Sociolinguistics of the Arabic-speaking World: Session 5, 20 July

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Plan for today

1. Assignment for Monday
2. Quick review of last Monday’s discussion
3. Small group discussions about today’s readings
4. Today’s readings as well as Bentahila; Mark will assist
Assignment for July 20

1) Our focus will be heritage learners. As you’ll see, there is lots we have no idea about wrt this topic.

2) I’d ask you to read two very different articles, both of which are posted:
Bale. (2010). Arabic as a heritage lg. in the US.
Other business

1) If there are topics you’d like us to discuss in remaining sessions, let me know.

2) If you’re taking the class for credit, let’s check in about your writing assignment for the course if we haven’t done so this week. I can meet some folks this afternoon, tomorrow, or Monday.
Quick Review from Monday

1) Using MS’s MLF/4-M models, we can account for nearly everything that seems to be occurring when speakers of Arabic engage in diglossic switching. Take away: at this point, there is no “third language” or “middle variety.” Instead, we have the practice of diglossic switching.

2) Depending on one’s interlocutors, it is always fine to use the L variety as matrix, embedding elements from the H variety as appropriate. However, when the H variety is the matrix, use of the L must be rhetorically marked.
3) An advantage of formal models (like MLF/4-M) is that they make strong, testable predictions about what will and won’t occur. In that regard, they tell us where to look.

4) In contrast, Behtahila provides a functional approach to Ar/Fr CS in Morocco. Functional models can never be exhaustive because functions may overlap, and new functions can arise (or be uncovered) at any time.

5) Surreptitious tape-recording is no longer considered ethical or permissible.
Check-in

1) How was today’s reading?
2) How much of the info in these articles was new to you?
3) Did these perspectives call into question anything you’d assumed, been taught, or experienced?
4) Which aspects of the articles did you find especially interesting?
5) Which aspects of the articles would you like to know more about or discuss further?
Samin (2010). Internet discussion boards in SA.

1) Samin is little concerned with the details of lg. in the way a sociolinguist (or linguist more generally) might be. How might we take some of Samin’s concerns and investigate them from a sociolinguistic perspective?

2) Why/How is an understanding of the forces Samin discusses—e.g., “the incursion of small media” (Eickelman)—important to sociolinguists?
3) Is Fernback’s claim that “community is both an object of study (an entity, a manifestation) and the communicative process of negotiation and production of commonality of meaning, structure, and culture” (qtd., 178-179) useful to sociolinguists? How?

4) How does the Internet offer challenges to pre-existing social orders, and how does it function as a norm-reinforcement mechanism, a characteristic of all social networks?
5) Where do we see evidence of purism in the bulletin boards discussed by Samin?

6) Importantly, Saudi Arabia is not the only nation-state where there is a tension between allegiance to the state—however the state defines that allegiance—and allegiance to other forms/levels of social organization. (We certainly see that conflict in the US.) What forms do these conflicts take in SA? Why is this information significant for sociolinguists?
7) Discourse analysts and rhetoricians would argue that different cultures favor different strategies for structuring arguments, termed *tropes*. An example is the use of the appeal to religious costs and benefits (Nisnaas, p. 187). Do you see other tropes at work here?

8) What might motivate the use of MSA on these bulletin boards, given what is usually claimed about written forms of Arabic in electronic media and the (likely) international nature of the participants?
9) What Ig. ideologies do we see at play in the postings?
Bianchi (2013)—3arabizi/Arabish

Quick background on two things:
1) involved vs. noninvolved style (p. 92)
   • from the multidimensional analyses of Biber, Biber & Conrad, etc.
   • involved: e.g., conversation (1\textsuperscript{st} person pronouns, active voice, pres. progressive, etc.)
   • noninvolved (=\textit{informational}): e.g., gov’t documents (passives, prep phrases, nominalization)
2) Fishman (1967): diglossia with and without bilingualism, bilingualism with and without diglossia

Fishman, a sociologist, extended the notion of Fergusonian diglossia by relaxing the condition that the two lg. varieties be linguistically related.

diglossia: a property of societies
bilingualism: a property of individuals
## Diglossia

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Bilingualism</th>
<th>Monolingualism</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Paraguay; Swiss-speaking Germany; E. European Jewish males: Yiddish/Hebrew (preWWII)</td>
<td>Situations of rapid social change, social unrest; immigrant communities where lgs are given up</td>
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<tr>
<td>Strong social cleavages: Francophone elites in Russia pre-WWI</td>
<td>small, isolated monolingual, monostylistic communities, self-liquidating</td>
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1) Were Bianchi’s findings a surprise in any way? If so, how and why? If not, why not?

2) What does Bianchi mean when he writes, "3arabizi may represent a sort of linguistic Arab spring" (p. 93)?

3) How does Bianchi’s approach to his data compare with most discussions of 3arabizi, including those of Albirini?

4) The Milroys write about the “the complaint tradition” in discussions of standardized lgs. How is this relevant to understanding attitudes toward CS?
6) What are the possible consequences of the strong link between fushaa and Islam with regard to language ideologies? How does that link and the purism linked to it encourage the use the dialect outside formal and religious contexts, perhaps ironically? (How does the title of Haeri’s book *Sacred language, ordinary people: Dilemmas of culture and politics* (2003) capture this tension?)

7) What experiences have you had with the phenomena discussed by Bianchi?
Bentahila: Questions

1. In some bilingual communities, one is far more likely to swear in “the other” language rather than the native one? Why might this be?

2. As MS might put it, what did Arabic and French seem to index for these Moroccans?

3. Did you see instances of what MS would term unmarked switches in the article? marked switches? CS as unmarked choice?
4. What do studies like Bentahila’s, which enumerate the possible/likely functions of CS within a specific community, tell us? What are their limitations?

5. Monolinguals often ask why bilinguals engage in CS. Bilinguals often wonder why people who are bilingual in the same pair of lgs. wouldn’t. What might account for the differences in perspective?
References

