



DIFFERENT DIALECTS OF ARABIC LANGUAGE



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ABSTRACT

Different dialects of Arabic language have been an attraction of students of linguistics. Many studies have been done in this regard. Arabic language is one of the fastest growing languages in the world. It is the mother tongue of 420 million in people across the world. And it is the official language of 23 countries spread over Asia and Africa. Arabic has gained the status of world languages recognized by the UN. The economic significance of the region where Arabic is being spoken makes the language more acceptable in the world political and economical arena. The geopolitical significance of the region and its language cannot be ignored by the economic super powers and political stakeholders.

KEY WORDS: Arabic, Dialect, Moroccan, Egyptian, Gulf, Kabaal, world economy, super powers

INTRODUCTION

The importance of Arabic language has been multiplied with the emergence of globalization process in the nineties of the last century thank to the oil reservoirs in the region, because petrol plays an important role in propelling world economy and politics. As we said above the native speakers of Arabic language have been spread across Asia and Africa. And there are many dialects and slangs in the language as any other language in the world however minor they are. The way of speaking the language and its style differ from person to person. The case of Arabic speakers is more complicated and obvious in this regard. Even an Arabic native speaker from the Gulf region may not follow a native speaker of Arabic from Morocco. Egyptian slang is very familiar because of the popular cinema industry of Egypt. The reason of this phenomenon is mainly its mixing with previously spoken languages like *Kabael*/languages in non-Egypt African countries such as Morocco, Algeria, Tunisia and Libya. In the case of Egypt previously spoken Coptic language played the role.

DISCUSSION

Within the non-Gulf Arabic varieties, the largest difference is between the non-Egyptian North African dialects and the others. Moroccan Arabic in particular is nearly incomprehensible to Arabic speakers east of Algeria. They employ the modern standard Arabic (MSA) to converse each other. It is the lingua franca of the region. News papers and books are published in the MSA.

DIALECT GROUPS

The dialect groups of Arabic language can be briefed as follows:

Egyptian Arabic, spoken by around 80 million in Egypt. It is one of the most understood varieties of Arabic, due in large part to the widespread distribution of Egyptian films and television shows throughout the Arabic speaking world.

Maghrebi Arabic includes Moroccan Arabic, Algerian Arabic, Saharan Arabic, Tunisian Arabic, and to a more particular extent, Libyan Arabic, and is spoken by around 75 million North Africans in Morocco, Western Sahara, Algeria, Tunisia and Libya ; it is often difficult for speakers of Middle Eastern Arabic varieties to understand.



The Berber influence in these dialects varies in degree.

Levantine Arabic includes North Levantine Arabic, South Levantine Arabic, and Cypriot Arabic. It is spoken by almost 35 million people in Lebanon, Syria, Jordan, Palestine, Cyprus, and Turkey.

Sudanese Arabic is spoken by 30 million people in Sudan and some parts of southern Egypt. Sudanese Arabic is quite distinct from the dialect of its neighbour to the north; rather, the Sudanese have a dialect similar to the Hijazi dialect.

Iraqi Arabic, spoken by about 29 million people in Iraq, eastern Syria and south-western Iran (Khuzestan). Gulf Arabic, spoken by around 22 million people, predominantly in the United Arab Emirates, Kuwait, Oman, eastern Saudi Arabia, Qatar, and Bahrain. Also spoken in Iran's Bushehr and Hormozgan provinces.

Yemeni Arabic spoken in Yemen and southern Saudi Arabia by 25 million people. Similar to Gulf Arabic. Najdi Arabic, spoken by around 10 million people, mainly spoken in Najd, center and northern part of Saudi Arabia. Hejazi Arabic (7 million speakers), spoken in Hejaz, western Saudi Arabia. North Mesopotamian Arabic, spoken by around 7 million people in northern Iraq, north-western Iran, northern Syria and southern Turkey.

Hassaniya Arabic (2.8 million speakers), spoken in Mauritania, Western Sahara, some parts of northern Mali, southern Morocco and south-western Algeria. Bahraini Arabic (1,000,000+ speakers), spoken by Bahraini Shia in Bahrain, Qatif, and Al Ahsa, where it exhibits some differences from Bahraini Arabic and Gulf Arabic. It is also spoken to a lesser extent in Oman.

JUDEO-ARABIC DIALECTS

Central Asian Arabic, spoken in Uzbekistan, Tajikistan and Afghanistan, is highly endangered

Maltese, spoken on the Mediterranean island of Malta, is the only one to have established itself as a fully separate language, with independent literary norms. In the course of its history the language has adopted numerous loanwords, phonetic and phonological features, and even some grammatical patterns, from Italian, Sicilian, and English. It is also the only Semitic tongue written in the Latin script. Siculo Arabic, spoken on Sicily, South Italy until 14th century, developed into Maltese language.

The Muslim Hui people in China had knowledge of archaic forms of Arabic. The Hui of Yunnan (Burmaese called them Panthays) were reported to be fluent in Arabic. During the Panthay Rebellion, Arabic replaced Chinese as official language of the rebel kingdom. In 1844 "The Chinese repository, Volume 13" was published, including an account of an Englishman who stayed in Ningbo in China. There

he visited the local mosque, the Hui running the mosque was from Shandong, and he was a descendant of Muslims from the city of Medina. He spoke both Arabic and Chinese, and could read Arabic as well. In Tianjin, Hui could speak an old, archaic form of Arabic, when they met Arab Muslims in recent times; it was found out that Old Arabic and Modern Arabic were very different, so Modern Arabic is now being taught to Hui.

Samaritan Arabic - spoken by only several hundred in the Nablus region

Andalusi Arabic, spoken in Spain until 15th century, now extinct.

SOUNDS

The "colloquial" spoken varieties of Arabic are learned at home and constitute the native languages of Arabic speakers. "Formal" Literary Arabic (usually specifically Modern Standard Arabic) is learned at school; although many speakers have a native-like command of the language, it is technically not the native language of any speakers. Both varieties can be both written and spoken, although the colloquial varieties are rarely written down, and the formal variety is spoken mostly in formal circumstances, e.g., in radio broadcasts, formal lectures, parliamentary discussions, and to some extent between speakers of different colloquial varieties. Even when the literary language is spoken, however, it is normally only spoken in its pure form when reading a prepared text out loud. When speaking extemporaneously (i.e. making up the language on the spot, as in a normal discussion among people), speakers tend to deviate somewhat from the strict literary language in the direction of the colloquial varieties. In fact, there is a continuous range of "in-between" spoken varieties: from nearly pure Modern Standard Arabic (MSA), to a form that still uses MSA grammar and vocabulary but with significant colloquial influence, to a form of the colloquial language that imports a number of words and grammatical constructions in MSA, to a form that is close to pure colloquial but with the "rough edges" (the most noticeably "vulgar" or non-Classical aspects) smoothed out, to pure colloquial. The particular variant (or register) used depends on the social class and education level of the speakers involved, and the level of formality of the speech situation. Often it will vary within a single encounter, e.g., moving from nearly pure MSA to a more mixed language in the process of a radio interview, as the interviewee becomes more comfortable with the interviewer. This type of variation is characteristic of the diglossia that exists throughout the Arabic-speaking world.

LITERARY ARABIC

Although Modern Standard Arabic (MSA) is a unitary language, its pronunciation varies somewhat from country to country and from region to region within a country. The variation in individual “accents” of MSA speakers tends to mirror corresponding variations in the colloquial speech of the speakers in question, but with the distinguishing characteristics moderated somewhat. Note that it is important in descriptions of “Arabic” phonology to distinguish between pronunciation of a given colloquial (spoken) dialect and the pronunciation of MSA by these same speakers. Although they are related, they are not the same.

CONCLUSION

Studying the dialects of Arabic language is an interesting subject. A whole book running to volumes might be tip of iceberg. No other language can have such a variety of dialects and slangs. Even some of them can be considered as an independent language. However, the MSA makes them connect and grow.

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