Weather Proverbs in Jordanian Arabic and British English: A Contrastive Study

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Abstract


This study investigates the sociolinguistic functions, syntactic patterns and lexical and syntactic characteristics of weather proverbs in Jordanian Arabic (JA) and British English (BrE). Also, the study aims to highlight the similarities and differences between weather proverbs of these two varieties in respect to their functions and constructions.

The data of the study consists of 100 JA proverbs that were collected by interviewing with old people and of 100 BrE proverbs that were collected from written sources.

The study has found that there are two kinds of weather proverbs: predictive and descriptive. These two kinds perform the sociolinguistic function of giving advice or warning. They tell about the changes in the weather or about the productivity of the land. They serve as guiding rules for people whose livelihoods depend on weather.

Moreover, the findings have revealed that these proverbs are expressed in complex, declarative or imperative sentences. The majority of predictive proverbs are expressed in complex sentences in JA and BrE. Also, the majority of descriptive proverbs are expressed in declarative sentences in the two varieties. Furthermore, weather proverbs in JA and BrE exhibit the use of stylistic devices like repetition, deletion, and contraction. There are also shared lexical characteristics between weather proverbs in JA and BrE like the use of archaic words, and the words that are borrowed from the standard language. JA proverbs have some unusual derivations of some words.

Keywords: proverbs, weather lore, Jordanian Arabic, British English, sociolinguistic functions, lexical and syntactic features.