

A STUDY ON VITALITY IN MODERN STANDARD ARABIC

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ABSTRACT

Linguistic diversity in the world today is an issue of developing social importance because a majority of all living languages are threatened in their continued existence. How they can be sustained is a matter of study and debate. A change in the vitality of a language has important implications for individuals and societies. Multilingualism is a common and increasing phenomenon in present day society which can be studied from different perspectives. The purpose of the position study is to focus on language as a cultural asset and to establish the relationship between linguistic diversity and human welfare from an economic perspective. From the Arab conquest in the seventh century, Arabic became the dominant language in Palestine. The tyrannical spread of dialects in the Arab world will result a gradual withdrawal of Fuss-ha. It will eclipse the contact and vitality of Arab culture, heritage, belief, and history.

KEYWORDS: Linguistic, languages, vitality, Arab culture, individuals, Arabic, human, etc.

INTRODUCTION

The Arabic language has gone through critical stage that has never gone through before. It is one of the serious problems facing Arabs in the present time. Arabic is the pot of the Arabian Islamic heritage with its various forms: religion, culture, history and so on. Through the Arabic language, the past of Arabian nation was preserved and through it Arabs were taught, and, are still learning, the heritage of Arabian nation and its civilization [1]. Although the Arabic language spent many centuries resisting the sweeping steam of illiteracy, colonialism and the break of slang in the private and public sphere, today it goes through various blocks in the process of its extension in all aspects. Consequently, the proportion of those who can speak and write properly is shrinking. So what are the factors behind the weakness and backwardness of the Arabic language? Hebrew is the dominant language in the country and Arabic is an important language only for the Palestinian minority, which plays scarcely any role in the national public sphere [2]. In light of the post-1948 socio-political reality, in which Palestinian-Arabs have become a marginalized minority in Israel, will they succeed to maintain Arabic, their native language? If the answer is positive, then to what degree and in which domains will Arabic be used? Or, conversely, will the socio-political reality shift to Hebrew, the language of the dominant majority in

Israel? A useful framework for the investigation of the vitality of the Arabic language in Israel is the model of 'ethno linguistic vitality' introduced [3-5].

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

The model proposes a group of societal variables, providing structural factors which promote or impede the long-term maintenance of the language of an ethnic group. The model argues that the greater the vitality possessed by ethno linguistic groups, the more they will be able to preserve their collective social identity and maintain their native language in various domains of life. In contrast, those ethno linguistic groups that have little (or no) vitality may lose their unique collective identity and native language [4]. The economic status of a minority language is likely to be a key element in language vitality. In summary, Palestinians in Israel are almost completely economically dependent on the Jewish majority, and Arabic is assigned a low value in the Israeli language market. With regard to language status, despite being recognized as an official language of Israel, Arabic does not enjoy a high status within the state. On the other hand, however, Palestinians in Israel themselves perceive Arabic as an important marker of their national and pan-Arab identities. Thus, an examination of status factors reveals that the Arabic language in Israel has a low-to-medium level of vitality [6].

1. The nature of ethno linguistic vitality:

Ethno linguistic vitality is usually defined as what "makes a group likely to behave as a distinctive and active collective entity in intergroup situations." [7] Deep down, it is a group identity issue. social identity is "that part of an individual's self-concept which derives from his knowledge of his

membership of a social group (or groups) together with the value and emotional significance attached to that membership." [8] Argue that these three components of social identity – cognitive, evaluative and emotional – are conceptually distinct aspects of identity; and that only the "group commitment appears to be the key aspect of social identity which drives the tendency for people to behave in terms of their group membership." call this commitment bounded solidarity, which is the feeling of unity that often arises from real or perceived threats to the group. Thus, ethno linguistic vitality could be defined as the group's will to act collectively, deriving from its members' emotional attachment to this particular group membership.

2. Promoting ethno linguistic vitality:

The main tool for protecting linguistic and cultural diversity is ultimately discursive: constructing a positive group identity, (increasing S1), enhancing its cultural distinctiveness (increasing R), rising in-group loyalty and solidarity (reducing U) or to raise the level of intergroup discordance (D). Of course, some would at this point certainly see here a ghost of xenophobia, intolerance and violence that attempts have generated. For [10] argues, relying on the Swedish and Norwegian data from the 1995 International Social Survey Programme (ISSP) "Aspects of national identity", that nationalist sentiments are in a strong correlation with xenophobic attitudes. Based on these findings, he calls into question any possibilities of constructing 'good' nationalism. He states that "first, even if nationalism is based on national independence the reason for this independence often boils down to that the people of one nation imagine that there is a difference between them and some other

people and that in the long run they are better off with their own nation-state. Therefore, they in some sense are superior to other peoples and nations” [9] one has to agree that the manipulation of D has in the history of humankind been used by far too often and with too dangerous consequences and should be avoided as discordance has tendency towards exponential growth. This means that a careless attempt to slightly increase a group’s vitality goes quickly out of hands and leads to a full blown interethnic conflict. The question is whether there is a possibility to avoid it.

3. The alphabet:

There are twenty-eight Arabic consonant sounds, twenty-six of which are consistently consonants, but two of which – waaw and yaa√ – are semivowels that serve two functions, sometimes as consonants and other times as vowels, depending on context. Most letters are joined to others on both sides when they are medial, but there are a few that are called “non-connectors” which are attached to a preceding letter, but not to a following letter.

Name	Final	Letter	Initial	Independent
(hamza)				ء
ʾalif	ا	ا	ا	ا
baaʾ	ب	ب	ب	ب
taaʾ	ت	ت	ت	ت
thaaʾ	ث	ث	ث	ث
jiim	ج	ج	ج	ج
Haaʾ	ح	ح	ح	ح
xaaʾ	خ	خ	خ	خ
daal	د	د	د	د
dhaal	ذ	ذ	ذ	ذ
raaʾ	ر	ر	ر	ر
zaay	ز	ز	ز	ز
siin	س	س	س	س
shiin	ش	ش	ش	ش
Saad	ص	ص	ص	ص
Daad	ض	ض	ض	ض
Taaʾ	ط	ط	ط	ط

Table-1 Names and shapes of the letters

The non-connectors are: alif, daal, dhaal, raa√, zaay, and waaw, as shown in the following examples:

country	<i>bilaad</i>	بِلاد
decision	<i>qaraar</i>	قَرار
soldier	<i>jundiyy</i>	جُندي
delicious	<i>ladhiidh</i>	لَذِيذ
ministry	<i>wizaara</i>	وِزارَة
star	<i>kawkaba</i>	كَوَكِبَة

	Labial	Labio-dental	Interdental	Alveolar	Palatal	Velar	Uvular	Pharyngeal	Glottal
Stops									
Voiceless				ط T t			ك k	ق q	ء ʾ
Voiced	ب b			ض D d					
Affricates									
Voiceless									
Voiced					ج j				
Fricatives									
Voiceless		ف f	ث th	ص S s	ش sh	خ x		ح H	ه h
Voiced			ذ dh	ظ Z z	ز z	غ gh		ع ʿ	
Nasals	م m		ن n						
Laterals				ل l					
Flaps				ر r					
Semivowels (approximants)	و w				ي y				

Table-2 Phonemic chart of MSA consonants

4. Vowels:

The Modern Standard Arabic sound system has six vowel phonemes: three “long” ones and three “short”: / ii/ and /i/, /uu/ and /u/, /aa/ and /a/. The difference in length is not a difference in vowel quality, but in the length of time that the vowel is held. The distinction between short and long is similar to difference in length in musical notation, where there are quarter notes, half notes, and whole notes, each one held twice as long as the other. It is possible to think of short vowels as resembling quarter notes and long vowels as half notes, the long vowels being held approximately double the length of time of the short vowels.

	Front	Central	Back
High	i/iي		u/uuو
Mid			
Low		a/aaا	

They are written into words as part of the words' spelling. Short vowels, on the other hand, are not independent letters and are written only as diacritical marks above and below the body of the word. In actual practice, short vowels are not indicated in written Arabic text; they are invisible. The pronunciation of vowels, especially /aa/ and /a/, varies over a rather wide range, depending on word structure and the influence of adjacent consonants, but also on regional variations in pronunciation. Moreover, the letter valif has several different spelling variants and the letters waaw and yaav function both as vowels and as consonants.

5. Developing multiple identities:

One of the most effective ways to promote the perceived strength of the in group is to use the notion of multiple identities. [2] An important feature is that people use their partial identities situation ally and relationally, i.e. they foreground the identity that best serves their immediate needs in that particular situation and the one which is shared with others in this context. This phenomenon is called identity addictiveness and the empirical social psychological research has shown that people tacitly make good use of the positive stereotypes that are associated with some of their multiple identities, depending on situation [7].

CONCLUSION

It is possible that the most important factor for the vitality of Arabic in Israel was the decision by the education committee to

continue the British policy of allowing Palestinian schools to use Arabic as their language of instruction. Beyond this, the success of Arabic in the national public sphere is very limited, and the hegemony of Hebrew is almost absolute. Today, Hebrew is a vital necessity for effective functioning. Keeping Arabic as the language of instruction is what has helped to maintain Arabic in the Israeli sociolinguistic landscape as an important language, and it has preserved more than anything else the individual and national identity of the Palestinian within the Hebrew State. As I have described elsewhere, the Palestinian Arabs in Israel have opted for the strategy of linguistic integration rather than linguistic assimilation. On the one hand, they attempt to acquire high socio-linguistic competency in Hebrew in order to be connected to and easily function in the wider social network, which is mainly shaped by the majority culture.

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