

**Dialect contact in Egypt**

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The talk discusses Arabic dialect contact in the Siwa Oasis in Egypt. Dialect contact is a steady research interest in mainstream sociolinguistics (e.g. Trudgill 1986) and Arabic sociolinguistics as well (e.g. Miller et al. 2007). Dialectologists have described the Nile shores and the arabophone oases of the Western Desert of Egypt as an area of encounter different dialect types (e.g. Behnstedt & Woidich 1985-88) and explained their mixed features as the outcome of population movements from a historical linguistic perspective (Behnstedt & Woidich 2018). Focusing on more recent phenomena, De Jong (1996) has described processes of accommodation, levelling and performance in the Bedouin dialects of the Sinai, while Miller (2005) accounted for processes of dialect contact and accommodation in the speech of Upper Egyptian migrants in Cairo. Finally, Bassiouney (2018) has analyzed the competing values of Cairene and Upper Egyptian dialects with a macro-sociolinguistic perspective. The study presented in this talk brings a new insight, as it is based on L2 Arabic rather than L1 Arabic.

The Siwi Berber-speaking population of Siwa has been exposed to different Arabic varieties in different historical moments (Souag 2013). More recently, Siwans are exposed to both Cairene and Bedouin Arabic. The analysis of L2 Arabic spoken by different generations of Siwi speakers points to a growing preference for Cairene Arabic in the younger generations, whose speech displays less occurrences of Bedouin features in comparison to elderly speakers'. In light of the geographical proximity of Bedouin speakers, the preference for Cairene is attributed to the prestige enjoyed by this variety nationwide and aligns with previous studies on dialect contact based on L1 Arabic.

Quoted references

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