

DIGLOSSIA IN ARABIC



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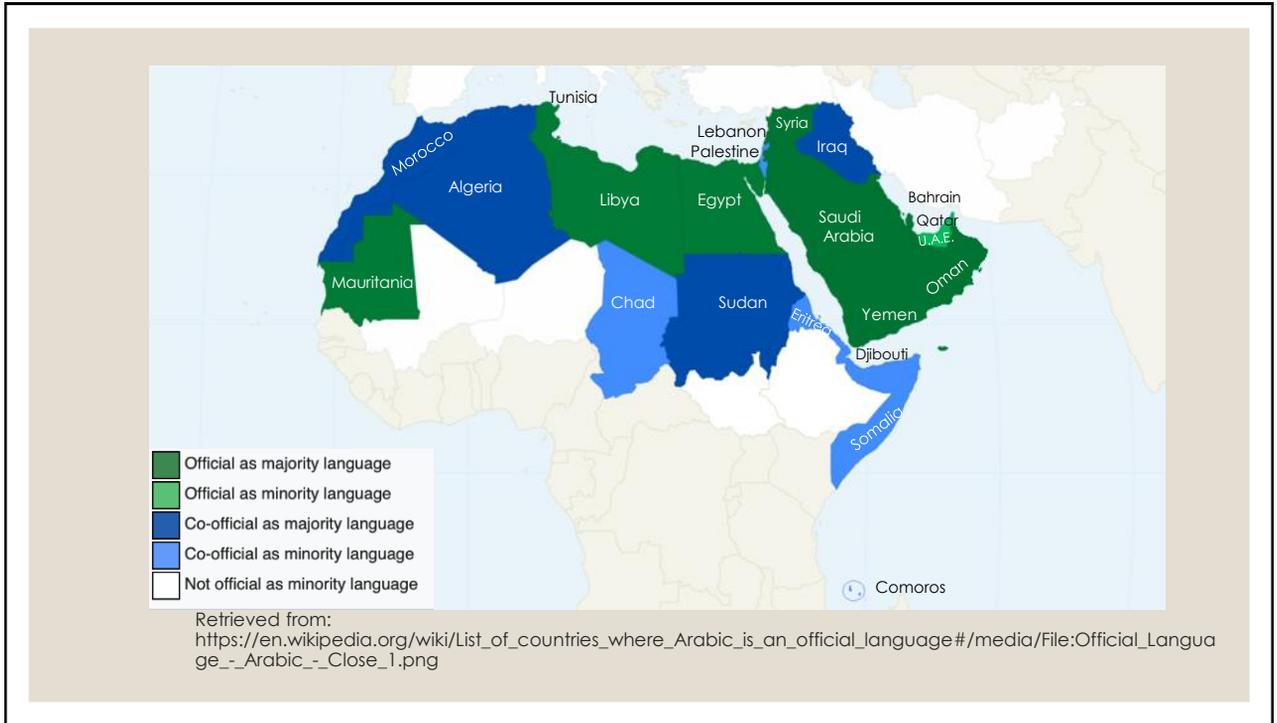
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About Arabic

- The fifth most spoken language in the world after Mandarin, Spanish, English, and Hindi (Doochin, 2019)
- One of the fastest growing languages in the US and the world
- One of the six official language of the United nations
- Official to ~25 countries (only or co-official) (Doochin, 2019)
- 5-6 presently-spoken major dialects (~30 sub-dialects)
 - Peninsular
 - Maghrebi/Darija
 - Sudanese
 - Egyptian }
 - Mesopotamian/Iraqi
 - Levantine
 - Andalusian



Languages other than English in NY

In order of number of speakers in NY

- | | |
|----------------------|--------------------|
| 1. Spanish | 13. Arabic |
| 2. Chinese | 14. Hebrew |
| 3. Russian | 15. Bengali |
| 4. Haitian (Creole) | 16. Urdu |
| 5. Italian | 17. Hindi |
| 6. French | 18. German |
| 7. Yiddish | 19. Japanese |
| 8. Korean | 20. Serbo-Croatian |
| 9. African Languages | 21. Portuguese |
| 10. Polish | 22. Persian |
| 11. Tagalog | 23. Vietnamese |
| 12. Greek | 24. Hungarian |
| | 25. Gujarati |

Languages Other Than English (LOTE) spoken by New Yorkers over 5 years of age, US Census Bureau (2009) American Community Survey Table B160001 in Garcia, Zakharia, & Otcu, 2013, p13.

KEY CONCEPTS

- **Accent:** a distinct way of pronouncing words within a language due to a difference in social class and/or difference in place of growing up/place of birth/ ethnic and/or cultural group
- **Dialect:** a different variety of a language with differences in grammar, vocabulary, and/or pronunciation
- **Diglossia:** two varieties of a language spoken in different situation within the same region (Ferguson 1959).
 - "[T]he use of two different varieties of the same language by the same speaker in separate socially-determined contexts" (qtd. In Bani Khaled,2014).
 - Origin: French "Diglossie"
 - William Marçais
 - Charles Ferguson
 - High and Swiss German in Switzerland
 - Standard Greek and Cypriot Greek
 - French and Haitian Creole

High Variety	Low Variety
Standard Arabic (SA) (al-fuṣḥá)	Dialectal Arabic (DA)/Colloquial Arabic (CA) (al-'ammiyya)
Not often used in improvised speech	Used in improvised speech
Used in formal situations/settings → Some media outlets (radio, (selective) movies, news broadcast, children's TV shows/animated movies, press coverage). Political Speeches and Academic/Educational settings. Majority of written material including newspapers, magazines, religious scripture, and books.	Used in everyday speech (e.g. informal situations) → Some media outlets (most movies, T.V shows, radio).
Mostly learned in schools	Acquired while growing up
Considered the Lingua Franca of the Arab World	Varies in different regions and/or countries where different dialects are spoken → "...increasing divergence between varieties across greater geographic distances" (Zacharia et al., 2013)

Theories on the differences between SA and DA

- “*Amiyya* has [...] diverged over time from *fuṣṣḥá*” (Zacharia et al., 2013)
- “It should be noted that “formal” and “informal” are provisional terms for denoting what are actually indiscrete circumstances in which [a certain variety of a] language is produced.” (Horn, 2015)
- Continuum Theory of Language:
 - “In reality, the speaker never opts for one variety or the other, but moves along a continuum of speech, of which the two varieties are only the extremes. In such a situation, code-switching doesn’t imply selecting a discrete variety, but positioning one’s utterance along a scale of Linguistic variation” (Versteegh, 2001)

Al-’ammiya: dialectal Arabic (DA)
Al-fuṣṣḥá: Standard Arabic (SA)

Why this study?

- There is more need for studying the similarities and differences among Arabic dialects as well as those between them on one hand and Standard Arabic on the other.
- “Young learners’ literary acquisition is negatively affected and their **motivation** for further study, in general, is **endangered**, as they cannot perceive that the language in which they have to function in school is really “theirs” and may easily conclude that the entire educational process is **alien to ordinary life**” (qtd. In Horn, 2015)
- Salah Ayari asserts that “Diglossia of the Arab world hinders children’s Arabic-reading acquisition” (Ayari, 1996) and that the solution is early exposure to literary Arabic as early as preschool

- Due to the political and cultural influence of Egypt among the Arabs, the EA is widely understood in the Arabic speaking world. Arabs from other countries can easily adjust their speech to Egyptian if desirable (qtd. In Husein 2017).
- As a result of multiple colonial efforts to reduce the status of Arabic in the Arab world (Zughoul, 1980) (Bassiouney, 2009) (Tignor, 1996), English [and Western languages in general] has enjoyed a higher status than Arabic and became the language of academics and employment (Kachru, 1992)(Schaub, 2000)

Research questions:

- Q1: What do Arabic speakers think about the two varieties?
- Q2: What do they think about the co-existence and use of 2 distinct varieties (Diglossia)?
- Q3: Is their attitude related to their educational level and/or age?

A language attitude study

- Alhassan Abdur-Rahim Husein's 2017 study investigates the attitudes that Egyptian college students have toward al-fuṣḥá
 - Egypt
 - 25 students from The American University in Cairo, Egypt
 - 25 students from Ain Shams University in Cairo, Egypt
 - 23 males; 27 females
 - Randomly selected
 - Used a five-point Likert scale to ask 12 attitude questions in a questionnaire
 - Research questions:
 - What is the Egyptian students' attitude towards al-fuṣḥā Arabic? → Cognitive domain
 - To what extent do Egyptian students consider al-fuṣḥā an important variety? → Affective and Behavioral domain

Husein's study (continued)

- Divided variables into three main domains:
 - **1. Affective Domain:** explores the feelings, preferences, likes, and dislikes about al-fuṣṣḥá (e.g. whether they enjoy speaking it)
 - **2. Behavioral Domain:** reflects their intentions and plans (e.g. whether they wish they spoke it perfectly)
 - **3. Cognitive Domain:** explores the "beliefs and opinions about fuṣṣḥá" (e.g. whether it's easy to learn it)
- **Results**
 - **Positive** *Cognitive* and *Behavioral* attitude toward al-fuṣṣḥá
 - **Negative** *Affective* one -- Husein states that such negative attitudes might be due to the fact that Egyptian Arabic is seen as a prestigious dialect
 - Limitations: the reasons participants found al-fuṣṣḥá harder

Al-'ammiya: dialectal Arabic (DA)
Al-fuṣṣḥá: Standard Arabic (SA)

Present study:

- **Methodology:**
 - Setting: Mosque in NYC; majority of attendees are Arabs, especially Egyptians
 - Questionnaire was filled out both online and on paper
 - Dörnyei (2010): questionnaires are versatile
- **Sets of questions:**
 - ~21 Demographic questions (e.g. dialect(s) spoken, age, educational level, etc.)
 - **29 Questions about the participants' attitude toward both varieties**
 - 6 questions asking respondents to self-evaluate their proficiency of al-fuṣṣḥá and of their dialect
 - 1 Question asking about the situations where they would use al-fuṣṣḥá
- Of the 29 language-attitude-related questions:
 - ~10 **affective** questions
 - ~15 **behavioral** questions
 - ~9 **cognitive** questions
 - Overlap; not clear-cut

Respondents

- *Study in progress*: so far 37 respondents, expecting more
- All participants belong to the Muslim faith
- The majority of respondents regularly interact with one or more person who speaks another dialect
- 81.6% females; 18.4% males
- 60.5% speak the Egyptian dialect; 21.1% Levantine dialect; 5.3% Moroccan; 13.2% Peninsular Arabic; Sudanese 2.6%
- 36.8% completed their bachelor's degree; 31.6% are still in college; 15.8% completed their masters degree; 7.9% completed primary school; 7.9% completed their high school studies

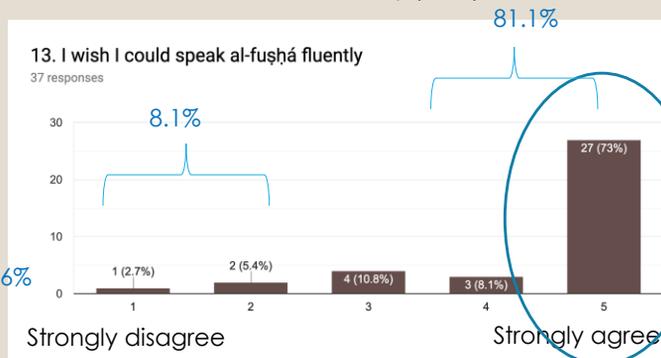
Al-'ammiya: dialectal Arabic (DA)
Al-fuṣḥá: Standard Arabic (SA)

Question 13. I wish I could speak al-fuṣḥá fluently (*Behavioral Domain*)

- Husein's study (2017) (Cairo, Egypt)

Present study (NYC)

	Q4. I wish I could speak fuṣḥá perfectly		
	Freq.	%	Cumul.
Strongly Disagree	1	2.0	2.0
Disagree	7	14.0	16.0
Don't Know	3	6.8	22.0
Agree	23	46.0	68.0
Strongly Agree	16	32.0	100.0
Total	50	100	



Al-'ammiya: dialectal Arabic (DA)
Al-fuṣḥá: Standard Arabic (SA)

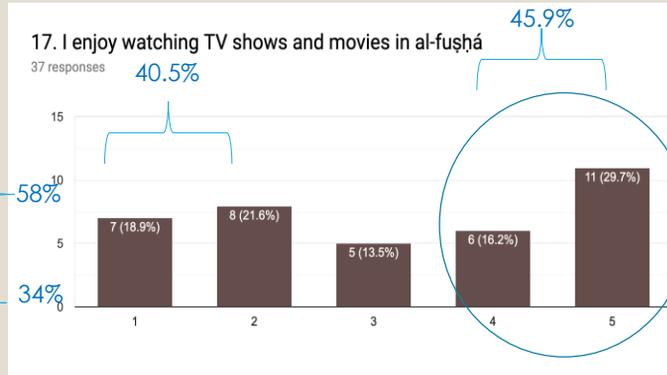
17. I enjoy watching TV shows and movies in al-fuṣḥá (Affective domain)

Cairo, Egypt (Husein, 2017)

Q11. I enjoy watching TV programmes (like talk shows, soap operas, etc.) in fuṣḥá

	Freq.	%	Cumul. %
Strongly Disagree	11	22.0	22.0
Disagree	18	36.0	58.0
Don't Know	4	8.0	66.0
Agree	16	32.0	98.0
Strongly Agree	1	2.0	100.0
Total	50	100.0	

Present study: NYC



Al-'ammiya: dialectal Arabic (DA)
Al-fuṣḥá: Standard Arabic (SA)

It is easy to learn fuṣḥá (Cognitive domain)
(Husein, 2017)

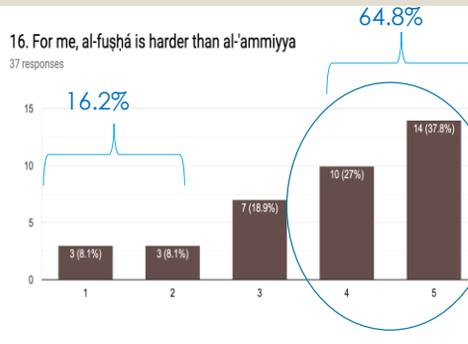
Q3. It is easy to learn fuṣḥá

	Frequency	%
Strongly Disagree	7	14.0
Disagree	19	38.0
Don't Know	4	8.0
Agree	18	36.0
Strongly Agree	2	4.0
Total	50	100.0

52%

40%

16. For me, al-fuṣḥá is harder than al-'ammiya (Cognitive domain)
Present study



Al-'ammiya: dialectal Arabic (DA)
Al-fuṣḥá: Standard Arabic (SA)

Conclusion

- Further Implications
 - Investigating the reasons for Husein's negative affective attitude
 - Investigating the reasons for our study's positive affective attitude
- Limitations of this study
 - Too many non-linguistic variables in relation to the small size of our population sample (e.g. age, educational level, gender, country of origin, specialization, employment status, etc.)
 - Focus on a specific educational level/age?
- Ways in which this study can be improved
 - More participants
 - More male participants
 - More questions concerning the cognitive and the affective domains
 - Ask about the borough where the participants reside



THANK YOU!