Diglossia among Students: The Problem and Treatment

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Abstract

This study aims at identifying the concept of diglossia, its causes and methods of treatment, and its negative effects. The researchers used the descriptive method. The study revealed the following most important results: Firstly, the reason for language diglossia is contact between languages and emergence of new other languages or dialects which leads to a losing some of their original characteristics and qualities and the different environments within the same society that has a role in the emergence of diglossia. Secondly, it causes moving away from the mother tongue. Thirdly, the study also found that classical Arabic is the strongest ligament, which brings the peoples of the Arab nation together. Fourthly, diglossia can be reduced by simplifying classical rules of Arabic; facilitating the teaching methods and by paying attention to basic Arabic, which is supposed to be the focus of education for the emerging of mother tongue.
Keywords: Diglossia, classical language, slang language

1. Introduction

The official language is used in schools, colleges and universities and all different subjects at all stages of education are studied by official language. Also, it recorded all literary and artistic creations, and all scientific and technical innovations. Moreover, books, newspapers and magazines are written by using official language and it is used by all media, including the language issued by the official command and announcements (Al-Sharoni, 2007).

Perhaps the weakness of students in the Arabic language is caused by diglossia (Anis, 2003); it costs us a few years of our children age, they spend the first five years to learn the vernacular, and then spend the past ten or twelve following in learning standard language and half of total is required if what we learn was one language (Bani Yaseen, 2010; Madkour et al, 2010).

The diglossia is considered as a title of the social conflict which eliminates the unification among its members (Anis, 2003). Conscious nation has one mentality and one soul (Qpauh, 1999). The phenomenon of language diglossia about standard and slang is existed in the educational field as part of the society in general, and most of the educational process elements suffer from this diglossia. Also it has a negative effect on the language and the process of teaching, especially in the field of use of oral language (Al- Sharoni, 2007).

Diglossia is dangerous because it affects on Arabic learning clearly and directly so the students can not master speaking skill by using the standard fluently and use vocabulary in the context of oral expressions (Madkour & Howeidi, 2006). the risk of slang in the classroom environment is appeared when it is used , either by the teacher or student who share in falling into the trap of this diglossia. It appears only in aspects of oral expression when the student tries to express issues or to answer oral questions and they resort to include phrases and vocabulary that is not based on language correctly, or vocabulary deviate in their voice performance for the right way to standard linguistic sound (Tenbak, 1992).

For researchers, the optimism of transition from slang to classical is associated closely with education, as they see that the victory will be for classical because of spread of education and culture, but that link overlaps the other factors such as society culture, and degrees of illiteracy and its view to the classical. The teacher plays an important factor in this issue, as he should adhere to classical Arabic in his studies and his address to the students, and each teacher considers himself a teacher of Arabic language indirectly, in order to be a good model for his students (Hilal, 1989).

But this optimism is still elusive because Arabic language teacher still tries, However, he can not achieve the conditions that make him improves the standard of the students and he is not able to create the conditions that will enable him like school books which is still restricted without melody and printing errors

(Daoud, 2001).

Arab educational institutions still ignore this fact, and try to ignore it. No doubt that the stalemate is not only in oral expression, but also in the achievement of Arabic language among students because they acquired the public spoken dialect firstly, then learn the standard. Thus, the child understands any language at the first two to three years of his life, but the teenager who taught for many years by experienced teachers does not possess such a child's linguistic efficiency (Al-Qo'od, 1997; Al- Khatib, 1996). Also, the language is not just academic subject, but it is a necessary means to study other materials prescribed in the curriculum, and it helps students to be able to rest other materials that support their achievement by reading and understanding, while the weakness in learning the language leads to refrain from reading, and to weaken the process of communication between teacher and his students (Al- Sharoni, 2007; Adas, 1994).

A number of Arab scientists say that diglossia is appeared as a result of the conflict between Arabic and other languages (Anis, 2003). Deviation in the use of words and formulas is appeared which leads to the closure of meaning and misunderstanding of many texts (Haleemi, 1997; Al-Qo'od, 1997). This risk continued more and more until our present time, we still live with linguistic frightening diglossia which threatens dire consequences. In the face of this imminent danger of using slang, and on this issue in the life of our nation's, positions of scientists and thinkers varied in the modern era about diglossia; a position sees that diglossia is well known in all languages and is not restricted to the Arab alone so it is natural linguistic development and one of the civilization features. The other team believes that the continuity of the slang means fragmentation of classical into other languages,for example, what happened to the Latin so fighting against slang is considered as essential and inevitable (Al- Sharoni, 2007).

1.1 The problem of the study
The slang language has poor vocabulary, and includes the essential words needed in normal talk. (Al-Nadri, 2005). The educational view does not realize the importance of teaching the classical language for the students in the first stages of their studies, and its effective role in building the proper educational entity for   innocent childhood. It is often found that persons who are responsible for this sensitive sector, unlike developed countries, appointed teachers with lower levels to teach this important segment (Anis, 2003)

It is painful to find Arab teacher whether in the primary school or secondary school or even at the university speaks slang language while teaching, so it is obvious that he does not care of students' linguistic and grammatical and spelling mistakes (Al- Sharoni, 2007).

The researchers believe that the problem of the study crystallizes in the linguistic oral performance with existence of this diglossia, as can be solved by developing performance. The most negative effects of diglossia on the students tongues are: firstly, not being able to use the spoken language as a basis for solving the problem of vernacular tone in speaking positions; because it is always observed the existence of linguistic poverty among students by using multiple vocabulary in their language they use in different situations. Secondly, the weakness of their ability to employ the learned rules in formulating.

Al-Shunaq (2000) called researchers to direct their research toward more implemented possible scientific suggestions, which aim at rehabilitating the Arabic language as an official and popular language in the Arab world. Therefore, this study came to show diglossia among students by answering the following questions:
1.   What causes the spread of diglossia phenomenon among students?
2.   What are the negative effects of linguistic diglossia among students?
3.   How do we treat the problem of diglossia among students?

1.2 Importance of the study
The importance of the study is derived from revealing the real reasons underlying diglossia of language among students, and its negative effects, and then the study provides appropriate solutions to treat its effects; by addressing some of the wrong methods in the teaching of the Arabic language. It is also important to provide constructive suggestions to overcome the problem of diglossia, support for the presence of classical in all strata of society, and make it obligatory in universities and colleges.

1.3 The limitation of the study
The results of the current study can be dealt in light of its limited theoretical side represented in the literature and previous studies on diglossia.

1.4 Terms of the study
Linguistic diglossia: is a competition between two types of the same tongue and to juxtapose forms of Arabic, the classical and slang, which used by the speaker and confuse them.

Diglossia: determining this term is still difficult and vague to many of those who fought to study this linguistic phenomenon. The word of "Diglossia "is translated to the Arabic term (الازدواجية). Some believe that

the first one who speak about the phenomenon of linguistic diglossia is German scientist "Krmbakhar" in 1902, but many scientists say that the French scientist "William Marseille" is carving of this term in French (La diglossia) and defined it in his article in 1930, he said that "diglossia is a competition between the literary written language and slang common language" (Al- Zghoul, 1980).

An American scientist called "Charles Ferguson" introduced this term into English in 1959. He specified this phenomenon as "a linguist condition which is relatively stable and it includes ,in addition to the dialects of a language, dialects of regional standard or more. It is the style of overhead high encryption, often complex grammatically and detached too. This style is a tool for recording large volume of written literature, whether at an early stage or in another linguistic community. Also, it is learned by formal education and used in most formal written purposes and conversations, but it is not used in normal conversation by any sector of society (Al-Qo'od, 1997).

Martinih agreed the same idea when he said that "diglossia is to use two dialects competitively that they have different social cultural status: the first as a local language which is acquired linguistic form used in everyday life, and the other is the tongue used in some circumstances by those who hold the reins of power (Martinih, 1990).

2. Methodology

The researchers used a descriptive approach. This approach goes beyond description to interpretation and analysis and the descriptive approach is not aimed at describing the phenomena or reality, but revealed to the findings that contribute to understand of this reality and develop it (Obaidat, 2001& Assaf, 2000).

3. The related studies

3.1 The researchers have arranged three studies, two Arab studies, and a foreign study, according to the chronological order as follows:

Hussein (1998) conducted a study aimed to diagnose the phenomenon of linguistic diglossia among students in different educational stages. The study clarifies the concept of linguistic diglossia in language teaching and its causes. The study revealed important results: that one reason for linguistic diglossia is existence of two contradictory models for students, namely: curriculum and teacher, as researcher emphasized the difference between these two models in terms of their linguistic nature. The study also noted that the curriculum has adopted fixed and inflexible way to introduce linguistic knowledge (theory), and it has exercises do not affect the core of knowledge and its known applications. Also, the teacher used a strategy does not agree with the curriculum, and does not have the ability to give students a greater benefit.

Tenbak (1992)conducted study aimed at finding out the reasons for the spread of the phenomenon of slang language in schools. The sample consisted of primary school teachers (first grades). The study revealed a number of recommendations, notably: that the most important causes of widespread of linguistic diglossia are: lack of model (teacher), and the loss of the elements of language use, which can make him able to talk standard language fluently on the one hand and teach it for students on the other hand. The study also showed the need to intensify the hours of instruction for students in universities and institutes that teach Arabic language especially the functional aspect of the language. Moreover, making courses continuously for teachers during their training period to be beyond the scope of the curriculum that focus on aspects of listening and speaking by using different teaching techniques.

Manazel (1994) conducted a study aimed at improving the skill of impromptu speech in the verbal communication and testing methods in the basic course at the University of Southern Arkansas in order to improve speech skills of students. The researcher divided the students into five groups and gave them marks according to the process of preparation and quality. He gave each group two weeks to gather information and presentations. The results of the study showed that using training improved the skill of impromptu speech for students.

3.2 Comment on related studies:

The researchers recorded on the previous studies the following:

- Some of the studies confirmed that one of linguistic diglossia reasons is existence of two contradictory models to the student, namely: curriculum and teacher, such as the study of Hussein (1998).
- Some studies have also confirmed that one of the most important reasons for the spread of linguistic diglossia among students is lack of model (i.e. teacher), and his loss of the elements of language use, such as the study of Tenbak (1992).
- Some studies have shown that there is a positive effect of training on students' impromptu speech. Such as a study of Manazel (1994).

The present study is different from the previous studies because it deepens the problem of the study by identifying the main reasons for linguistic diglossia, its negative effects, and methods of treatment.

Researchers have got the benefit from the previous studies by adopting the methodology, the cited rationale, statistical means, how to analyze the results, and some of its recommendations.

4. Results and Discussion

This section includes discussing of the results which aimed to find out the reasons for the students' linguistic diglossia, its negative effects, and methods of treatment.

4.1 The results and discussion of the first question:

The first question is: what are the causes of the spread of the phenomenon of linguistic diglossia among students? To answer the question the study, the researchers review many of the studies and researches that addressed the causes of widespread of linguistic diglossia among students represented in language development at all levels of language; voice level which is the deviation of some sounds from pronunciation placements; the morphological level like appearing new unmeasured inaudible formulas in ancients Arabs dialects, like localization; the syntactic level such as non-observance of inflection while speaking and combining sentences; and the semantic level and what occurs to the meanings of words and formulas change due to psychological or social and others things, all of these lead to the emergence of differences in pronunciation among speakers of a language (Al-Nadri, 2005).

Languages historians noted that tribes, religious communities, professions and unlawful groups, tend to find their own language that cannot be understood by other groups, it can not be decoded (Madkour& Howeidi, 2006). Also, the class differences between the classes of society have a role in the emergence of such dialects, each class try to find their own language which is different from other classes. The aristocratic class has its own dialect; the middle-class has its own one, as well as the lower-class dialect (Anis, 2003).

The linguistic friction between languages and the resulting of emergence of the new languages or dialects that lost something of its original characteristics and qualities, and beginning of gradual moving away from the mother tongue lead to linguistic diglossia (Madkour & et al, 2010).

The different environments within the same society has an important role in the emergence of linguistic diglossia, for example, sons in countryside speak a dialect different from that spoken by the people of the cities, and these differ from the dialect of sons of the desert so each individual of environment agree on the certain way of producing speech they deal with in their own environment. The mother tongue can not continue in all environments and under all circumstances without change or development (Al- Sharoni, 2007).

The reasons for the widespread of linguistic diglossia among students are: not adopting appropriate exact linguistic expression by the teacher, teachers lack of commitment to speak with his students by using language of science and knowledge, the adoption of the student to the slang that is based on the memory of his society and his family and the environment, as well as the difference of teachers dialects from their students, and students friction with several dialects per day such as repeating phrases, proverbs and anecdotes, stories and poems by heard slang. The student studies texts in literature by using classical language in school, but he is surrounded overseas by relatives and grandparents texts and poems that based on community- curriculum (Anis, 2003). This result was consistent with the study of Tenbak (1992), which confirmed that one of the most important reasons for the spread of linguistic diglossia among students is lack of model (i.e. teacher), and the loss of the elements of language use.

" The linguistic diglossia rises when there are certain conditions in a particular community like availability of literary great material with closely related language or even similar to the original language of the community and this literary material embodies both as a divine source or reinforcement of some of the core values of the community, when writing in the community is limited to an elite few, and passing long a period of time after centuries on the availability of the first two conditions. We could probably prove that mixing of these three conditions has happened hundreds of times in the past, and has resulted in diglossia of language "(Al-Qo'od, 1997).

The most important reasons for this problem are leaving Holy Qura'an schools and inattention to the Arabic language curricula specifically (Al- Rafii, 2002).

The researchers believe that the use of slang takes many forms, and perhaps most notably common one among students is to include slang words when using standard phrases, the use coherence not based on correct linguistic rules, the use of question tools incorrectly, and making inflectional mistakes.

The researchers claimed that common use of slang words among members of the school and none school community led to an intimacy between it and the speakers so it is against our standard language. The effect does not stop on spoken language but exceeded to writing.

4.2 The results and discussion of the second question:

The second question of the study is: What are the negative effects of linguistic diglossia among students?
To answer the question the study, the researchers reviewed several studies about the negative effects of linguistic

diglossia among students?

The danger of diglossia that represented in slang language lies in the fundamental aspects of a large aspect of our lives. Standard language which is the language of science and religion is our spiritual home; it's a symbol of unity and communication among members of the Arab nation. But the slang is against any unite or affinity, as evidence of plurality.

The growth of slang is struggling classical for survival and sovereignty. If that's achieved so it becomes literary written language; moved to the stability and increased strength and left classical beyond, and then classical is extinct and died, and then decay slowly to be left by speakers and it does not exist in the community (Hussein, 1998) .

Diglossia is a symbol of the intellectual, cultural failure, and it is obstacle for each economic development and impede all attempts to promote instruction and education, as well as prevent the media and communication devices doing their real role, Sotaro Bolse says: "Although diglossia is an ingenious tool, it is an obstacle from the economic point of view and national cohesion and effectiveness of education, communication and media (Al- Zghoul, 1980.).

The slang language -which heard by the child from others- received directly over the days, acquired and mastered it, settles in his conscience and his mind, provides him with all the necessary words and expressions. When he entered the school, he begins to learn classical Arabic which is unfamiliar to his hearing and understanding so he finds hardship and discomfort while learning, and he feels that he learns a foreign language far from what he acquired, this feeling makes him averse of this language so he finds it very difficult to learn, and offers on this matter like a necessary evil, and he makes strenuous efforts to learn it, and wasted a long time to translate between classical and slang and he can not master the classical as it should because he resorted his linguistic storage of slang and use it when he answers or writes (Daoud, 2001).

Linguistic diglossia creates psychological negative effects among students which are extremely harmful, as it makes them always indecisive and hesitate their understanding of expressions and sentences they hear so they find themselves between two antagonists so they unable to determine the direction in which they want and the language they wish to use and not sure what they say and their answers (Al- Rafii, 2002).

Linguistic diglossia causes the weakness of the linguistic level of the students, thus it lead to the killing of creativity in all of its forms so the student of diglossia -which lives in a state of indecision and uncertainty- will not be creative, because creativity requires controlling and mastering the language. The writer is able to formulate phrases and sentences easily, and to express what is going in his mind of meanings and ideas easily. We will not expect the creativity of any student -no matter how many of his knowledge and culture- unless he control and master the language (Al- Sharoni, 2007).

The researchers believe that the suffering experienced by many students due to lack of mastery of classical Arabic. Thus, the researchers understand that this diglossia of which we live makes the dichotomy in our intellectual performance. It is the only reason that   damages the cultural structure of our nation; it is also responsible for wasting of our educational efforts,

The researchers believe also that diglossia works to stifle classical, stands a barrier to spread outside of the Arab world scope, it prevents a classical to have global dimension. If a foreigner desired learning the Arabic language, he learns classical Arabic, so it is difficult to understand Arabic-speakers. Also, If this foreigner has learned Arabic verbally in one of Arabs environments, he learns the slang language of that region so if he moved to another Arabic environment he could not understand its slang language and difficult for the people of this region to understand the slang of him. Thus, diglossia in both cases stood as wall which converts between us and our wishes and desires to spread our language around the world.

4.3 The results and discussion of the third question:
The third question of the study is: How do we treat the problem of linguistic diglossia among students?

To answer this question, the researchers reviewed several studies on how to tackle the problem of linguistic diglossia among students.

If we want to make the classical Arabic as the strongest ligament which combines the peoples of the Arab nation, the decision-makers in the Arab nation must defend their classical language in order to preserve their identity, nationality and unity; (Daoud, 2001).To deal with the phenomenon of linguistic diglossia among students, we must not provide foreign languages for our children in the first years of their lives but only after they master their mother tongue. It does not mean that we deny learning foreign languages but on the contrary, we are advocates of learning foreign languages because we believe in its importance (Madkour & Howeidi, 2010).

To treat diglossia, firstly, the expansion in the use of slang language should be avoided in teaching directly or indirectly. The teachers usually attribute using it because of the weakness of the students linguistic comprehension, or lack of understanding the abstract scientific points or questions so it is difficult to teach them the classical tongue. (Hijazi, 2007). Secondly, focusing on using monolingual dictionaries to reduce the problem

of diglossia among students(Al- Rafii, 2002).
　　　The researchers believe that the most important role to maintain the classical Arabic language is the role of family and the environment in which student live in because they are two more influential factors than the rest of the other factors, then the secondary role of the school, teachers, and the community comes. To solve this problem, we have to concentrate on Arabic language curricula, especially in schools and universities.

4.4 The researchers emphasize the following:
1. To simplify the rules of classical language and facilitate its teaching methods.
2. To focus on using the basic Arabic.
3. To adopt modern Arabic for the production and exchanging the cultural and social programs and audio-visual that intended to children.
4. To use the commonest, most familiar and hesitant terms and expressions by the poets of songs, plays makers and authors of children's stories.
5. To use the standard language in the programs and seminars via television stations.
6. To cancel all dialects and accents in various Arab countries under the supervision of the scientific research institutions and centers.
7. To simplify the general political discourse directed to the vast majority of people,
8. To eradicate illiteracy in the Arab world.

4.5 The proposed procedural implications recommended by the researchers can be classified and presented as follows:
4.5.1 The standard language and dialects
- To prepare a comprehensive index of morphological grammatical and lexical characteristics related to ancient and modern Arabic dialects.
- To make a series of research and seminars to discuss aspects of the contrast among the Arabic dialects.
-To prepare a comprehensive guide to compare between every slang and classical Arabic.
- To conduct comparative studies between moderate Arabic and slang on the one hand, and between moderate Arabic and classical Arabic on the other hands.
4.5.2 In Education
-To design a series program in classical Arabic conversation based on the rules of the spoken Arabic language.
- To produce a series of television and radio programs to teach Arabic for beginners.
- To connect each textbook in the first primary with recorded tapes.
- To make the classical language a language of whole university education.
- To develop the Arab educational systems.
- To call Ministries of Education in every Arab country to establish elementary schools based on Arabic language without any use of slang throughout the school day, inside and outside the classroom.
- To pay attention on Arabic teachers, in particular, the children teachers physically and morally.
- To develop a plan to provide Arab educational institutions with computers and methods of learning Arabic.
- To establish a research institute for planning teaching Arabic.
- To establish centers to training the conversation by using classical Arabic in every Arab country and outside.
-To change the teaching methods from indoctrination to creativity and participation.
- To develop a scientific plan for an integrated approach to teaching Arabic language in elementary school
- To continue interesting in Arabic and its various activities at all levels of education.
- To care of economical developmental programs and working to raise the economical level of the Arab family.
4.5.3 In the Children's Literature
-To produce appropriate songs and jingles for Children in classical Arabic.
-To sort childhood stories of the subject, and exclude the slang ones.
-To establish an institution for children's literature working to create appropriate materials in classical Arabic.
-To pay attention to the authors of Arab children's literature.
-To encourage scientific research .
-To take advantage of projects and activities that support the child's language in some Arab countries and disseminated throughout the Arab world.
4.5.4 Literacy
-To prepare a comprehensive program to eradicate illiteracy.
4.5.5 In public life
-To prepare a serial radio-TV program which offered by a caring mum for a child in start talking.
- To prepare similar programs in classical Arabic at the level of childhood based on conversational situations.

- To prepare program about the life of the family at home.
- To create club for speaking classical Arabic in every neighborhood, school, college and institution.
- To adopt Arabic language as a language of children's radio and television programs in Arab countries
- To recommend the concerned authorities to impose a kind of linguistic control over cultural products.
- To create special channels for children.
- To oblige media workers to use classical Arabic.
- To direct the T.V and radio programs to teach Arabic.

4.5.6 In management
- To make mastery of classical a condition in appointment at administrative or clerical jobs.

4.5.7 In the arts:
- To use only classical language in theater, film industry and the texts of the songs.

4.5.8 In writing language
- To appoint linguistic editors to correct the language of the press and prevent printing books by using slang.

4.5.9 In the field of translation
-The linguistic friction makes the individual takes natures of whom he contacts with, but the Arabs are the only ones who collect more than one language in their talk, some may use more than one language in one sentence, while other people unite use only their tongue although they have the ability to speak other languages.

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