

Sociolinguistic Reflexes of Modernization in an Israeli Palestinian Town: The case of  
Taibeh town.

A proposal for a Doctoral Thesis in Linguistics

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# **Sociolinguistic Reflexes of Modernization in an Israeli Palestinian Town:**

## **The case of Taibeh town**

### **1. Aims and General Description.**

The present study will shed light on the sociolinguistic reflexes (i.e. variation and change) of the language repertoire in Taibeh town in recent years and the factors causing change. Participants will include residents that have contact with English and Hebrew through schools/multicultural schools, and their exposure to the global world through modern life experiences (the net, TV, traveling, and more). The sociolinguistic change will be examined for evidence of globalization, modernization, Hebraization and Englishization.

The study hopes to bring to a better understanding of the changes that Israeli Palestinian speakers of Arabic are undergoing and the appearance of added varieties in their repertoires as a result of modernization. These can be attributed to several factors such as age, gender, education, social class, economic status, group solidarity and traditions, parental influence, and strength of religious affiliation.

The current study will take into account crucial sociolinguistic phenomena previously noted by Spolsky and Amara in studies on the Arabic community in Israel and the West Bank, and especially in the villages of Barta`a (see Amara and Spolsky, 1995, 1996; Spolsky and Amara, 1997), Zalafa (see Amara, 1986; Amara and Spolsky, 1986, 1991, 1994, 1995), Silwan (see Abdeen, 2002), and Bethlehem (see Amara, Spolsky & Tushyeh, 1999), Palestinian Arabic in Israel (Horesh and Cotter, 2015, 2015; Amir, Amir and Rosenhouse, 2014; Bassal 2008, 2015), studies that looked at attitudes of locals towards local dialects and foreign ones, in addition to the usage of rural and urban varieties of Palestinian Arabic which is usually linked to a social status of the speaker. These studies linked the changes in the language varieties studies to age, gender, occupation, education, and geographical locus of the participants.

My study will present a novel perspective on the substantial sociolinguistic aspects of the varieties in a community that is undergoing important linguistic fluctuations. Taibeh is closer to Jewish cities than other Arab towns and villages that have been

studied, a fact which intensifies language contact between Arabic and Hebrew. The exposure to varied linguistic and social realities (including the influence of the social media and internet) is expected to reveal prominent differences in language change among interlocutors.

## **2. Scholarly Background.**

**2.1 Sociolinguistics.** New ways of life, whether they fall under the umbrella term of "globalization" or "modernization," open the doors for language change and variation from the mother tongue especially among minority language speakers. Kouzmin (1988) described these changes: "Increasing immersion in the mainstream society and acceptance of new ways of life...mean that language shift from mother tongue to majority language is inevitable" (p.52). This can perhaps be attributed to the participants in our current study where young people are much more immersed in the Israeli or global society than their parents, something which is reflected in the greater tendency to undergo a linguistic change and variation rather than mother tongue preservation. The Arab community in Israel has extensive contact with Hebrew. This close contact is the result of numerous factors such as the easy access of the internet and social media, in addition to the exposure to TV and film which are westernized and very often not compatible with the traditions of Arab Muslims in general. This exposure leads youth to an intensified immersion in Hebrew and English as well as other languages. Moreover, Arab students in Israel often seek their education in Hebrew-medium academic institutions and after completing their studies are often employed in occupations, professions and jobs in the neighboring Jewish cities since these cities represent economic stability for them. All of the above mentioned factors contribute to youth's exposure to Modernization and Westernization at the same time.

Researchers have studied the relationship between linguistic and social behavior. Gumperz showed "linguistic behavior as a form of social behavior, and linguistic change as a special case of social change." (Gumperz, 1964, p.52). This claim emphasizes the inseparable relationship between language and social behavior.

The evolutionary nature of social norms and structures is remarkably associated with the possibilities of generations undergoing language change which can lead to either "language maintenance" or "language shift" (Fishman, 1966). Fishman was among the pioneers who addressed these phenomena and reflected on their consequences for the

speakers of one community or another. In 1966, Fishman had already noted that linguistic input is a crucial factor in maintaining a generation's language. He stated that deficiency in input leads to language attrition. Yet, it is important to note that Fishman, unlike Clyne (1988), didn't talk about the size of the community; but rather, the amount of linguistic input. Clyne on the other hand, has said: "...the size of the community...is not a predictor of language maintenance" (p. 68).

Languages and their speakers undergo radical changes due to contact which very often entails cultural variations and the influence of other aspects of life. These changes concern *language loyalty* (Spolsky, 1988), the desire to express one's identity through the use of the native language and its culture even in situations where this language is not dominant.

Language is consequently viewed as something which is influenced by society, culture, and the speakers who utilize it for various purposes. Schmidt-Rohr (as cited in Fishman, 1972) identified these purposes in 1932 and called them domains. These domains are: the family, the playground and the street, the school, the church, the literature, the press, the military, the courts, and the governmental bureaucracy, etc (Fishman, 1972, p.122). Schmidt-Rohr further explained that these domains help us comprehend more information about language choice and topic for the purpose of analysis of face-to-face encounters (Fishman, 1972).

Weinreich (1988) stresses that the level of control or value interlocutors attribute to their language choices varies from one context to another. Weinreich alleges that an improvement in family context may require a different language choice on the part of the interlocutor rather than an improvement in work or governmental context.

### **Theoretical approaches**

The political changes that resulted after 1948 and 1967 in Israel and Palestine have greatly influenced the social and economic reality of Arabic speakers in the region (Horesh and Cotter, 2015). Consequently, Arabic speakers have adopted different variants of dialectal Arabic. The adoption of these variants can be related to language contact Arabic is experiencing with Hebrew and other languages according to Henkin-Roitfarb, 2011 (as cited in Horesh and Cotter, 2015). In light of the change and variation Arabic is reported to experience over the years; this dissertation wishes

to justify the occurrences of these alternations with the support of the following theories:

To begin with, the Community of Practice Theory was introduced by Lave and Wenger (as cited in Holmes & Meyerhoff, 1999) and it is defined as:

"an aggregate of people who come together around mutual engagement in an endeavor. Ways of doing things, ways of talking, beliefs, values, power relations- in short, practices- emerge in the course of this mutual endeavor. As a social construct, a CofP is different from the traditional community, primarily because it is defined simultaneously by its membership and by the practice in which that membership engages." (Holmes & Meyerhoff, 1999, p. 176). Here, we are relating and focusing on the speakers of the language and the practice they are engaged in; something that can explain their specific language choices during social interactions. The importance of this theory stems from the fact that Arabic Palestinian speakers in Taibeh are perceived as members of the Arabic speaking community in Israel practicing their dialect along with Hebrew and English being present in their daily interactions.

Since social interaction can draw the lines of the amount of linguistic change taking place in discourse; the role of the group member in the speech event is vital. Among the theories relevant to this view is the one by Harris. Harris proposed the Group Socialization (GS) Theory of Development in 1995 which states:

... socialization is context-specific and that outside-the-home socialization takes place in the peer groups of childhood and adolescence. Intra- and intergroup processes, not dyadic relationships, are responsible for the transmission of culture and for environmental modification of children's personality characteristics. The universality of children's groups explains why development is not derailed by the wide variations in parental behavior found within and between societies (p. 458)

GS theory does not state that children can develop without their parents, but it states that society shapes their personality to a great extent. For instance, we can think of Arab immigrants who move to live in Europe or America. Their children adopt the new lifestyle and language of the hosting country. Children might have the accent and speech of the language of their new home, unlike parents who might speak the new

language, yet with less competence than the children. This is relevant to the present study in the sense that children are able to adopt the new colloquial forms or more prestigious linguistic changes their society accepts more easily than their parents.

My study will utilize the Contact Linguistic Theory by Myers-Scotton (2006), which is governed by several set of principles. Myers-Scotton proposed the Matrix Language Frame model (MLF) and the Embedded Language model which proposes that there is no symmetry between the participating languages in speech. The matrix language contributes the morpheme order and the embedded language contributes content words. This is especially significant in this study since exposure to less traditional life styles can prompt greater language contact among Arabic Palestinian speakers and can account for the changes taking place in the Arabic varieties examined.

Another relevant theory, the Speech Accommodation Theory (Bourhis and Giles, 1977) was illustrated by Myers-Scotton (2006) and will serve as a basis for explaining changes Arabic is undergoing by native speakers in the modern social context in which it is used (Horesh and Cotter, 2015; Bassal, 2015). This theory was developed based on an experiment of the matched guise tests to study different British dialects. In this test, there is a recording of different language varieties, and subjects are asked to listen to these varieties in order to provide a judgment of their expectation about the speakers' background. This theory alleges that speaker accommodate their speech to people they like and tend to not accommodate their speech to people they do not like (Myers-Scotton, 2006).

Finally, the Ecology of Language theory, which Haugen posited in 1972, is explained in the following way: Languages are said to interact with each other and with their environment. Haugen further stated that "the ecology of language is determined primarily by the people who learn it, use it, and transmit it to others" (Haugen, 1972, p. 325). This theory can contribute to understanding the interaction of Arabic with the current environment in Taibeh and reflect on the changes it is experiencing.

## **2.2 Palestinian Arab Modernization and its linguistic effects**

Arab countries are experiencing major urbanization in the last century (Miller, 2004). Miller relates to the rapid growth of urban populations in many Arab countries which has important linguistic ramifications. Bassiouney (2009) reviews these social and

linguistic transformations in her book *Arabic Sociolinguistics* while stressing the major shifts each of the studied populations has experienced. Holes (1995) adds to Bassiouney's review the fact that not only is the size of the population important for the linguistic change taking place, but also the political importance of those populations; a standpoint that was related to by Clyne, (1988) who alleged that the size of a community is not a predictor of language maintenance. Egypt and Syria illustrate these transformations; large segments of the populations moved from a rural setting to an urban one while accommodating to the prestigious Cairene and Damascene dialects respectively as a sign of modernization. The beginning of the modernization process in many Arab countries began with the movement from the countryside to the city and adopting the urban dialect. At a later point, these groups would have been exposed to foreign languages. In Taibeh, this is relevant especially due to the fact that the city is growing and population growth is contributing to the increase of language changes taking place.

Cairo presents an example of the linguistic modifications introduced by modernization. Woidich (1994) explains that the Cairene dialect was formed in the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century after many people moved from the countryside into the city. It was the stigmatization of the rural dialect which caused many rural forms to disappear and led to a new linguistic reality (Versteegh, 2001). Among the changes occurring was the pronunciation of the sound [q] for example as a [ʔ]. According to Versteegh, many Egyptians modified their dialect once they encountered the dialect of Cairo, and even dropped their original speech forms. This phenomenon is similar to the case Abdel-Jawad (1986) presents. Abdel-Jawad distinguishes among the urban Palestinian dialect with a glottal stop [ʔ], the rural Palestinian dialect with a voiceless stop [k], and the Bedouin and rural Jordanian dialects with a voiced stop [g] while attributing the usage of each to various social motivations. A more thorough explanation of the phenomenon will be given below in the section about the emergence of vernaculars.

Urbanization was studied by Moghadam in 2010 where she presented it as a key factor for social change and economic growth in Middle Eastern and North African countries (MENA). Moghadam especially focuses on how urbanization contributes to enhancing the status of females in MENA societies. The rate of urbanization is very

high in the light of the industrial boom associated with the importance of oil. As a sociologist, Moghadam states;

Cities across the region are now participants in the global economy through investments and trade and are linked to the world polity through government involvement in multilateral organizations and international treaties. A growing population has access to the new information and communication technologies that link it to world society and world culture. Women's rights groups are composed of those among this population of urban, educated, and tech-savvy citizens. (p. 20).

Moreover, MENA countries are experiencing lower fertility rates, higher marriage age, and shifts in family structure and higher education levels; all of these factors strengthen the urbanization process in these countries. A relation to the distinction between urban and rural varieties was stressed by Seeger, 2009 (as cited in Horesh and Cotter, 2015) on the villages in Ramallah area.

The above mentioned examples of linguistic and social changes are a few among many others present in Arab countries undergoing modernization processes.

### **2.3. The Arabic sociolinguistic system and the emergence of vernaculars**

The investigation of the Arabic sociolinguistic system has increased especially since the work of Ferguson on diglossia in 1959. The Arabic sociolinguistic system has attracted the attention not only of linguists and Arabists, but also of those who are involved in the fields of anthropology, folklore, history, political science, and sociology (Suleiman, 1994a, &b, 1999 and others). For many years, the Arabic language has served as an instrument to define the nationalist ideology and ethnic identity of many speakers around the Arab world. Yet, the political upheavals and changes of power in the different regions of the Arab world have changed the status of this language.

### **2.4. Dialect categorization.**

Bouamor, Habash and Oflazer, 2014 have stated that the Arabic language is viewed as a collection of untaught or unstandardized dialects. These dialects were a result of communication between pre-Islamic local languages (such as Coptic, Berber and

Syriac), neighboring languages (such as Persian, Turkish and Spanish) and colonial languages (such as Italian, French and English). Dialects differ lexically, phonologically, and morphologically (Watson, 2007).

Dialect contact and language variation has been extensively studied and researched in the western world, especially in the cities where there is closeness among the processes of urbanization and industrialization in the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> centuries (e.g. Auer et al. 2005, Chambers et al. 2002, Kerswill 2005). The same interest in the linguistic changes and developments occurring in the Western world has emerged in Arab speaking countries, especially considering that these countries have varying degrees of urbanization. Most of these societies have been rural for a lengthy period of time (Miller, 2007).

The Arab-Muslim conquest in the 7<sup>th</sup>-8<sup>th</sup> centuries (CE) led to contact between Arab speakers and non-Arab populations outside the Arabian Peninsula (Donner, 1981; Versteegh, 1997). As a result, there was a claim that "corrupt" Arabic vernaculars developed and the only vernaculars maintaining their "purity" were the Bedouin ones (Miller, 2007). It was believed that traditionally Bedouin speakers were those who were responsible for fixing the faults of the Classical Arabic language coming from foreign influence (Versteegh, 1997:3). This has created a close relationship between the Bedouin variety and Classical Arabic which can be traced till the present day (Bassiouney, 2009).

Ibn Khaldun (as cited in Palva, 2006) has typologically divided Arabic dialects into Bedouin (*badawi*), urban (*madani*), and rural (*qarawi* or *fellahin*), a division that continues to be used by Western dialectologists till today. Palva discussed the term *koine/koineization* in referring to the source of urban varieties which developed post Arab-Muslim conquests in places like Iraq, Syria and Egypt in the 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> centuries (Palva, 1982). The term refers to "a shared variety" (Miller, 2007). Palva has attempted to check the nature and origin of the emerging vernaculars using the abovementioned sociolinguistic categorization.

The repercussions of Ibn Khaldun's (as cited in Palva, 2006) divisions were reflected in the fact that the origin of speakers and their families was more significant than their geographical residence as they claimed affiliation with a specific dialect, such as the Bedouin one (Miller, 2007). In other words, utilizing the Bedouin dialect did not

necessary mean that the speaker was living a nomadic life in the desert. This point was further elaborated on by Barth (1969) raising the theory of ethnic boundaries which basically can be seen as interpreting the word Bedouin socially in a given society. In my study, the theory of ethnic boundaries will be relevant especially when discussing the division of the variants of [q] and their linkage to certain speakers regardless of their current geographical locus.

The efficiency of Ibn Khaldun's (ac cited in Palva, 2006) dialect categorization was utilized in identifying linguistic divisions in many countries such as Iraq among others. The distinction in Iraq was drawn between the [q ] sedentary dialect and the [g] Bedouin dialect (Jastrow, 2006a). Miller (2007) discusses the Mashreq and North Africa in relation to the dialectical changes occurring and sums up her observations by stating that:

...with the progressive settlement of former Bedouin groups, a process of *koineization* occurred which led to the emergence of mixed urbanized vernaculars spoken mainly by Muslim groups (particularly males), while the old city vernaculars were kept by non-Muslim communities and women (Miller, 2007, p.6).

Miller alleges that this conclusion weakens Cadora's linear developmental model (Cadora, 1992) which proposes a movement from the Bedouin dialect to the rural and to the urban respectively. Moreover, Miller notes that this can be seen as an indication that dialect contact doesn't always lead to a process of *koineization*.

Jordan can be an example of the categorization of dialects present in many Arab countries. Bassiouney (2009) citing Cleveland 1963 describes the linguistic situation of this country as a highly divided one which embraces an urban Palestinian dialect, a rural Palestinian dialect, a Bedouin Jordanian dialect, and a rural Jordanian one. The difference among these dialects can be highlighted in particular when noting the phonological realization of the consonantal [q]. Suleiman (2004) suggests this division comes as a consequence of the bloody confrontation between Jordanians and Palestinians in 1970. After this confrontation, Palestinians began shifting from or adapting their rural and urban Palestinian dialects to the Jordanian one which was considered more prestigious and safer (Suleiman, 2004). However, Jordanians were not accommodating to the Palestinian dialect which was associated with modernity

and education, even after the reconciliation. This was seen as a sign of pride and solidarity according to Abdel-Jawad (1986).

Arab counties offer a rich pool of research for sociolinguists in all that relates to dialect contact, as the following cases will show. The first example is in North Africa where there is a distinction between cities of Bedouin vernacular or *koine* (Oran, Marrakech, Casablanca, Constantine, etc.) and cities of Andalusian dialect (Algiers, Fez, Rabat, Sale, Tunis, Tlemcen, Tangiers, Tetouan, Tripoli, etc.). The process of urbanization that took place in these cities caused an increase in language contact between Standard Arabic and French or English which consequently led to the spread of language mixing (Miller, 2007). In these cases, we saw a shift from the negative perception of language mixing to a positive perception of the phenomenon.

Other cases of dialect change documented in history can be seen in Iraq, Bahrain, Jordan-Palestine, Lebanon, and Yemen among others. For instance, the settlement of many Shi'is in Baghdad at the end of the 20<sup>th</sup> century strengthened the Bedouin Arabic of the city according to Abu Haidar (2006). In Bahrain there are two varieties that are related to each other and close to the Sunni Bedouin speech (Holes, 2006). The effects of urbanization were reviewed in studies examining the vernacular contact of urban Palestinian and rural/Bedouin Jordanian. This contact caused variations in relation to gender, ethnicity, religion, and contextual use according to Miller's 2007 report. In this special case of urban and rural/Bedouin vernaculars there was an evidence of women's tendency to use the urban vernacular (Palestinian), while men tended to use the Modern Standard Arabic (Amara, 2005) or the rural/Bedouin vernacular (Abdel Jawad, 1986; Sawaie, 1994). Christians also used the urban vernacular more than the rural one (Amara, 2005).

## **2.5. Arabic in Israel.**

**2.5.1. The situation of Arabic in Israel.** In 1948 the new State of Israel took over the regulation which had been in place during the British Mandate which had English, Arabic, and Hebrew as official languages of Mandatory Palestine. Yet, the state of Israel's language regulation was far from being clear according to Spolsky (1994). The new regulation didn't keep English on the list of the regulated languages, yet, this act didn't stop this language from being used and ranked after Hebrew but before Arabic (Fishman, 1977). Spolsky has also noted that there is a tendency to have public

signs in Hebrew and English more than in Hebrew and Arabic (Spolsky and Shohamy, 1999). The Mandatory Government after WWI encouraged two separate educational systems of Hebrew and Arabic for both populations living there and this continued after the establishment of the state. Today, Arabs in Israel use their dialectical Arabic informally and their standard Arabic in schools' formal setting (e.g. literature resources). They acquire their Hebrew formally through the school system and informally in the field of work, through medical services, governmental offices, and commercial contacts. The division between Arabs and Jews in Israel is reflected in many domains: institutions, culture, national identity, socioeconomic status, and more (Smootha, 2010). Therefore, Smootha claims that: "Arabs in Israel endure Palestinization and Islamization differently because of their Israelization." (p.8). However, it is claimed in Smootha's paper that despite modernization; Israeli Arabs maintain semitraditional lifestyle which differs from the dominant Hebrew culture. Based on what has been previously mentioned it is important to add that the linguistic heterogeneity in Israel differs also when discussing a city setting or a village setting. Numerous studies have made this distinction clear; emphasizing the role of an urban or rural setting in the appearance of linguistic varieties among speakers (Amara (1986, 1991, 1994; Amir, Amir and Rosenhouse, 2014; Bassal, 2008, 2015; Horesh and Cotter, 2015; Cotter, 2013; Cotter and Horesh, 2015). My study will be conducted in Taibeh which is considered a large town. According to official categories, Taibeh is considered a city. However, among the group of cities like Tel Aviv and Haifa, it is small, with a population of 50,000. Therefore, for the purposes of this paper, Taibeh will be referred to as a "town" and will be examined in light of the sociolinguistic reflexes expressed by its community members.

Horesh and Cotter have touched upon the issue of variation and change in Arabic within Israel while highlighting the changes occurring in the /q/ variable which is considered among the mostly studied variables in Arabic sociolinguistics (Horesh and Cotter, 2015). They note that /q/ is produced as a glottal stop ʔ in Jaffa, Jerusalem and Haifa (Horesh 2000, Levin 1994, Geva-Kleinberger 2004). It can be assumed that these variants along with [k], until the glottal stop turned to represent the phoneme /q/.

Henkin, 2010 and Horesh, 2014 (as cited in Horesh and Cotter, 2015) have presented structural borrowings that they considered as changes in the Bedouin Palestinian and urban Palestinian Arabic (Jaffa). These changes include: glottalization, vocalization,

vowel shortening, and various morphological processes performed on loanwords from Hebrew; among others.

Cotter, 2013 (as cited in Horesh and Cotter, 2015) is among the ones who studied the /q/ variable in the city of Gaza. Cotter found that indigenous residents pronounce this variable as [g] whereas others who come from different regions in Palestine pronounce it as a glottal stop [ʔ]. Cotter has also found that gender is considered an important factor in the linguistic variation in Gaza.

Bassal reviews the phonemic features of some villages in the North comparing them to the dialect of Kufur Yassif. He claims that Yirka, the Druze village has a unique pronunciation of the phoneme q being produced as a velar [ʔ] with aspiration. In the Christian village of Mi`ilya they have a special pronunciation of it as an emphatic variant. However, in Kufur Yasif which is close to the urban town of Akka and maybe influenced by this location we see a deviation in the pronunciation of some classical phonemes (Bassal, 2008).

Dialect divergence in coastal Palestine was of an interest to Cotter and Horesh in 2015. They wrote that urban dialects of the Levant perceive /q/ as a glottal stop, while rural dialects and Bedouin ones perceive it as [k] and [g]. In addition, Cotter and Horesh presented the four primary variants of the uvular stop /q/ in Palestinian dialects (Shahin, 2007: 527): [k]- voiceless velar stop: rural and village dialects across Palestine, [ʔ]- glottal stop: in Palestinian urban centers like Jerusalem, Nablus, Jaffa, and Ramallah (Abd El-Jawad, 1987; Horesh, 2000; Rosenhouse, 2007; Shahin, 2007), [g]- voiced velar stop: in Bedouin dialects in Nagab desert and Southern West Bank (Cleveland, 1967; Palva, 1984; Shahin, 2007; Shawarbah, 2012), and [q]- voiceless uvular stop: in rural Druze communities in the Galilee and Mt. Carmel regions of northern Palestine (Blanc, 1953: 68-69).

Gender was found to play a role in the variant choice of speakers. Females tend to adopt the supralocal variant [ʔ] as noted in many studies (Abd El-Jawad, 1987, 1981; Al-Wer, 2007; Haeri, 1997), where males speakers tend to use the local variants more often. The study proposes that female speakers are "innovators of linguistic change". The women investigated in the study tended to maintain the [ʔ] variant in their speech in order to maintain their identity as Jaffan.

Following the review of dialectical variants of Arabic within Israel the study will relate to the way the geographical setting of different communities is viewed and the effect it has on modernization.

### **2.5.2 Urban areas: civilized or corrupt**

Since my study will be conducted in an urban area rather than a village, it is essential to show the perception of the Arab world to urban areas. Urban areas embrace a tremendous amount of heterogeneity in their social structure; this raises a controversy as to whether this should be considered in a positive light or a negative one. Miller (2007) talks about how cities or urban areas were on occasion viewed as a source of corruption. Yet, she also presents the fact that cities were also perceived as places of "civilization, refinement, dynamism and modernity as opposed to the backward rural areas." (p. 12) I can say that these two standpoints are both dominant and relevant nowadays in the daily discourse of residents in Taibeh (i.e. the locus of my research).

Presenting these two sides of a debate must be accompanied by providing explanations about the political unsettlements prevailing in major Middle Eastern cities in previous centuries. If we were to review the political situation of the Middle East in the 14<sup>th</sup> century till the beginnings of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, we would realize that there were foreign ruling powers like the Mamluks, Ottomans, Circassians, Mogols, etc. In addition, cities attracted many workers from different fields (Dakhliya, 2004; Raymond, 1993). Cities had also many non-Muslim European inhabitants (Boucherit, 2002). All of the above facts had contributed to the perceived corruption of the Arabization of these places. However, once the foreign dominance ended, a great effort was invested on the national side and the educational purity in regards to Arabic language. All of these elements have given birth to interesting dynamics in major cities, especially in the linguistic dimension of the speakers and the new generatio

### **2.6. Language attitudes**

Attitudes in sociolinguistics can serve in defining a speech community and the plausible success in learning a second language according to Cooper and Fishman (1974). There are other functions language attitudes can serve such as being a "catalyst for sound change" (Cooper and Fishman, 1974, p.5). Fasold further stresses that "the course of a sound change is apparently influenced by whether the change is

favored or disfavored by the speech community" (Fasold, 1984, p.184). It was mentioned earlier by Versteegh that many Egyptians, for example, modified their dialect to the dialect of Cairo, and even possibly dropped their original speech forms.

Benrabah (1992) examined the reactions to language change among speakers once the urban variety comes in contact with the rural one. It was seen that the mothers were more conservative towards change while the daughters leaned towards language change and greater usage of the urban variety.

Benrabah describes the work carried out by Bentahila in 1983 where the matched guise test was used to elicit judgments on Arabic-French usage in Morocco. Results revealed that those who use Parisian French were more highly evaluated in regards to prestige, education and social status than those who use Arabic. Interestingly, code-switching was viewed as less prestigious (as cited in Benrabah, 1992).

Suleiman (1994a) elaborates on Giles' studies in 1970 and 1971 that were replicated in studies held in the Arab world on language attitudes. El-Dash and Tucker (1975) for instance researched the Egyptian attitudes toward five speech varieties: "Cairene Egyptian Arabic, Classical Arabic, Egyptian English, American English and British English." Results reflected preference for classical Arabic while identifying it with features of leadership, intelligence, friendliness, and religious association.

Judgment and attitudes on languages apply to phonological variants such as the variable [q] in Arabic. Sawaie (1994) conducted a study on Jordanian/Palestinians to check their preference of the four variants of the variable [q]: [q], [ʔ]-glottal stop-, [g], and [k]. The [q] variant was rated the highest, [k] and [g] received less favorable ratings while [ʔ] was the least favored when used by males because it was viewed as effeminate. The study showed female preference for urban varieties because these varieties are considered more prestigious; these results accord with the results of many other studies (Abd-el-Jawad, 1986; Cadora, 1970; Suleiman, 1985; Boukous, 1979). Suleiman conducted a study that elaborated on the reasons females favored the urban variety, the "*Madani*" speech, especially university students. These reasons are "(1) the high socio-economic conditions of urban speakers who are (2) more educated and live in (3) influential cultural centers from which cultural and artistic innovations spread to other areas" (Benrabah. 1992). In addition, this literature review has

brought evidence for the belief that females are the leading forces for language change.

On the basis of this background, in the next section I present the questions that the study will try to answer and the hypotheses I will investigate.

### 3. **Research questions and hypotheses**

#### **3.1. Research questions:**

- 1) What are the prominent linguistic features of the Tibawi (of Taibeh) variation?
- 2) What are the social factors influencing the Tibawi linguistic repertoire?
- 3) How do social networks of the Tibawi community affect the changes of Arabic and the appearance of added varieties?
- 4) What are the speakers' different attitudes towards the changes of Arabic and appearance of added varieties in the language?

#### **Hypotheses:**

Taibeh is experiencing change and variation in its linguistic repertoire which can be associated with the modernization process the town population has gone through. There are several factors which can perhaps account for this change and variation; such as age, gender, education, social class, economical status, group solidarity and traditions, parental influence, and religious affiliation. These factors can lead to an increased usage of added forms into the language [borrowings].

In addition, the above mentioned factors will play a significant role in the choice of the Arabic form used among speakers from different backgrounds.

- 1) The Tibawi linguistic variety or repertoire will be different among males and females due to attitudinal reasons and stereotypes prevailing in the community in town.
- 2) The educational background of speakers will influence the level of linguistic change and varieties of Arabic. The higher the educational level with increased exposure to foreign language contact, the greater the probability Arabic will experience change in the community repertoire.
- 3) The age of speakers will affect the extent to which the language of speakers is changed or influenced by added forms. Youth are more tolerant to language changes since they are more flexible in terms of traditional practices.

- 4) Family traditional practices will significantly influence the usage of a certain variety/ form of Arabic. Some families tolerate changes more than others do because of the elders' attitude and contact with the outside world.
- 5) The context of speech will determine the extent to which Arabic integrates change and adds new varieties. Formality can constrain the use or acceptance of added forms.
- 6) Parental attitudes will play an important role in maintaining Arabic or changing it and adding new varieties to the repertoire in Taibeh. Accepting changes in Arabic can be seen as a sign of modernization and globalization. This is in contrast to the situation in previous years where national identity was an issue to be reflected via maintaining Arabic and rejecting changes in the language.

#### **4. Methods**

##### **4.1. Participants**

The study will recruit male and female youngsters and adults from Taibeh town. The ages of the younger group will be 15-30 years old. The ages of the adult group will be over 30-60 years old. There will be 60 participants. Thirty youth from both sexes and 30 adults from both sexes.

The choice of the age range and linguistic background of interlocutors was based on the fact that the study wishes to relate the change in the speakers' language repertoire to modernization via the following factors: age, gender, education, social class, economical status, group solidarity and traditions, parents influence, and religious affiliation.

Moreover, the age of 15 is the age when teenagers in the Arab community generally, and Taibeh specifically; mostly have access with the outside world and interact with foreigners, it is the age where their personality starts shaping and becoming more independent. Thus, it is the relevant age to investigate language variation and change.

The study duration will be 12 months where data of natural speech will be collected in the town of Taibeh.

##### **4.2. Materials and Design**

The study will make use of four sociolinguistic experimental methods in order to add reliability and validity. Participants will fill out a demographic background questionnaire. Then they will take a survey of their linguistic

attitudes. The third phase will be a less structured one in which the researcher will record free samples of participants' everyday speech (while observing only) in order to check for various linguistic choices made unconsciously by the interlocutors. This phase will be carried out in participants' free time, at their homes, sports clubs, café's, the mall, and more; in their interactions with friends, and family members. Fourth, the researcher, who is trilingual, will interview participants about their life in Taibeh while relating to traditional, linguistic, identity aspects and more. Interviews will be recorded and transcribed. Anthropological background will be provided about Taibeh in an attempt to explain and validate participants' performances in all of the aforementioned stages. The study will extend over a period of nine months.

#### **4.3.Procedure**

Participants of the study will be informed about the purpose of the research and asked to sign a consent form for their voluntary participation. The interviews and the recording sessions will be held in the participants' homes, sports clubs, malls, café's, or work places.

#### **4.4.Transcription and data analysis**

All sessions will be audio-recorded and transcribed. Linguistic interviews and attitude questionnaires will be examined on the micro and macro level. These analyses will be held while categorizing the research participants into groups of different educational background, gender, and age. The transcriptions will undergo several statistical tests of ANOVAs and non-parametric tests to highlight the variations in the frequency of Code-Switching instances or borrowings among the three languages. These instances will be also associated to specific contexts in the interlocutors' speech. Furthermore, there will be an examination of the rural and urban varieties among interlocutors of the study.

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