

1. Introduction

The Israeli Hebrew language and the Palestinian Arabic language coexisted side by side long before the establishment of the State of Israel in 1948. Close contact between Palestinian Arabic speakers and Israeli Hebrew speakers, often accompanied by conflicts, ideological and social tension, created major mutual shifts in many aspects. One area of such influence is linguistics (Spolsky & Shohamy, 1999).

As for today, Hebrew is the main language of the Jewish population in Israel in all life domains, while Palestinian Arabic is somehow limited to stay vibrant in Arab towns, cities and villages and as a language of tuition in Arab schools (Gorter, 2011). Palestinian society in Israel is in close contact with the Jewish majority and strongly influenced by it.

In this paper, I would like to discuss the everyday life linguistic practices of Palestinian Arabic speaking society living in Israel. But first, a terminological note: Palestinian Arabs of Israel are a heterogeneous and diverse group. First, it is divided between Christian and Muslim Arabs, while Bedouin, Druze, and Circassians create other separate groups. In Hebrew, the word minorities (מיעוטים), is used for describing Arabic speaking non-Jews: Palestinian Arabs, Bedouin, Druze, and Circassians. This fact by itself marginalizes minority groups. In this paper, unless stated otherwise, I will use the term "Palestinians" when referring to Arab citizens of Israel, unlike the common usage of this term in the Hebrew language for residents of the West Bank, East Jerusalem or Gaza.

I stress that Palestinian community, has been strongly influenced by Hebrew, which is gradually penetrating its various fields. The results of this process can be seen nowadays in a wide sense which may be also studied from different angles; as psychological, social and many more. In this paper, I will focus on practices as adoption, code-switching and borrowing between Hebrew and Arabic.

The research questions that I will discuss in this paper are as following:

1. Would children use Hebrew for the lexical variants?
2. Which lexical variants would adults rather use?

3. Which age group will use more words from the Hebrew language?
4. In which domains Arabic speakers would be more likely to use words from other languages?

My initial hypothesis is that quantitatively, the discourse of today's students and younger generations is much more intervened with Hebrew than that of their parents, as the Hebrew language is intertwined with the everyday lives of Palestinians who are in close contact with Hebrew speakers. The influences of Hebrew on Palestinian Arabic are so profound and inseparable that linguistic practices are highly to be affected. In this paper I would like to show that there are various reasons, such as the frequency of use of Hebrew in daily life, the distance between the high variety of the Arabic language used in formal speech in a mosque, governmental office, parliament or formal conversations and the low variety used in casual daily conversations, and other reasons which I shall expand on below.

I claim that in the reality of Israel today, there are strong pressures from the majority population and among the inner group of Palestinians as well towards "Hebraization". I believe that it is drawn from the fact that Hebrew is the dominant language in the public sphere, including among Palestinian citizens of Israel. Hebrew is an essential necessity for effective functioning in nowadays society in Israel.

Several studies have already conducted on researching language and literacy performance in developing children from various speech communities demonstrating diglossia, but in this paper I would like to look into the differences of those lexical practices within a community and to compare performances and strategies between different age groups. I assume that there is a difference between age groups and the linguistic practices they espouse; children will tend to mix two languages while adults, in a more traditional manner will put borrowed words into the conversation. The subject of discourse will also affect the chosen language, in a way that contemporary topics will be discussed in a language mixed with Hebrew to some degree or another, while more traditional topics will remain in the Arabic language discourse. From this I will try to draw a general conclusion about the direction in which the Palestinian community in Israel is inclined in terms of language and discourse.