruption within the government or the ruling regime. This unity is linked to the emphasis that Egypt, and of course her leader, have never been followers or subjects of any other state. Egypt has always decided for herself and never submitted to any foreign pressures. This assertion can be seen as an implied response to some accusations of being an ally and follower of the West, especially the US. Mubarak responds, in most of the speech, to accusations and conspiracies plotted against Egypt. Although he does not name who wages those wars or conspiracies, he refers explicitly to an instance of dismissing Egyptian workers in some countries. This reference, as vague as it may be, is directed to the decision taken by some Gulf states to dismiss Egyptian workers. Mubarak counts this as a war of economic siege. This is supported by the fact that though, at that time, Egypt has not retrieved her place in the Arab League yet, it was announced, more than once, that her policies, especially the economic ones, are western wise.

In his 1985 speech, Mubarak refers to himself directly using the first person singular pronoun 'أنا' 'I', (وإنني أتحدى) (I defy). He, also, uses first person singular verb forms to refer to himself in several instances, e.g. (أتحدى من يقول) (I defy who says), (أن أوصون بروحي) (that I protect with my soul). The examples show clearly that he is responding to accusations of being a follower of the US, because of the aids and loans Egypt receive. That is why he makes it a personal challenge, where the leader's identity speaks itself out loud; he speaks authoritatively to emphasize that

no one can ever prove such claims, because they are fake. (وإنني أتحدى من (and I defy ...who says that there is even one trait of vassalage in Egypt), and (I defy who claims) من (أتحدى من يزعم) سمات التبعية).

An interesting point is that Mubarak uses 'Egypt' in this speech to serve as a self- reference tool. The current paper argues that when Mubarak says ( لن تخضع مصر لأحد ) (**Egypt** will never kneel to whomsoever) and (ولن ترهن مصر إرادتها) (and **Egypt** will never submit its will), he is in fact referring to his own determination and resolution as a president of Egypt. This is supported by the fact that he has already been talking about himself, showing how willing he is to sacrifice his soul for the people and asserting his commitment to his people by repeating ( عقلي ) (أو قلبي أو ضميري) (**my** mind or **my** heart or **my** conscience) using the first person singular possessive. The same commitment is also asserted by Mubarak's use of negation at the beginning of his sentences (ولن يأتي اليوم) (the day will never come) where he forcefully negates the future occurrence of the day when he might neglect his commitment. He repeats that negation to serve the same idea of asserting his position ( ولن يهتز هذا ) (القسم) (and will never kneel even to the most tyrannical titans).

Another assertive tool is the use of oath forms. It is interesting that Mubarak uses an oath quoting from the Qur'an (والشمس وضحاها القمر إذا ) (By the Sun and its brightness, and by the Moon when it follows it), which gives his words more credibility and sincerity and makes them more acceptable to his audience. A further tool is the use of verbs such as 'أتحدى' 'I defy', which is repeated more than once, showing how firm and sure he is of his position and words.

Mubarak emphasizes his constitutional role as a protector of Egypt's sovereignty and independent will. He uses solely the first person singular pronoun 'أنا' 'I' to make no confusion as to whom the reference is. Therefore, he is the one who protects, cares for, sacrifices and challenges for the sake of his country and people. The use of the Qur'an is noteworthy, as it is not common in Mubarak's language. He even uses a verse from the Qur'an to respond to those who accuse him of being a follower of the West. The verse is used to attack them as liars (كبرت كلمة تخرج من أفواههم إن يقولون إلا كذبا) (Grave is the word that comes out of their mouths; they speak not except a lie). It suggests clearly that these are mere lies and that Mubarak is the one who is telling the truth.

Mubarak, thus, can be seen as a political leader who cares most for his country. He refers to himself using only the first person singular pronoun, which emphasizes his personal involvement and his keenness on stressing his personality as a leader. His authority is, also, maintained via

using repetition of words such as 'أتحدى' 'I defy' and the use of oath, especially that from the Qur'an, to give his words more credibility. He refers to himself, also, using 'مصر' 'Egypt', which can be viewed as if he represents all the populace. Mubarak, the politician, is a strict, independent and, at the same time, wise leader.

However, Mubarak does not ignore the human aspect of his identity. In fact, he pays great attention to that part. For instance, at the beginning of his speech in November 2006, Mubarak concentrates on the democratic aspect of his identity, and how he endeavors to achieve more democracy and freedom through presenting more constitutional reforms. He links that to the human part of his identity, and how keen he is on relieving the low-income categories of the people's problems and on raising their standards of living. Mubarak's point here is to stress the human feelings inside him. The human being within the leader is clear when he refers to himself as the one who fully realizes, and is fully aware of all the worries of his people.

Mubarak, the human, speaks openly to his people to show his personal interest in their welfare. He refers to himself using the first person singular verb forms, e.g. (مرة أخرى أقول) (once more, I say), (أعلم) (I am well aware of) and the first person singular pronoun, (إلا أنني) (yet I know). He, in some instances, uses the first person plural pronoun in its inclusive sense to refer to himself as one among others, e.g. (أمامنا تحديات ومشكلات عديدة) (We have several challenges and problems). Mubarak shifts to 'we' when he talks about responsibilities, challenges or problems. This shift mitigates Mubarak's personal involvement and makes it a collective mission of all the people or at least the government. However, he uses 'أنا' (I) and its variants when he stresses his personal knowledge and awareness. In other instances, the President uses 'we' in its royal sense to refer only to himself, e.g. (إن ثمار ما حققناه حتى الآن من (إصلاح اقتصادي) (the fruits of what we have achieved so far of economic reform), which is clearly referring to Mubarak alone. His following sentences support this where he talks about achieved progress during the last year, a progress that has not been achieved before in the last 15 years.

When Mubarak refers to citizens' worries and suffering, he tries to show his personal sympathy and affection to those who suffer. No doubt that such a sympathy, especially when expressed in the singular pronoun 'أنا' (I), will reach the audience easily and touch their hearts, which, in turn, stresses the human aspect of Mubarak's identity (أعلم تماما شواغل مواطنينا وهمومهم ومعاناتهم) (I am well aware of the preoccupations of our citizens and their concerns and suffering). What Mubarak really seeks is to depict himself as a human president. He cares for being viewed as the caretaker of all Egyptians. His reference to himself using the first person

singular verb forms asserts this fact and makes it evident that Mubarak is paying attention to the human aspect of his identity.

This human aspect of Mubarak is emphasized from time to time. In his November 2007 speech, he starts his speech by emphasizing the issue of social justice, counting it as a major cornerstone of the reform process. In 2007, two years of his fifth term have elapsed, and there should have been concrete results of the promises he made in 2005. That is why he talks about how economic reform has been his priority since the beginning of his regime, and that it has achieved high rates of growth. He links this to the process of achieving social justice as one of his promises. Furthermore, he stresses his personal bias in favour of the needy and the poor to gain his words more credibility.

Mubarak uses the first person singular verb forms to refer to himself, e.g. (تمسكت بالترج في برنامج الإصلاح الاقتصادي) (I adhered to gradual advance in the program of economic reform). He also uses the first person singular possessive pronoun to identify himself, e.g. (منذ تحملي) (المسئولية) (since I assumed responsibility). In addition, he refers to himself using 'we' in its royal sense to exclude anyone else but him, e.g. (سوف) (تستمر في صدارة أولوياتنا) (will continue at the beginning of our priorities).

In order to emphasize his human part, Mubarak asserts his personal attitude towards issues related to social justice, such as the distribution of development fruits among all Egyptians. He uses, for instance, assertive verbs to stress his position (وإنني أؤكد) (and I affirm), which is also preceded by (إن) that functions as an emphatic particle in Arabic. In addition, he uses the emphatic particle 'لقد', which is combined with the first person singular verb in its past tense to denote undisputable assertion (لقد انحزت) (I have sided with). The human aspect is also evident when Mubarak tackles the issue of distributing the fruits of development, where he stresses that justice must be the criterion of such a distribution so that all Egyptian citizens may enjoy these fruits.

However, when he talks about social justice, he states (وقد حان الوقت) (لإيلاء أولوية خاصة) (the time has come to give special preference), which has a negative implication. It may mean that such a time has never come before and that all those previous years witnessed no justice in the process of distribution. This implication is almost true, especially that the President, instantly, follows it by asserting his personal bias from the first day in office towards the poor who have a low-income.

Thus, Mubarak associates himself with stressing, prioritizing, achieving, biasing and adhering to social justice via referring to himself using the first person singular verb forms. Such reference emphasizes the human aspect of Mubarak's personal identity.

## 5. Conclusion

The analysis shows the relation between each example and the identity examined through the use of the simple linguistic tools of self-reference and other lexical choices such as repetition. The President has succeeded in constructing the identity he wants to appear as possessing. A linguistic notable point in the analysis is the president's use of mental verbs such as 'أرجو - أظن - أتمنى - أريد - أعتقد - الخ' (hope, guess, wish, want, think, etc.). The combination of such mental verbs and first singular pronoun 'I' is often used to communicate attitudes, particularly sincerity.

The variety of choices available to speechwriters regarding pronouns and self-referencing help them create the identity they want of Mubarak. Sometimes he is associated directly, through the first singular pronoun 'I', with the issue of democracy for instance, but, on other occasions, he distances himself from responsibility by using the plural form 'we' or words such as 'Egypt' or 'the people' to mitigate his personal involvement and claim a collective responsibility. The analysis has shown that Mubarak seeks a certain identity through his various language uses.

In addition, the president uses keywords and expressions that are related to the construction of intended identity. The most often used one is his 'العدالة الاجتماعية' (social justice), which has its emotional influence on the audience, as it conveys how concerned the president is, and, in turn, it earns him the support of the audience. A most notable repetitive thing is the problems in the Egyptian society. In almost all his speeches, the president repeats his concern regarding ending the problems of the low-income categories. These problems include salaries, housing increasing prices, unemployment, and the problem of increasing population in Egypt.

The identity sought by Mubarak is already mentioned by Mubarak himself in one of his speeches, where he sets the milestones of his identity. It is upon these milestones that the study relies in counting the main features of Mubarak's identity. In November 2002 speech, Mubarak speaks of the main goals of his presidency:

والحفاظ وتدعيمها السلام مسيرة واستكمال الوطنية الوحدة وتأكيد الديمقراطية الممارسة تعميق الشامل بمعناها التنمية سبيل في والمضي بها نلتزم التي الدولية وموآثيقنا عهدنا على

'Consolidate the democratic practice, Confirm the national unity, consummate and support the peace process, and maintain our international pledges and agreements by which we abide and continue the route of comprehensive development'.

However, the researcher believes that the goal is not to draw a number of identities, but a complex identity consisting of all these aspects or features of Mubarak. This is because, in the end, he is the president

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who is a wise successful administrator refined by experience, never shaken by serious incidents, and always motivated by the sublime interests of the nation. The overall picture of the president is that of an omniscient president who knows all the facts and realizes all the needs of the masses as well as all their interests.

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