Announcements

- There is a go link for the class website now. It is go/arabsocio.
- Screening of The Writing Code (Part 1: The greatest invention) movie next Thursday Feb 28th during class time. The movie is on reserve for this class. Any volunteer to run the screening?
- Class visits probably until the Spring break.
- Any questions on Homework #1?
- Also, how are the readings (Holes/Bassiouny)?

Some Egyptian Arabic Proverbs

- ‘He who gets his tongue burned by the soup will blow in the yogurt.’
- ‘I never sold water at the alley of the water waiters.’
- ‘A piece of news that is worth money to know today will be known for free tomorrow.’

Today’s agenda

- Finish our discussion of the history of Arabic, including a quick note on the development of Arabic script.
- Talk briefly on how this history is related to the diglossic nature of Arabic-speaking countries.
- Introduce phonetics as background to our discussion of dialectal variation in pronunciation.

Transition from last class

- Middle Arabic dialects developed from some form of Classical Arabic (used here in the broad sense) that was introduced during the Islamic conquests into what is today the Arab world and some areas beyond.
- Theories were proposed: pidginization, learning Arabic as a second language, and the military Koiné (this last is discussed in the reading in Homework #1).

The effect of language contact on the development of Arabic dialects

- Substratal influence refers to effects on Arabic caused by the languages that people in the conquered lands were speaking when the Arabs arrived, e.g., Coptic and Berber.
- Substratal effects are typically cited to account for differences among Arabic dialects.
- While such effects are reasonable to assume in some instances, many such effects are often exaggerated.
- Egyptian Arabic lost the sounds ذ, ث, and ح, but that can’t necessarily be a substratal effect from Coptic. Why?
- Because many of the sedentary dialects in the Arab world lost these sounds as well.
A quick history of the Arabic script

Arabic inscriptions

- Arabic In Nabatean script:
- Without dots:
- With and without dots within the same text:

Modern Arabic

- Arab-European contact upon the French invasion of Egypt in 1798.
- Muhammad Ali’s era in Egypt.
- Arabic language academies.
- The emergence of MSA.
- Calls for Arabic simplification: simplify the grammar, or simply start using the dialects in writing.

Lexical differences in MSA: Car rental

- المغرب العربي (المغرب) vs. المشرق العربي (المشرق)
  - [Ejjar Sirarat (Car Rental)](image)
  - [0122729837](image)

Lexical differences in MSA: Fruit

- [Fruits (المغرب) vs. Fruits (المشرق)](image)
Lexical differences in MSA: Hotel

More lexical differences in MSA

MSA’s ‘accents’ across the Arab world

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Influence of European languages

Diglossia:
MSA side by side with the dialects
Diglossia (Ferguson 1959)

- Arabic-speaking countries are diglossic.
  Translation: There exist two varieties in the speech community, side by side, with a division of labor between them.
- One variety is the High variety (called H), and the other is the Low variety (called L).
- The two varieties differ in their contexts of usage.

BUT:

- Certain contexts of usage seem to allow both H and L.
  In fact, within the same utterance, speech can go from H to L, or vice versa.
- Positing two varieties is probably an oversimplification.
- Maybe we have more varieties than just 2. How about we call them ‘levels’ of language?

Diglossia as a continuum: Badawi’s 5 levels of ‘Arabic’

- El-Said Badawi proposed the following five levels of the ‘Arabic’ used in Egypt:
  - Classical Arabic
  - Modern Standard Arabic
  - Educated Spoken Arabic
  - Semi-literate Spoken Arabic
  - Illiterate Spoken Arabic

Examples of usage for every level

- Level 1: Recitation of the Quran, dramatic recitation of events in Islamic history
- Level 2: Political speech to the nation, read from a prepared text; news bulletins; voice-over commentary on visual documentary
- Level 3: Studio discussion on any serious topic, for example, literature, the environment; unprepared interview with government minister, scientist, writer
- Level 4: “Ush pop” interviews in the street with ordinary people. “ordinary people” dressed in serious/trial plays, serials, soap operas; discussions, interviews on numerous topics, especially if involving women (e.g., cooking, fashion); game shows; sports commentary
- Level 5: Rarely represented except by speech of stereotypical working-class characters (doormen, porters, messengers, cleaners) in comedies and soap operas.

You can go ‘up’ and ‘down’ between levels

- In actual language usage, Arabic-speakers will alternate between the different levels, depending on the situation, the topic, and who they are talking to.
- That creates a fascinating spectrum of variation in language usage that sociolinguists have been trying to understand, a topic we will explore over the semester.
Linguistic differences between CLA and the dialects

- Starting next week, we look at the linguistic features of Arabic dialects and how they differ from CLA in phonology (pronunciation), morphology (word structure), syntax (sentence structure), and the lexicon (vocabulary).
- We start with pronunciation differences. We do this on Tuesday ان شاء الله.

Next class agenda

- Consonants and vowels in Classical Arabic and the dialects. Follow the link on the online syllabus to the chapter on phonetics from O’Grady et al.