Arabic Sociolinguistics

Announcements

- Prof. Sam Liebhaber’s guest lecture on Mehri next Tuesday, April 30.
- Please make sure to browse the pages on this website before coming to class.
- http://sites.middlebury.edu/mahripoetry/

Today’s agenda

- Continue to talk about issues related to language policies in the Arab world.
- Colonization effects on language policies and the current linguistic situation in Arab countries.

Arabic

التعريب

- New words are created in accordance with the root-and-pattern rules of Arabic morphology.
- Nouns of instrument: مفاعل، مفاعلة، مفاعل
  «microscope» مصعد مجهز «elevator»
- Notice, however, that use of such forms is restricted to writing. In speech, Egyptians for example use ميكروسكوب and أسامبوسir.
التعريب

- Biology → علم الأحياء (to avoid علم البiology)
- Psychology → علم النفس (to avoid علم السكولوجيا)
- But: How to derive adjectives?

Media Arabic

- The Arabic used in media outlets has been the most influenced by foreign languages.
- New idioms and phrases entered the language this way. Consider these examples from Holes (2004: 315), given in transcription and translation on the next slide:

Examples of التعريب

- http://www.bbc.co.uk/arabic/scienceandtech/

A little bit of history

- Notice that the word تعریب has two meanings: Arabization of foreign words, and also Arabization at the educational, administrative, and governmental level.
- We’ll talk about this second meaning today.

- Note: In the literature, both Arabization and Arabicization are used.
A little bit of history

After Arab countries gained their independence, they faced great challenges due to the deep penetration of colonialist powers and their languages into every domain of life.

We focus here on challenges regarding language policies.

Arabization

The main policy after independence was Arabization.

For many, Fusha became a symbol of identity: “a language of independence, tradition, a glorious past, and even the language in which a sound moral system could be explained and maintained.”

That said, colonialist languages are still used until this day, and even more than before. Why?

Arabization in Algeria

Longest years under French rule: 132 years.

French was the official language.

Eradication of the religious education system, and with it the teaching of Fusha.

Pre-colonization literacy rate: 40-50%

Post-colonization literacy rate: 10%

The Algerians responded by clinging to Islam and Fusha: “Islam is our religion, Arabic our language, and Algeria our fatherland.” (Al-Madani 1931).

French was an official language, but not a national language in Algeria.

French pattern of colonization

France’s language policy was linguistic assimilation.

French was the language of administration, public life, and education. Fusha was suppressed.

After independence, Arab countries that were under French rule faced serious challenges regarding language policies.

We discuss each in turn.

Arabization in Algeria

Still, French continued to flourish due to immigration and urbanization.

After Algeria gained independence in 1962, a policy of Arabization was put in place. But there were challenges. What were they?

Main challenge: Finding teachers.

Some French teachers. Then Egyptian teachers.

Arabization of subjects in primary and secondary education. Same with the humanities and social sciences.

Requiring competence in Arabic for government positions.
### Arabization in Algeria

- Still, there remained challenges. Why?
- The job market was still French-centric. That created a problem for graduates from Arabized education.
- Medicine and technical subjects are taught in French. Humanities and Social sciences in Arabic.
- The problem is that students going to college are not good enough in French to succeed in college.
- So, French remains instrumental. SA is symbolic. Hence, the problematic situation.

### Berber in Algeria

- Algeria also has a Berber minority. What was the Berbers' reaction to Arabization?
- Traditionally, Berbers were opposed to Arabization. They also lobbied for recognition of Berber as an official language.
- The Arab-Berber dispute has its roots in French colonialism.
- Tamazight was declared a national language in 2003, but there is no reason to believe it’ll be an official language any time soon.
- Tamazight is now taught for 3 hours a week in the middle school.

### Arabization in Morocco

- Colonized by the French from 1912 to 1956.
- French was imposed as an official language.
- Assimilation to French as not as deep as in Algeria.
- Arabization started after independence.
- Five stages of Arabization, with setbacks on the way.

### Arabization in Morocco

- Stage 1: Started Arabising subjects at the primary level.
- Main problems: Teaching materials and teachers.
- A setback in 1966.
- Stage 2: Completed Arabisation for the elementary cycle.
- Stage 3: Social studies in secondary schools were all Arabised.

### Arabization in Morocco

- Stage 4: Efforts to Arabize all secondary school studies.
- Stage 5: All secondary school subjects including science and math have been Arabized.
- But higher education is still in French, resulting in same problems as in Algeria.
- Today, there are two groups: Arabisants and Françisants.

### Arabization in Morocco

- But French actually became even more powerful. Why?
- Economic reasons. Language of prestige. Urbanization allowed more contact with French speakers.
Berber in Morocco

- Moroccan policies did not take account of Berber dialects or seek to standardize them.
- Berber languages are still not recognized in the constitution.
- Berbers did not use the Arabic script to write their dialects/languages, which were mainly oral ones.
- Berber dialects are now emphasized as a symbol of a distinct identity, and using Arabic script may be a threat to this identity.

Arabization in Tunisia

- Colonized for 75 years.
- At the time of independence, Literacy rates in Arabic and French were similar.
- Biculturalism and ties to France/West were stressed.
- French remained prestigious.
- Arabization was finally achieved in math, science, and technical education up to 9th grade in 1997.
- Scientific and technical subjects in secondary school and university are still in French.

Syria and Lebanon

- The colonization of Syria and Lebanon by France did not have the same effect as it did in North Africa. The Syrians and the Lebanese were able to preserve SA with more success. Why?

Syria and Lebanon

1. Missionary schools that had opened in the late 1800s had taught SA in addition to their own
2. Syria created the Syrian Arab Science Academy in 1919 which provided Arabic equivalents for new technical terms, languages (French, Italian, and English).
3. The geographical location of Syria and Lebanon allowed them to interact with their Arab neighbors more than their French colonizers.
4. Syria and Lebanon were not occupied for nearly as long as the countries of North Africa.
Syria

• The University of Damascus was established in 1923 and instruction was mainly in Arabic.
• After independence, SA became a symbol of unity and identity.
• All university subjects, including science and technical fields, were Arabized in Syria.
• The Syrian government always wanted to project an image of الو vọngة العربية والعروبة.
• The Kurds were largely ignored.

Lebanon

• The French created a sectarian political system in Lebanon (where the president was to be a Maronite, the prime minister a Sunni, and the president of the Chamber of Deputies a Shiite). This weakened feelings of nationalism, but did not eradicate them completely.
• The Lebanese people continued to think of themselves as part of an Arab nation.

Lebanon

• The education system remained at the hands of missionary schools.
• In private schools, technical studies are taught in French or English, while Arabic is reserved for the humanities.
• In a university co-founded by Egypt’s Alexandria University, the organization is almost the same except that both English and SA are used for technical subjects, while French is not used at all.

Lebanon

• Currently, French tends to be associated with Christians, and English with Muslims.
• For some, French is considered a symbol of ‘sectarian conflicts.’

Next class agenda

• Guest lecture by Prof. Sam Liebhaber on Mehri
• Follow the following link for information on Mehri: http://sites.middlebury.edu/mahripoetry/
• Also read section 5.9 from Bassiouney’s Chapter 5, pp. 263-267 on linguistic rights.

“One nation, one language.”