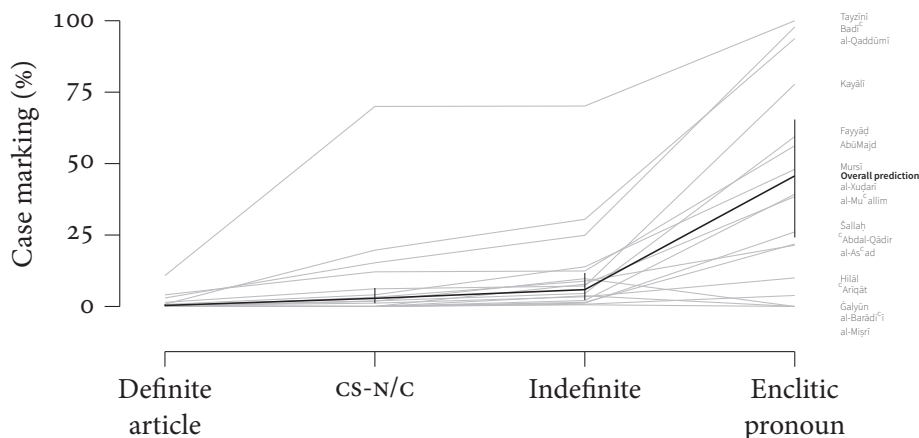


FIGURE 13: *Proportional case marking by types of definiteness. Gray lines represent individual speakers and the black line the overall prediction.*



significant ( $p < .001$ ).

The four types of definiteness thus form a hierarchy of increased case marking in the order *a* to *d* as listed above. This hierarchy is remarkably consistent between speakers, as shown in Figure 13. In the previous chapter, it was shown that speakers mark case at very different overall rates that range from marking almost half of all nominals to only a few in the entire interview. Figure 13 shows that even though speakers vary widely in overall case marking rates, they have a very similar manner of distributing the case endings that they do use over different types of definiteness. All speakers mark case at a higher rate going up the hierarchy. To put it differently, the lines in Figure 13 are, with a few exceptions, either flat or have a positive slope. The definiteness hierarchy is so consistent that it may be considered to form a constraint on how case marking is structured in Spoken Standard Arabic. This constraint implies that if a speaker marks case at a certain rate in one type of definiteness, he will mark it at a higher rate in types of definiteness further up the hierarchy. Consequently, if for a given speaker there are no case markers on words with an enclitic pronoun, the topmost type in the hierarchy, there is no or minimal case marking elsewhere in that person's speech.