Lexical and Phonological Variation in the Dialect of Young and Middle-Aged Speakers in the North-Western Badia in Mafraq-Jordan

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B.A English Language and Literature, Al Albayt University, Jordan 2009

A Thesis Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirement of the Degree of Master of Arts in Linguistics in the Department of English Language and Literature

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Abstract

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This study investigates lexical and phonological changes in the dialect of the North-Western Badia (hence DNWB). The sociolinguistic approach is adopted here to examine change of some lexical items and some of the phonological changes among 120 speakers of DNWB. The study sample was divided in term of two age groups: young speakers (secondary students), and middle-aged speakers (40-49). This study is intended to analyze lexical change in correlation with some social variables of income, education, age, gender and origin of mother. Phonologically, the current study examines the phonological change in correlation with the external linguistic variables: age and gender in the variants of the three variables: /d/, /q/ and /k/. Data analysis reveals that the social variables affect language change. The data also show
that young and middle aged speakers tend to abandon some of their local lexical items in favour of other ones that are borrowed from other colloquial Arabic dialects in Jordan. The recorded data also show some phonological changes. The /q/ shows two main variants in DNWB: [g] and [Ĵ]. Middle-aged male speakers tend to use both of these variants, but most of the middle-aged female speakers and all the young female speakers tend to abandon the [Ĵ] variant in favour of the [g] variant. The /k/ variable also has two main variants in DNWB: [k] and [č]. All of middle-aged male speakers and the young male speakers still use the [č] variant in words such as [čalb]. Most of the middle-aged female speakers also tend to use the allophone [č]. But most of the young female speakers have tendency to use the [k] allophone of the /k/ phoneme and abandon the [č] variant. No change is recorded regarding the /d/ variable; young and middle aged speakers still use the variant [Ḋ] instead of [d] across all words in DNWB.