Marriage Proverbs in Colloquial Jordanian: A Sociolinguistic Perspective

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Abstract


This study investigates marriage-related proverbs in Jordanian Arabic from the view point of their content and language. It is mainly concerned with analyzing the themes and the formal properties of these proverbs. For the purpose of the study, a number of 113 proverbs were collected and analyzed. The proverbs were collected by means of personal interviews and some were cited from Al-Amad's (1996) book of traditional sayings. There is no specific reason why the number is 113. Data analysis has shown that marriage proverbs address various topics such as endogamy, importance of marriage, in-law relations, similarity in personal traits between parents and children, advice about choosing wives, advice about accepting a marriage proposal, fortuity of marriage, bridewealth, polygamy, mothers-in-law and marriage troubles. It is plausible to say that those proverbs aim mainly to educate people how to lead a successful marriage and avoid misconduct. In terms of formal properties, the analysis has shown that marriage proverbs are mainly expressed in complete sentences though there are some cases of deletion. These proverbs exhibit the structure of declarative, imperative, and conditional sentences. The declarative-sentence type is the most frequent.