THE ORIGINS AND LINGUISTIC POTENTIALS OF NUBI

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# ABSTRACT

Creoles create a special dilemma to genetic linguistics. One controversial viewpoint –the discontinuity hypotheses- emphasizes the uniqueness of creoles in that they cannot be genetically related to any language. Bickerton explains via the LBH (The Language Bioprogram Hypothesis) how creoles are innovative in nature and unique from any source language(s). The second viewpoint, the continuity viewpoint, (which is supported by most Arabic structurlists)- finds creoles as a genetically related language to either its substrate or lexifier source(s).

In the amidst of two radically different viewpoints, The Nubi Creole of East Africa has proven to be genetically related to Arabic and also contains aspects of unique, innovative nature, specifically in its great reduction of Arabic inflectional morphology.

In this research, I shall argue against Bickerton and Thomsan’s notion of creole discontinuity. I shall further examine some of the major Arab structurlists viewpoints on The Nubi Creole having the *recent* potential of being classified as a “dialect” or /lahdʒah/ (Hassan, 1993) by comparing it to the Morrocan Dialect of The Far West. Having opposing directions in terms of language development (Nubi as a creole and Morrocan Arabic as an old dialect that has shifted from its standard form), both the Nubi Creole and the Western Dialect of Morroco have developed means of simplification mainly via the reduction of inflectional forms (both in terms of morphology). Thus, Arab structurlists came to the conclusion that Nubi can nowadays be categorized as a / lahdʒah/.

To better understand the origins of this creole, I shall first present a brief introduction to the historical framework and Linguistic Background of the Nubi Dialect/creole of Uganda.

In the second chapter of my research, I shall discuss in detail Bickerton’s notion of creole language formation and creole discontinuity and how it is *not* applicable to all creoles. I shall further support my argument by presenting a comparative analysis to Nubi’s lexifying languages: Sudanese and Egyptian Arabic. I shall compare and contrast in all areas of phonology, specific areas of syntax and I shall finally discuss in detail the unique innovative aspect of Nubi and specifically the great reduction in inflectional structure.

In the third section of this research, I shall examine in great detail what is meant by / lahdʒah/? Is it possible to classify a creole as a dialect? And why did Arab structurlists including “Tammam Hassan” arrived at such a conclusion. In an attempt to better examine the Morrocan dialect, I have collected data from my Morrocan friends in Saudi. I transcribed, morphologically and syntactically analyzed their dialect. I then compared it to Nubi.

In the last section of this research I shall present a literature review and my conclusions on the hypothesis of creole “inheritance” vs “discontinuity”. I shall also present my thoughts on “Tammam Hassan” paper on the definition of dialects or / lahdʒah/ and whether Nubi can be labeled as one.

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Section 1:

THE HISTORY AND LINGUISTIC BACKGROUND OF NUBI

Introduction

Wellens (2005) explains “Once upon a time, there were people who came from *‘Bilad-a-sudan’* to the rural towns of Uganda, developing a language and culture of their own. This can be an opening statement to any ancient Nubi story.” (p. xv) However, what historians chose to miss out is that this story did not happen with ease.

After years of suffering- having been rejected by the locals in Uganda and the Arabs in Sudan- Nubi people can finally claim a cultural identity of their own. Nowadays, there are about 25,000 Nubis who live scattered over the towns of Uganda and of Kenya. According to Wellens (2005) “They are distinguished from other tribal groups by their rather refined culture, adherence to Islam, exotic clothing and multi-ethnic food.” (p.1)

To better understand the linguistic theories suggested to the emergence of the Arabic pidgin ancestor of present-day Nubi, it is important to understand the historical events that took place during that time. Therefor, I shall present some of the important events that took place in ‘*Bilad-a-Sudan’* and helped develop the emergence of a new language.

History Of Nubi

‘Bilad-a-Sudan’ Before 1820 and The Early signs of an Arabic Pidgin: *The land of the Blacks*  as named by medieval Muslim Geographers to Sub-Saharan Africa is different from the modern state of present day Sudan including parts of modern-day Kenya and Uganda. It was from the seventeenth century onwards that Arab tribes intermingled with people of this region leading to further Arabcization and Islamization (Wellens 2005). It must be noted however, that the Arabic culture and religion was not entirely alien before that time. It has gradually taken over the *Christian Nubian Kingdoms* from the eleventh century onwards and it was only possible after the “/ftu ħat/: Islamization” that trade between the Islamic Empire centered in the Arabian Peninsula and *Belad-a-Sudan* can take place (Wellens, 2005).

Arabic words, relating to trade and barter, were some of the early lexical items that have been modified in the Nubi Pidgin. Nonetheless, Islamic Pilgrimage was another vital activity that led to further Arabcization in ‘*Belad-a-Sudan*’ and by 1850, Sudanese Arabic became the Lingua Franca of the entire area (Wellens, 2005).

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“Bilad-a-Sudan” (Wellens, 2005)

*‘Bilad-a-Sudan’ 1820 and Onwards:* It was during that time of *Mohammed Ali*, Viceroy of Egypt that troops were sent to “the Sudan” as to conquer it. He mainly was aiming at the submission of a rebellious Arabic speaking tribe called ‘*shaʔqiya’* who are centered between the Nile and the town of ad-Dabba. Ali was mesmerized but the supposed wealth of the country (its gold and slaves). He forced taxes which were normally replaced by slaves that were owned by the locals. Training camps were held for the (*Nezam Al-Jadid*) -a newly formed army with European training techniques (Wellens, 2005).

The early years of war did not show any successful conquer of slaves but it was during the slave raids of (1822-1823) that 30,000 slaves were conquered, Islamized and received military training. Since the number of black slaves for the ‘*Nizam Al-jadid’* were not enough to conquer Syria and Antolia, Ali was forced to recruit for Egyptian and Turkish soldiers to join them. It was then that Arabic-speaking soldiers were intermingling with Sudanese soldiers of different ethnic groups. History states that from 1830 onwards, 3,000 slaves were sent from *bilad-a-Sudan* to Egypt for military training yearly causing more and more Arabcization (Wellens, 2005).

Fearing the harsh taxation collected by tribes (such as the taxation collected from ‘*shaʔqiya’*)some Sudanese had fled their villages in the Nile valley to Darfur and Kordofan. They were known as the ‘*Jallaba*’: functioning as small traders and middlemen for the foreign trading companies leading to further ‘intertribal’ contact. By 1890 a semi-Arab population came into existence whose members were distanced from their tribal origins through a language enforced by slavery, intermarriage and militarization (Wellens, 2005) .

*Birth of ‘Nubi’:* The birth of Nubi took place when Emin Pasha (governor of the Southern Sudanese province of Equatoria) was forced to leave the country by the Mahdist in 1889 leaving the groups of *Fadil AlMula* and *Salim Bey* behind. The number of ‘***near-native speakers of Arabic***’ was estimated as 900 soldiers with 8-9,000 followers. The groups were later on divided into garrisons and scattered all over present-day Uganda and Kenya (Wellens, 2005).

*Present-Day Nubi:* By the dawn of 20’th century, these group were still not referred to as Nubi. They were simply referred to as Sudanese. It was only after World War 1 that these people began to be addressed to as Nubians on a more regular basis. Kokole (1985) talked about his Kakwa father who spoke Nubi as a second language and referred to the creole/ “lahdʒah” as “Arabic” (p. 420). Since 90 percent of its lexicon derives from Arabic, Nubians would occasionally refer to themselves as “*Arab Nubians*” (Wellens, 2005).

It is estimated by 1991 that there are 15,000 speakers of the Nubi /lahdʒah/ scattered across Northern Uganda and 10,000 in Kenya. New sources of estimates claim that there are more than 68,000 speakers of /nubi/ by 2005 in Uganda alone. Having developed their own cultural identity throughout the years, the Nubi people of Uganda and Kenya refer to their language as a simplified form of Arabic since most of its lexicon is of Arabic roots (Wellens, 2005).

11th C 17th C 1850 (M. Ali) 20th C

Islamization Trade militarization and Eman P. troops

slavery*. (Lingua* left behind (Birth

*Franca).* of Nubi)

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Wellen’s History of “*Bilad-aSudan”*

### The Linguistic Background of Nubi:

Having the recent potentials of being classified as a dialect by Arab structurlists, (which I shall further discuss in great detail in chapter three) Nubi both linguistically and socio-historically, was first considered as an Arabic Creole, having been developed from a pidginized Arabic (Wellens, 2005).

Pidgins are generally characterized by:

1. Limitation in structure and vocabulary when comparing them to their target languages.
2. Explicit linguistic transmission tends to be more implicit.
3. Inflectional-agglutinating structures tend to be more analytic and isolating.
4. Context sensitive rules tend to be replaced by context free rules (Wellens, 2005)

As previously mentioned and around 1850, the Arabic Lingua Franca must have made its way initially in training camps and then in southern Sudan by southward movements of the military and through trade in the White Nile Valley, Equatoria and the ‘*Bahr-AlGhazal’.* Impeded by limited access to Arabic and through a process of inaccurate language learning, the Southern Sudanese subordinates and Black slaves adopted a pidginized Arabic (Wellens, 2005).

By 1888 and when Emin Pasha and his troops were met by Stanley at the shores of Lake Albert, this ‘foreign talk’ may have been a stable pidgin. It then received input from local languages such as Lur and Lendu in the Lake Albert area.

It was only years later before the newborn children were enough to bring about nativization/creolzation to the structures of the pidgin and by 1902, creolization of this foreign-talk took place as to explain the similarities between the *regional varieties of Nubi* which were only different by the influence of their substrate languages.

However, it was the contact between the Nubis in Uganda and Kenya, especially after 1979 that led into further assimilation between the varieties of the creole (Wellens, 2005).

#### Language Influences:

#### Substrate and Adstrate Influences:

All Nubi are multilingual. The second language of importance and of adstrate influence in both Uganda and Kenya is Swahili. English is considered the official language in Uganda and Kenya, however, knowledge of it is limited to those who had a chance to go to school, mostly, boys (Wellens, 2005).

As for substrate influences, southern *Bilad-a-Sudan* had tribal groups with a large language variety (twenty six to be exact). These languages belong to African Languages. They can be divided into Niger-Kongo-Kordofan group and the Nilo-Saharic group. Most of the substrate languages belong to the latter group:

1. Niger-Kongo-Kordofan group:

Niger-Kongo Languages: Mundu

Kordofanian: Nuba

1. Nilo-Saharic Language group:

Chali-Nile: 1) Eastern Sudanic: Nubian

Nilotic: Western

Shillock, Acholli, Lur, Luo, Dinka, Nuer.

Bali, Fajulu, Kakwa

Eastern:

2) Western Sudanic:

Bongo, Baka, Kreish, Moru, Avokaya, Lugbara, Madi, Mamvu, Lindu

Substrate and adstrate influences are mainly in the areas of phonology and grammar (Wellens, 2005).

#### Lexifier influence:

It has been widely believed that the ancestor of Nubi Arabic is an Egyptian and Sudanese dialect. However, several recent studies suggest that Nubi Arabic’s lexifier is a dialect spoken in Western Sudan that had some features of Egyptian and Khartoum Arabic. There are evidence that Owens had found in the vocabulary and phonology (lack of pharyngealization) that Nubi shares with WSA. There is also evidence in the word order.

Arabic pidgins that had an influence are the *Juba* Arabic that exists in the Southern Sudan and *Turku* Arabic which by now became extinct.

Evidence suggests that the two Pidgins share the same language ancestor as Nubi Arabic allowing their evolutionary progress to be similar (Wellens, 2005)

Section 2:

UNIVERSAL BIOPROGRAM VS LANGUAGE INHERITANCE

## Introduction

Creole’s origins have long been debated by several linguists. Some believe that one reason to the *cross-linguistic resemblance* between creoles is the one fact that they all go through a creolization stage influenced by a human innate language capacity by children “The Language Bioprogram Hypothesis” or LBH by Bickerton. Thus, creoles cannot entirely relate to their superstrate, substrate or lexifying resources. Others have seen the determining influence emanating from the languages the creoles have had contact with. Superstrate, adstrate and substrate languages only determine the structure of creoles (Owens,1990). This is what has often been labeled as the Language Inheritance theory. Within this latter theory other hypothesis have arose. One believing in the greater influence of *substrate* languages in the development of creole structures, and the opposing opinion believing in the strong influence of *superstrate* or *lexifying* languages in determining the structure of creoles (Owens, 1990). That is, the resulting creoles are genetically related to their sources. In this chapter, I shall examine Bickerton’s notion of creole language formation and creole discontinuity and how it is not applicable to all creoles. I shall also support my hypothesis by examining the similarities between the Nubi creole and its resources.

## Bickerton’s LBH and Discontinuity Hypothesis

The theories of creole origins can be divided by two categories: the discontinuity hypothesis and the continuity hypothesis. The former relates creole structures to features intrinsic to human nature and has been supported mainly by Bickerton’s language program hypothesis. The latter looks at the structure of creoles as a result of inheritance from their source language(s) (Owens, 1990).

In Bickeron’s theory, he argues that the structural similarities between the different creoles that he examined are not a mere result of the influence of their sources (substrate, adstrate and lexifying), rather, a result of an innate language capacity that young children have. This innate ability helps transform inconsistent pidgins to better developed creoles, which within time, become well-developed languages. The theory is not indigenous to the field. Chomsky has long argued to the existence of a language acquisition device that humans posses and that give an explanation to certain linguistic cases of home signs (Owens, 1990).

As a supporter of Chomsky’s notion of the existence of LAD, Bickerton argues that language can be seen as a “system of representations” and as an “evolutionary adaptation of particular species”. Early human language is not a continuum of an animal communication system that only conveys information about survival, mating and reproduction. Human beings have the ability to convey information of displacement (Owens, 1990).

In the light of this theory, Bickerton argues against the origins of creoles. He demonstrates in his case studies, that creoles cannot be genetically related to their lexifying, substrate or adstrate resources, rather they should be seen as new languages. Many researchers on creole formation have criticized Bickerton’s universal creole features as a “selective shopping list of features that are drawn from an artificially limited store of creoles languages, all of them with an European lexifier source” (Owens, 1991).

Some of the prominent features by Bickerton are: inflectional-agglutinating structures tend to be more analytic and isolating and a lack of semantically opaque word formation (Degraff, 2001). Although The Nubi creole/dialect posses such features, it also contains prominent lexical features similar and certain cases identical to those in Arabic.

## The Language Inheritance Theory

This theory believes in the greater influence of substrate, superstrate and adstrate languages in determining the structure of the resulting creole. Holm (p.6, 1988) for instance, argues in his book “Pidgins and Creoles” against the importance of the lexifying languages on their creoles. He furthens his argument by presenting case studies of European-bases creoles where adstrate and substrate languages had the primary effect in the syntactic development of the creole language (Owens, 1990).

Hall (1958), on the other hand, emphasizes the importance of a creole’s lexifying language(s), especially in word-formation. Hall further argues that superstrate languages are important in establishing the quantity to which a creole is similar to its source languages. And in most cases he has examined (primarily Sranan and Haitian creoles) he proved how their lexifying sources were prominent in determining specific linguistic features (Owens, 1990).

A third viewpoint holds an intermediate position. Mufewene (1986) explains how certain creoles may be equally or near equally influenced by both their lexifying and substrate languages *and* by the language universals suggested by Bickerton.

During their pidginization phase, some languages may have been influenced directly by both their lexifying and substrate resources. However, as newborns acquire these inconsistent pidgins, they manage (via their innate language capacities) to transform them to better developed languages. This intermediate approach nearly holds true especially in the cases of Arabic based creoles such as Juba, Turku and Ki-Nubi.

The case study of the Nubi Creole is an interesting one. Owens argues that Nubi is a perfect counter-example to Bickerton's theories of creole language's formation. (The LBH). Nubi shows little resemblance to Bickerton's universal creole features and thus these features should not be labeled “universal”.

He then figured, by observing the case study of the Nubi creole, that creoles’ structures are not the mere result of an innate language capacity or the mere lexifier and substrate influence of languages they have came into contact with. But rather, they are a result of combination of these two factors (Owens, 1990).

## My Humble Approach

Looking back at the history of the Nubi creole and observing its very slow structural development, I have noticed that it is quite different from any other creole linguists have been observing in the sense that its pidginization phase was exceptionally long when compared to other pidginization phases of other European-based creoles.

The Nubi Creole for a period of two hundred years has been labeled as a (*Lingua Franca*). However, it must be noted that the language was not entirely alien to the region from the 11th century onward. Thus, the resulting innovations from the pidginization phase and that have long been into practice by the Sudanese of the time (habitants of *Bilad-a-Sudan*) had an influence on the structures of the later on (Nubi Creole).

*Evidence to Support My Approach:* When I gave a better look into Bickerton’s theory of creole language formation, I have noticed that he has clearly stated his belief that the creole-type structures he describes **are not relevant to all languages**. They are applicable to what he terms as ‘*Early-Creolizing Creoles’*. They may be describes as:

1. Formed within a short time span, no more than two generations.
2. Relatively uninfluenced by the lexifying source.
3. It arose when the creole speaking population was displaced away from the area where its speakers originated. Examples are Hawaiian Creole English and Haitian Creole French (Owens, 1990).

The Nubi Creole was not formed within a short-time span. It took the language more than 600 years to be labeled as a Lingua France (from 1100-1800). Also, it is greatly influenced by its lexifying source, especially in terms of its lexicon and basic word-order. Nonetheless, the Ugandans and Kenyan’s have not been moved away from their original homeland *Bilad-a-Sudan*.

The reason to these three conditions is the necessity to learn a language very quickly (1), with restricted input from native speakers, not having good models for proper language learning (2). And finally the fact that the creole language population has been removed away from its homeland meant that the influence from the substrate languages must have been minimal (3). This resulted in the fact that the language they have developed must then be ***substantially*** influenced by an innate bioprogram which has not been the case in the Nubi Creole (Owens, 1990).

In the next section I shall further argue against Bickerton’s universal creole features and how they are not applicable to all languages. I shall also support Mefwene’s intermediate position in highlighting the role of structures convergent between substrate superstrate and language universals (Owens, 1990). The Nubi creole shows great resemblance to its lexifying languages (Egyptian and Sudanese Arabic) and contains aspects that are innovative in nature such as in the great reduction of inflectional structure.

### Nubi From A Comparative Perspective

Nubi shows great resemblance to its lexifying resources (Egyptian & Sudanese Arabic) in all areas of the language. This has led some Arabic linguists, including the great Arab structurlist Tammam Hassan, to conclude its potential of being labeled as a /lahdʒah/. I shall further discuss this in the following section, but for now, I shall present a comparative analysis between Nubi, its lexifying sources EA and SA and its adstrate influences:

### *Phonology:*

* *Consonants:*

The phonological inventory in Nubi Arabic is very much similar to that of (Egyptian & WSA: West Sudanese Arabic) combined, Some examples include:

* Devoicing:

t<d : Nubi: *asati* (lion) < *asad* EA and SA

/d/ is normally devoiced to /t/. This trend of devoicing final obstruents is common in WSA dialects and in the whole Sudanese belt (Owens 1985).

* Loss of Emphatic sounds such as in WSA:

d< d̥ Nubi: *ardi* (soil) < *ard̥* EA and SA

s< s̥ Nubi *asli* (pray)< *as̥li* EA and SA

* Substitution of /q/, kh [x] and / ħ/sounds in EA & SA to /k/ in Nubi:

/k/</g/ Nubi: *kabri* (grave)< *qabr* EA and SA

/k/</x/ Nubi: *kabar* (information)< *khabar* in EA and SA.

/k/</ ħ/ Nubi: *luku* mar(donkey) < *alhumar* in EA and SA.

* Substitution of / dʒ / sound in SA and OA to /g/ such as in EA:

/g/</j/ Nubi: *gameel* (beautiful) < *jameel* in SA and OA (Wellens, 2005).

(OA stands for Old Arabic or Classical Arabic)

*Other Substrate and Adstrate Influences:*

In certain African languages, apicals such as: /l/,/d/,/r/ and /n/ are related and are considered as allophones of the same phoneme. Such a phenomenon may help reconstruct the presence of these sounds in the Nubi consonant inventory in utterances like:

/r/</l/ Nubi: *jeber* (mountain)< *jebel* in OA.

Nonetheless, other substrate influences is the Bari influence of the /sh/ sound. Since the palatal sound does not exist in Bali, it is substituted by the /s/ sound in Nubi:

/s/</sh/ Nubi: *seder* (tree) < *sheder* in SA and EA.

Also, substrate influence includes the adaptation of new sounds that did not exist in the consonantal system of EA and SA such as /p/, /v/ and /ch/ sound (Wellens, 2005).

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | Bilab. | Labio. | Dent. | Alv. | P.Alv. | Palat. | Velar | Uvel. | Phary. | Glott. |
| Plosive | p,b |  |  | t,d |  |  | k,g | (q) |  | (ʔ) |
| Nasal | m | (ɱ) |  | n |  | ɲ | (ɳ) |  |  |  |
| Trill |  |  |  | r |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Flap |  |  |  | (ɽ) |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Fricative |  | f,v | (Θ,ð) | s,z | ʃ |  | (x) |  | (ħ) | h |
| Affricate |  |  |  |  | tʃ,dʒ |  |  |  |  |  |
| Approx | w |  |  |  |  | j |  |  |  |  |
| Lateral |  |  |  | l |  |  |  |  |  |  |

Table (1): Consonant Inventory of The Nubi Creole (Wellens 2005).

The consonants in parentheses occur in both English and Arabic loanwords or as a result of phonological processes. Nasal compounds, on the other hand, may occur in loanwords from Bantu languages (Wellens, 2005).

* *Vowels:*

Contrast between long and short vowels is neutralized in Nubi, also since the creole has a CV- structure there tends be epenthetic vowels between two consonants. The quality of the vowel depends on the quality of the other vowel in the word, for instance:

Nubi: *moyo* < *moya* in SA and EA (Wellens, 2005).

Typical of Vowel inventories of creoles, the inventory is *simplified* and vowel length is not distinctive:

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
|  | Front | Back |
| High | i | u |
| Mid | e | o |
| Low | a | |

Table (2): Vowel Inventory of The Nubi Creole (Wellens, 2005).

*Morphology****:*** (Syllable Types): Although syllables of different types including: CCVC and CCV occur in Nubi, the syllable structure of Nubi is usually CV. Some linguists argue that this happened because of poor transmission of proper Arabic roots and templates:

**Nubi Root Tier:** k d m

**Nubi Skeletal Tier**: C V C V C V

**Nubi intervocalic T:** i i a : ‘*kidima*’ in Nubi< ‘*khidma*’ in SA & EA

The new syllable type: CV can be established in four ways:

1. Insertion of vowel in consonant clusters. Nubi: *kidima* (favor)< *khidma* SA and EA.
2. Degemination. Nubi: *kalimu* (speak to someone) < *kallim* SA and EA.
3. Loss of consonant. Nubi: *abya* (white) < *abyatt* SA.
4. Addition of final vowel. Nubi: *muku* (brain)< *mukh* in SA EA.

Vowel harmony plays an important role in the ‘choice of the epenthetic vowel’. VH is a universal tendency among many creoles (Owens, 2013).

The Nubi Creole phonological and some of its morphological features may be attributed to a general phenomenon operating in languages universally through the creolization process and through influence of dialects such as: WSA, EA and SA.

#### Features in Syntax:

* *The Noun Phrase:*

No distinctions are made for gender and number in pronouns which is a typical paradigm of creoles worldwide.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| 3rd PS SG | OA | Nubi |
| F | heya | ‘uo |
| M | houa | ‘uo |

Table (3): Gender Distinction in Nubi and OA’s 3’rd PS SG (Wellen’s 2005).

Another typical paradigm is the loss of plural markers in nouns which are normally substituted with numerals, plural demonstratives and separate quantifiers:

Ex: Nubi: *etnen shajarah* (two trees)< *shjrten* in SA and EA

However, fossilized plurals may be found in nouns that are used frequently or that refer to human beings. They also may be extended to other words such as:

Nubi: *haramiya* (thieves) <SA: *haramiya*

Nubi innovation: *binadu’miya*

The collective marker ‘nas’ (meaning people in OA) can be found in NA (Nubi Arabic) and was adopted from WSA (Wellens, 2005).

In Nubi, it is less personified,; meaning it is not restricted to human beings and may occur to all quantifiable nouns:

Nubi: *nas dufur* (the nails)

* Modifiers:

The indefinite articles for Nubi are homophones with the numeral ‘one’ in EA: *wahid* preceding the noun it modifies. This phenomenon leads to further simplification of the morphological system of its lexifier (reduction in inflectional structure), typical in processes of creolization.

The definite article in Nubi is da/de which is derived from demonstratives in EA and SA.

Nubi: *de benet* (the girl)< *al-bnt* in EA and SA (Wellens, 2005).

* Adjectives:

Typical of creoles, the verb meaning (pass) is used as a marker for comparison *futu*. The same word was also found in parallel pidgins such as Turku.

Nubi: *de benet gameel-futu de walad* (the girl is prettier than the boy) < “al-bnt agml mn alwalad’ in EA and SA (Wellens, 2005).

* The possessive Phrase:

Possessive phrases are usually marked by 1) the pronoun *ana*: which express owner possessed relationships 2) or juxtaposition of the possessed item and the pronominal possessor:

1. Nubi: *Sandouk ana hou* ( his box) < *Sandouk-a*-*hou* SA and EA
2. Nubi: *maraddan noum* (sickness of sleeping).

* Numerals:

The numeral system is a decimal one. Most of its numerals are fossilized Arabic forms with little differences such as the numeral *lak* meaning (one hundred thousand) which is a loan from Swahili:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Nubi | SA/EA |
| i’dashar (1+10) | i’dashar |
| it’nashar (2+10) | it’nashar |
| waid’ishren (1+20) | Wahid-w-ishren |
| kamsa’mia (5 times 100) | khamsa’mia |
| elf’ talata (1000 times 3) | talata-alaaf |

Numerals in Nubi (Wellens, 2005).

The Nubi noun phrase is mainly influenced by Sudanese and Egyptian with very little effect from WSA. Such an observation led most linguists to abandon Owens claim of WSA’s primary influence on Nubi and consider EA and SA as the two major lexifiers of the creole (Wellens, 2005).

* *The Verb Phrase:*

At first, Nubi’ verbal system seems to be a simple one in which there is a direct relation between form and meaning. However, looking better at the morphological system of the creole, one can notice that there is a wide variation of form that can express slight nuances. I will present some features in the verbal system that support this:

* Tense:

*The Progressive Marker:*

Marked by /gi/ such as in WSA:

NA: gi-adurus (studying) < ya(ta)-drus as in SA and EA.

*The Future marker:*

Marked by /bi/ stating habituality or future reference.

NA: bi-adurus (will study) < ha-ya(ta)-drus in SA and EA.

*The past* is marked by the word /kan/ : (was) in SA & EA with no change in the verb if it is non-stative (Wellens, 2005).

* Final *–u*: Verbal Particle or Transitivity Marker?

Most Nubi vowels end in a vowel whether it is an /a-e-i-o-u/ corresponding the language’s tendency to use a CV syllable structure. In Ugandan Nubi about 57% of the verbs end with a final /u/ while in Kenyan Nubi about 45% of the verbs end in a final /u/. Owens states that this percentage is too high to be coincidental. It has been argued that the final /u/ is a verbal particle or a transitivity marker (Owens,1985). Owens takes the high frequency of the existence of /u/ as the only evidence to his assumption. Such a hypothesis is weak as others note. Below listed are the Nubi transitive and intransitive verbs in which speakers give different citation forms for the same verb stems depending on whether it is used in a transitive or intransitive sense:

*kasaru* (transitive) VS *kasar* (intransitive)

*karabu* (transitive) VS *karab* (intransitive)

Such a phenomenon can be observed in WSA (Wellens, 2005).

* Inflection in Nubi Verbs:

Due to the incorrect transmission of Arabic roots and templates, Nubi verbs are almost not inflected morphologically except for passive and gerundival verb forms. Tense/Mood and Aspect are usually expressed by markers or auxiliaries or may be left unexpressed if there existed an adverb or adverbial phrase or an overall context which expresses *tense*, for instance (Wellens, 2005).

* Nubi Verbs and the Imperative Arabic Forms:

According to Owens (1985) two thirds of the Nubi Verbs are derived from the imperative Arabic forms; this is also typical in the WSA:

[a + verb stem]:

NA: *adurus* (study) < *adrus* in EA.

NA: *asala* (prayed)< *sala* in EA.

* The Anterior Marker /*kan*/:

Typically, and in SA &EA and even in certain Arabics of the gulf this marker indicates an action that took place in the (remote) past or what may be explained as the (past-before-past). The same marker has been taken in this language and has been used differently. The combination of the exterior marker /kan/ and the progressive marker /gi/ expresses an even of non-punctual nature that has ended before the time of speaking. Whereas the same marker /kan/ followed by the future marker /bi/ expresses counterfactuality as Bickerton notes in his paradigm (Wellens, 2005).

Lastly, considering the overall inventorial system of Nubi in all of its linguistic aspects, it may be hard to merely attribute them to the universal tendencies of creoles or to the mere influence of its lexifier(s) but rather to a combination of both. In the following section, however, I shall present some of the morphosyntactic aspects of Nubi that can be attributed solemly to the creole’s innovative nature.

#### Innovative Aspect of Nubi: The Great Reduction in Inflectional Structure

The fate of Arabic morphological structure in Nubi is that it lost almost all productive inflectional affixes of Arabic. That and the loss of gemination discussed earlier is what helped simplify the new language. I have previously discussed briefly the result of the loss of gemination in Nubi and thus I will now focus more on the innovative aspect of loss of affixes:

* *The Nubi Noun:*

The noun in Nubi inflects only for number as opposed to its lexifiers inflection for number, gender, state and case:

Nubi: *bagara, baga’ara* (singular, plural) < SA & EA: *bagara, bagar* (singular, plural).

And many nouns have only one form:

Nubi: *gur’un* (singular/ plural) ‘horn, horns’ < SA & EA: *garn, gurun* (singular/ plural) (Wellens, 2005).

* *The Nubi Adjective:*

Adjectives do not inflect for gender and only a small number of them have a distinct plural form:

Nubi: *ke’bir, ku’bar* (singular/plural) ‘big’ < SA & EA: *kebir, kubar* (singular/plural)

Nubi: *kaber-a* (FEM & MAS) ‘big’< SA & EA: *kaber,kaber-a* (MAS/FEM) (Wellens, 2005).

* *The Nubi Verb:*

Verbs do not inflict for person, number or gender but do have a set of tense/ aspect prefixes:

Nubi: *bi-gi-ja* ‘will-be-coming’ < SA: *ha-yigi* ‘will be coming’

Nubi: *bu-gu-ruwa* ‘will-be-going’ < SA & EA: *ha-yrawah* ‘will be going’.

They also show voice differences through stress changes:

Nubi: ’*ashrubu* : drink < SA & EA: *eshrb, eshrbi* ‘FEM,MAS’

Nubi: *ashru’bu* : drunk < SA & EA: *etshereb*

Nubi: *ash’rubu* : drinking < SA & EA: *b-ashrabu*.

Person and number must be indicated by separate pronouns:

Nubi: *’ana gi-‘jere*: I am running < SA: *b-agri*

Nubi: *ita bi-‘jere* : You will run < SA: *ha-t-jri*

Nubi: *umwon bi-jere* : They will run < SA: *ha-y-jir-o*.

It must be noted, however, that we can notice a lot of frozen morphological structures in Nubi from Western Sudanese and Egyptian Arabic (Owens, 1985).

Section 3:

ARABIC STRUCTURLISTS THEORY OF /lahdʒah/

Introduction

Arabic structurlists have always labeled the Classical Arabic language as “*The Miracle Language*”. A language that is quite divine in terms of religion and in terms of its structure. They claim it is quite unique when comparing it to the rather “*simplified structures*” of other languages (and by other languages they mainly compare it to European languages). However, in my opinion, they have failed to notice that the main reason to Classical Arabic’s *unique* complicated structure is that it is an ancient language. Most ancient languages structures are quite complicated. Latin, Sumerian, Old Chinese and Mycenaean Greek all contain aspects in the language that, through evolution, are rather simplified (Hassan, 1986).

What they also have failed to notice is that Classical Arabic is almost extinct. If it weren’t for the written form of the language which is mainly in “Modern Arabic: a somewhat simplified version of Classical Arabic”, and if it weren’t for the Quran, the classical “complicated” form of the language would have died out centuries ago. Another reason for the existence of this language is necessity. It is rather difficult to communicate with some dialects, thus, the modern form of the language is used as a means of communicating with Arabs of a rural dialect. Some Arab structurlists refuse to label the quite unique dialects stretching across the Middle-east and northern Africa as separate languages. Reasons to this refusal are both religious and socio-historic (Hassan, 1986).

As a result, Genetic Linguistics is not a favored topic according to many Arabic structurlists. However, many modern Arabic structurlists including Tammam Hassan and Ebn Alsakeet have tackled this isuue in their publications.

Tammam Hassan, for instance has looked into the history of arabcization and islamization in his theories and argued why label newborn dialects /lahdʒah/ as separate languages that need not to belong to Arabic. (Hassan, 1986) Ebn Alsakeet, on the other hand, has employed examples from modern European languages in his argument. He questions the whole theory of dialect vs language and arrived at the conclusion that Nubi is not very different, in terms of its structure, to the Morrocan dialect of the far west (Al-Sakeet,1990).

In this chapter, I shall present both Hassan and Ebn Al-Sakeet’s viewpoints in regards to Modern Arabic genesis. I shall than further the argument by presenting data that I have collected from my Morrocan friends in Saudi Arabia and comparing them to Nubi Arabic. I will than draw conclusions to the possible similarities between the two /lahdʒah/ and the classical form of Arabic which may have helped Arabic structurlists come up with such hypothesis.

Tammam Hasaan’s Approach

Tammam Hassan, a major modern Arabic structurlists, has been a predominant figure among Arabic linguists in his approach on Arabic genesis. He refused the widely accepted view of Classical Arabic as a living language and argued that the written form of a language cannot suffice for its existence. Classical Arabic has died centuries ago and specifically during the time of the Muslim Conquest of Egypt (616 AD) (Hassan, 1986).

In his publications on labeling Arabic creoles such as Nubi Arabic, Tammam Hassan explains his view by looking back into the history of Islamization and Arabcization (Hassan, 1986).

In his book “ Strategies in Observing The Language” he explains how Arabic was the language of the “Beduins” of the Arabian Peninsula before it spread to Africa. Forcefully, habitants of Egypt, which belonged to the Byzantine/ Eastern Roman Empire at the time, had to learn the language overnight. Naturally, the language was not acquired adequately, specifically in the areas of phonology and syntax (Hassan, 1986).

Through time, and with more and more exposure to the written classical form of Arabic, the Egyptian dialect became more similar to its conquering language. However, it still is considered as a dialect that contains features remaining from the time of the conquest to this day. What is confusing, he claims, is that Arab structurlists, regardless of the language/dialects history, do not differentiate it from other dialects that better resemble the classical form; such as the gulf dialect. He further argues that Nubi is not any different. The Nubi language of Uganda and Kenya with 90 percent of its lexicon belonging to Arabic shouldn’t be considered a separate language, rather, a dialect that is under progress (Hassan, 1986).

Nonetheless, Hassan discusses Bickerton’s universal creole features. He explains how the Nubi “dialect” should not be considered as a separate language that is evolving. He supports his argument by presenting the conditions to what Bickerton labels as: “Early Creolizing Creoles” and how they are not applicable to Nubi. The Nubi dialect has gone through a long pidginization phase before becoming a creole. It is also greatly influenced by its lexifying source the way the Egyptian dialect/language has (Hassan, 1991).

He finally argues against Arabic structurlists in their categorization of Arabic dialects vs Non-Arabic dialects. He questions the ethnicity of some dialects of The Far West. He claims that Arabic was so poorly transmitted to the Far West (Morocco and Mauritania) that their dialects are mutually unintelligible to those living in the Arabian Peninsula. Perhaps the most predominant dialect that resembles Nubi (especially in the area of morphology) is the Moroccan Dialect of The Far West. Both dialects/languages have shifted greatly in their reduction of inflectional forms (Hassan, 1986).

Morrocan Arabic

Same level of development, specifically in the area of morphology.

\_ \_ \_ \_ \_ \_ \_ \_ \_ \_ \_ \_ \_

Nubi Arabic

Nubi and Morrocan Arabics’ level of development.(Hassan, 1991)

Ebn Al-Sakeet’s Views On The Nubi / lahdʒah/

Ebn Al-Sakeet is also one of the important Arabic structurlists who gave his opinions on Genetic Linguistics. He argued against many Arabic structurlists, including Ebn Katheer, on the origins of The Nubi dialect/language.

Ebn Al-Sakeet shows how the whole dilemma of whether to attribute new languages to their sources can be explained. In his book “The Miracle of Arabic” he figures that genetic linguistics is nothing but a matter of comparison. That is, whether to attribute the Nubi dialect/creole/language of Uganda and Kenya to its sources, which is mainly Arabic in this case is a matter of comparing its similarity to its source(s) (Al-Sakeet, 1990).

Al-Sakeet (1990) further explains, “if we compare Nubi to the Classical form of Arabic then yes, it has shifted greatly. However, if we compare it to the neighboring dialects/languages SA and EA, both of which have been influenced by their domestic languages (Ancient Egyptian and the Old Nilo-Saharan Languages respectively) than it has not shifted from its sources. It can be considered as a newborn dialect that is still under development.” (p. 32).

He supports this argument by employing an example from the English language. Alsakeet (1990) explains “Comparing the Nubi dialect to the Classical Form of Arabic is like comparing the American Southern Dialect to Ancient Latin.” (p. 38). Ancient Latin has gone through a long period of simplification processes before the resulting dialects were labeled as separate languages. These languages in return, have been influencing each other resulting in Modern Day English which has further evolved to different dialects. The Nubi language is mainly influenced by EA and SA, both of which have been influenced by other languages. “Thus, the comparison is not possible”, he claims (Al-Sakeet, 1990).

He then addresses the contemporary controversy of language vs dialect. It confuses him how we can relate a dialect to its source even though two dialects of the same source can be mutually unintelligible. He then states the absolute importance of categorizing the Arabic Dialects stretching from the Arabian Peninsula to the North-West regions of Africa to different languages (Al-Sakeet, 1990).

His hypothesis on Modern Arabic Genesis can only be explained if these dialects were labeled as languages. Modern Arabic languages may be categorized as:

1. The Khaleeji Language: including the dialects of Saudi Arabia, UAE, Kuwait, Qatar. Bahrain, Umman, Iraq and Yemen.
2. The Shami Language: including dialects of Syria, Lebanon, Palastine and Jordon.
3. The Nile Language: including the Egyptian and Sudanese dialects
4. The Saharan Language: including the Tunisian, Algerian and Libyan dialects.
5. The Far West Language: including the Moroccan and Mauritanian dialects (Al-Sakeet, 1990).

Tammam Hasaan and Ebn-Al-Sakeet were some of the leading figures in Arabic linguistics that tackled some of the most controversial issues in the Arabic language. They discussed Arabic genesis and questioned the ethnicity of some Arabic dialects. Tammam Hassan specifically argued how illogical it is to label newborn /lahdʒah/: dialects as separate languages and supported his hypothesis by questioning the Arabism of dialects of The Far West. In the following section I shall further support his hypothesis by presenting data from the Moroccan dialect.

A Comparative Analysis Of The Moroccan Dialect

In this research I have collected data from two of my Moroccan friends who live in Saudi Arabia. First, I will give a brief introduction to their backgrounds. Then, I shall phonologically, morphologically and syntactically analyze their utterances and compare it to Ki-Nubi. I will finally present the level of similarity between these dialects and their sources to support Hasaan’s argument.

It must be noted, however, that they do not have similar sources. Moroccan Arabic’s lexifying language is the modern written form of Arabic, whereas Nubi’s superstrate source is SA and EA along with WSA.

Background of Participants: The participants in this research are a young lady and her brother. Muhjah, is twenty seven years old and Ahmad is twenty one years of age. They are both of pure Moroccan descent, that is both their mother and father are Moroccans from the capital Rabat. Their parents fled to Saudi Arabia in the late eighties for job outsourcing. However, they have not been influenced by the local dialect of Saudi. They state that they use their mother dialect at a daily basis.

I also questioned whether their dialect represents the whole dialect of Morocco. Muhja answered me with “It is much more complicated than that”. She explained: “The older generation uses the unmixed version of the local dialect or what is called as the *Pre-French darija*: (meaning the variety of Arabic that is used before the French colonolization of Morocco in 1912). People of the southern region, on the other hand, and who are of Berber descent usually code-switch between their dialect and the Berber language. Not only that, but they have also integrated some of the Berber morphemes that it is hard to understand them. The rather younger generation and especially the educated class in society take pride in code-switching between Moroccan and French or Spanish.”

She further explained: “ Those who were born from the eighties onwards usually code-switch between Moroccan and English.” I then stopped her and asked whether she can speak in all of those dialects. She replied with: “No, that would be impossible. But I will give you data from what we label as the white dialect which is the darija of Rabat.”

She explained how it is widely used and is considered as the official dialect of Morocco.

I collected the data by recording a conversation that they had. I then transcribed, and phonologically analyzed the data by observing some of the phonological processes that took place. I then tried to analyze the morphology of Moroccan Arabic and its Syntax and compared the level of similarity it has with its lexifying languages. I then compared the level of similarities the two dialects have – Moroccan Arabic and Nubi Arabic- with their lexifying sources.

Phonology: Moroccan Arabic has thirty two consonants and six main vowels.

* Vowel Inventory:

One of the most prominent features of Moroccan Arabic and which we as speakers of the Gulf dialect can notice is the reduction or omission of short vowels /ə/,/ɛ/as in:

* The deletion of short vowels in word initial position:

Muhja: /smœħlɪɑ/ : “excuse me”< /əsmœħlɪ/ in MSA: Modern Standard Arabic

Ahmed: /smetɪ/ : “my name”< /ɛsmɪ/ in MSA.

However it is maintained in word final positions and in words with the following morphological template:

1. CVC#
2. CVCC# “Where the vowel is short in these cases.”

Exception to the rule: short vowels are not deleted when adjacent to Arabic’s emphatic consonants and pharyngeals (Heath, 2002):

Muhja: /ɛqræ/: “read”< /ɛqræʔ/ in MSA.

* Labialization of short /u/:

Short /u/ is pronounced as /ə/ except when it is adjacent to a labial or velar consonant (Heath, 2002):

Ahmed: /surə/: “he walked”< /sæ:rə/ in MSA. (short /u/ is maintained)

Ahmed: /qəm/: “stand (IMPERATIVE)” < /qum/ in MSA (short u is substituted by /ə/)

* Long Vowels in Moroccan /darija/:

Long vowels /a/ /i/ and /u/ are maintained especially if the word is borrowed from MSA even though it does lose some of its length. It must be noted that words borrowed from MSA are usually nouns (Heath, 2002):

Muhja: /ximə/ “tent”< “xi:məh” in MSA.

* Moroccan /darija/ vowel inventory:

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
|  | Front | Back |
| High | /i/ | /o/ |
| Mid | /e/ | /u/ |
| Low | /ɑ̃/ | /a/ |

(Heath, 2002)

It must be noted that the following vowels: /o/, /e/ and /ɑ̃/ are not stable vowels. They are shorter relevant to other vowels in the inventory. Also, they do not occur in certain positions such as in word final positions and can be subject to deletion or inversion. Variable vowels cannot occur in open syllables. There are two phonological processes that prevent variable vowels occurring in open syllables which are:

1. Ellision:

The deletion of a variable vowel:

Muhja: /ræjlɪ/ “my husband” < /ræjelɪ/ in MSA.

1. Inversion:

Variable vowel switches positions with a consonant:

Ahmad: /ħbɑ̃b/ “loving, dearing person”< /ħɑ̃bɪb/ in MSA (Heath, 2002).

* Consonant Inventory:
* Affrication of /t/:

The phoneme /t/ is almost always affricated to the sound /tʃ/ as in:

Ahmad: /tʃʊfrk/ “rub” < /tʊfrək/ in MSA (Heath, 2002).

* Geminized Emphatic labialized sounds:

The emphatic labialized consonants /mˤʷ, bˤʷ, fˤʷ/ which are not part of the MSA consonant inventory always occur geminated (Heath, 2002):

Muhja: /mˤʷ:ot/ “death”< /mot/ in MSA.

* Inversion of /g/:

One of the most distinguishing sounds in Moroccan /darija/ is the substitution of MSA /g/ to /q/(Heath, 2002):

Muhja: / qəʃqʕ/ “a type of desert plant” < / qəʃgʕ/ in MSA.

* Backing of / dʒ/ sound:

The / dʒ/ palate-alveoler is usually backed to a near velar /ʒ/ or the velar /g/ if /s/ or /z/ appears in the same word. This feature can be found in other Arabic/ North African dialects such as in EA (Heath, 2002):

Muhja: / ʒɛ/ “he came” < / dʒæʔə/ in MSA.

Ahmad: / gəsm/ “body” < /dʒəsm/ in MSA.

* Assimilation of /s/ and /z/:

The following consonants /s/ and /z/ are assimilated to the surrounding sounds if the sounds were / /ʃ/ and /ʒ/ respectively:

Muhja: / ʃɑ̃ʃʊq/ “saw” < / sɑ̃ʃʊq/ in MSA.

Muhja: / ʒuʒ/ “husband” < /zauʒ/ in MSA (Heath, 2002).

* Gemination of flap /ɾ/:

Unlike MSA there exists a flap /ɾ/ that exists in forms of a word different to those in trill /r/. In fact, some linguists claim that Arabic trill /r/ occurs in Moroccan Arabic as a result of gemination (Heath, 2002):

Muhja: / mæħɾʊm/ “deprived”< / mæħrum/ in MSA.

* Moroccan *darija* Consonant Inventory:

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | Labial | | | Dental-Alveoler | | Palatal | Vel. | Uvel. | Pharyn. | glottal |
| plain | Emphatic- labialized | | plain | emphatic |
| Stops | P,b,  (bˤʷ) |  | | t, (tʃ),d | tˤ, dˤ |  | k,g | q |  | ʔ |
| Fricatives | f,(v) | (fˤʷ) | | s,z |  | ʃ,(ʒ) | x,ɣ |  | ħ,ʔ | h |
| Nasal | m | (mˤʷ) | | n |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Tap |  |  | | (ɾ) |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Trill |  |  | | r |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Approximate |  | |  | l |  | j | w |  |  |  |

Moroccan Consonant Inventory (Heath 2002)

It must be noted that sounds marked with parenthesis are not part of MSA consonant inventory system.

Morphology: Moroccan Arabic has been greatly influenced by the Berber language because Berber speakers have carried over many of the structural features of their language to Arabic. Ever since the seventh century, when Arab horsemen set foot in Morocco, the Classical form of Arabic has been in constant contact with Berber. The result is that Moroccan Arabic is phonologically and morphologically distant from MSA and the colloquial varieties than it is from Berber (Chtatou, 1997).

* Adoption of the Berber Syllable Structure:

Moroccan Arabic copied, among other things, the syllable structure of the Berber language. Some of the most common syllable structures found in *Tamazight*: Berber are:

1. CVCC
2. CVVC
3. CVC
4. VCC
5. VVC
6. CCV
7. CV
8. VC
9. V (Chtatou, 1997)

As a result, the following lexical items from Modern Arabic lost their initial syllable structure and took on that of Berber:

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| MSA | Morrocan A. | Gloss | Berber | Gloss |
| a. /na.di.ma/ | /n.dm/ | “to regret” | /s.tn/ | “to bark” |
| b. /ta.qɑ̃.ba.la/ | /t.qɑ̃.bl/ | “to meet” | /s.tu.sm/ | “to shut up” |
| c./ʔis.tax.ra.dʒa/ | /s.tax.rdʒ/ | “to extract” | /s.wit.nt/ | “drink them!/ |

Adoption of Berber Syllable Structure (Chatou, 1982).

As we can see in (a) Moroccan Arabic drops (in verb forms) all of their vowels in the root structure and instead opt for the clustering of consonants at the underlying level. However, in the cases of (b) and (c), they drop the short vowels and keep the long vowels (Chtatou, 1982).

* Feminine Marker in Moroccan *darija*:

In Berber, one of the most prominent processes in forming the feminine marker is by adding the phoneme /t/ as a prefix and suffix to a masculine noun (Chtatou, 1997).

Muhja: /qmmɑ̃r/ “male gambler” /t+qmmɑ̃r+t/ “female gambler”< /qmmɑ̃rh/ “Female gambler” in MSA.

Ahmad: /xbbɑ̃z/ “male baker” /t+xbbɑ̃z+t/ “female baker”</xbbazah/ “Female baker” in MSA (Chtatou, 1997).

* The use of the diminutive in *darija*:

Like MSA, Moroccan Arabic uses the diminutive, but rather quite deliberately. It conveys meaning of greatness and exaggerating someone whereas in MSA it only conveys meanings of smallness. The diminutive is formulaic in *darija* and involves the insertion of a first short vowel /ʊ/ and adding a long vowel between the second and third root consonants:

Muhja: /ha fin lbʊneh?/ “How are you dear girl?”< /ælbʊneyætə/ in diminutive MSA.

This can be further exemplified in the following root template:

Moroccan Root Tier:  **/**r/ /dʒ / /l/

Moroccan Skeletal Tier: C V C V C

Moroccan intervocalic T: **/**ʊ/ /e/ : /rʊdʒel/ in *darija*: “little man”.

(Chtatou, 1997).

#### *Some Features in Syntax:*

* Basic Word Order:

Unlike MSA, Moroccan darija (like most other colliqual Arabics) starts the sentence with a subject followed by a verb and then an object.

Muhja: /əħmd  ɾæħ l-sʊq/

“ Ahmad went to-market”

as apposed to MSA’s: / ɾæħ aħmd  lɪ-lsʊq/

“went Ahmad to-market”

* The Moroccan Verb Phrase:
* Tense and Aspect in Moroccan *darija*:

MA expresses aspect through the phonological realization of agreement markers and their position with respect to a verb stem and tense through a prefix. So while tense is usually expressed through the following prefixes:

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| ∅ | ka | ɣa |
| PAST | PRES | FUT |

Tense And Aspect in MA (Chatou, 1997).

Muhja: /ka -t- lʔb- t / **<** / t- lʔb -∅  / in MSA.

“PRES-FEM-Play-FEM “ “PRES- Play -She<MSA omitted pronoun>”

Agreement on imperfective verb is usually realized by both a prefix and a suffix, while agreement on perfective verb is usually realized as a suffix only.

Muhja: / rəsm-u/: (They drew “Perf”)

Muhja: /jə-rəsm-u/: (They are drawing/will draw).

As illustrated, perfect stems are only compatible with past tense whereas imperfective stems are compatible with present and future tense morphology (Chtatou, 1997).

* Mood in Moroccan *darija*:

Unlike MSA, Moroccan Arabic expresses no mood distinctions morphologically. For instance:

Ahmad: /j- rqəsˤ / < /ja- rqusˤ -u/ in MSA

3M-dance.IMP “3M-dance.IMP-IND.

1. (Chtatou, 1997)

* Negation in Moroccan darija:

Like many other north African varities of Arabic, negation is marked by the two part negative verbal circumfic: /ma……ʃɪ/:

Muhja: /ma- ktəb- ʃɪ/ “ didn’t write”< /lm jə-ktub/ in MSA.

* The Noun Phrase in Moroccan Arabic:
* MA Personal Pronouns:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| English | *Darija* in transcription |
| I, me | /ənâ/ |
| You (F.S.) | /ntəj ntɪjâ |
| You (M.S.) | /ntâ,ntâyâ/ |
| He | /howa/ |
| She | /hɪja/ |
| We/Us | ħənâ |
| You (PL.) | /ntômâ/ |
| They | hômâ |

MA Personal Pronouns (Chatou, 1997).

As we can see, the pronouns reserved most of the gender and plural markers in MSA with slight phonetic distinctions.

* The MA Possessive:

a) The Synthetic genitive consists of the juxtaposition of the head and the dependent. The head being the possessed and the dependent the possessor. The dependent is usually marked by a definite marker. This can be found in MSA:

Ahmad: /əjd l- bənt/ < /jəd æl- bənt/ in MSA.

“hand DEF- girl < hand DEF- girl”

b) However , the second type of possessive marker is called the analytic genitive (AG) and cannot be found in MSA. It makes use of a separate word which is called the “genitive exponent” and can express the relationship between the two referents. It must be noted that both the head and dependent are marked by definitiness:

Muhja: /l- əjd dyal l- bənt /

“DEF- hand of DEF girl”

(Chtatou, 1986).

* Modifiers:

The definite marker in MA is the prefix “l” and requires agreement with its adjective as in:

Ahmed /l- bənt l-jmilh/ “the beautiful the girl” < /æl- bənt æl-jæmilæh/ in MSA.

With the exception of the change in syllable structure in Moroccan Arabic definite marker (from /æl/ to /l/) the definite marker shares the same charactaristics of that in MSA. The indefinite marker is marked by ∅ (Chtatou, 1997).

* Adjectives:

Adjectives behave the same as those in MSA in reference to their positions in respect to the head noun in a given noun phrase. They also agree with the noun they modify in terms of number, case, state and gender: with the exception of the dual in MSA. Also, never will the adjective in MA precede its noun:

Ahmed: /bnt -in     ħlw- ætʃ/ < /bɪnt -æn     ħɪlwæt -æn/ in MSA

“INDEF.Girl-Dual Pretty-PL” < “INDEF.Girl –Dual Pretty-Dual

As you can notice, the Adjective followed the noun it modifies and agreed with it in terms of case, state and gender. However, it did not agree with it in terms of the dual number. Especially that the dual number is almost never in use in modern colliqual Arabic (Chtatou, 1997).

### Discussion

In this discussion I shall present a comparative analysis between both Nubi and Moroccan and their resources: EA/SA and MSA respectively. I will compare the level of similarity between these two dialects and their resources. The results to this comparative analysis will help determine the accuracy of Arab structurlists hypothesis on whether to render Nubi as a / lahdʒah/.

* In Terms of Phonology:

As I have mentioned in Chapter 2, the phonological inventory in Nubi Arabic is very much similar to that of (Egyptian & WSA: West Sudanese Arabic) combined. In fact, Nubi Arabic’s phonological inventory and specifically its consonant inventory does not include any phonemes from its adstrate languages; with the exception of the apicals such as: /l/,/d/,/r/ and /n/ that are considered related and are considered as allophones of the same phoneme. These phonemes represent 11 percent of the whole phonological inventory.

Whereas in Moroccan Arabic, seven phonemes from adstrate background are considered alien to MSA. They represent about 18 percent of the whole phonological inventory. Both / lahdʒah/ share the same vowel inventory.

The level of similarity between MA, Nubi Arabic and their lexifying languages can be summarized in the following chart:

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
|  | Nubi A. | Moroccan A. |
| Level of Similarity with Lexifying Source | 89% | 82% |

Level of Similarity with Lexifying Source (Wellens, 2005).

* In Terms of Morphology:

By observing both / lahdʒah/’s morphological systems, Nubi, due to poor transmission of proper Arabic roots and templates usually uses words with the following syllable structure: CV. However, it did not employ new syllable structures that are very alien to Arabic the way MA did. Nonetheless, Nubi Arabic leans towards losing all productive inflectional affixes of Arabic. Whereas in MA, new affixes from Berber were employed to mark gender, tense and aspect. Therefor, they are on an opposite level of development: Nubi Arabic is becoming more analytical in terms of morphological structure whereas MA is becoming more innovative and inflectional (Wellens, 2005).

* In terms of Syntax:

MA has not changed its major syntactic features from those in MSA. Even though it has employed some morphological stems that are alien to those in MSA, Moroccan darija has maintained levels of agreement between modifiers and their head noun, Subject and verb ..etc. It has also preserved all MSA personal pronouns and the basic word order typical of the colliqual varities found in North Africa. However, in NA there is no marking for agreement, it has not preserved SA and EA’s personal pronouns and has shifted greatly in some syntactic features such as possession. This is, according to Owens, a typical paradigm of creoles worldwide (Wellens, 2005).

However, I do agree with Arab structurlists Tammam Hassan and Ebn Sakeet that both dialects are at the same level of development. Even though they do seem like they are coming from opposing starting points, both dialects *equally* exhibit features that are different from their resources. In fact, the Nubi creole/ lahdʒah may contain more phonological elements that are Arabic or of Arabic *nature.* On the contrary, Moroccan darija contains phonemes of European influence.

Section 4:

LITERATURE REVIEW AND CONCLUSIONS

In this section I shall present a literature review on the some of the major books and articles that are of importance to the research.

## Literature Review

In the first chapter of this research, I have presented a brief introductory on the History and Linguistic Background of Nubi by Ineke Wellen’s “The Nubi Language of Uganda: An Arabic Creole in Africa”. The book is mainly concerned with presenting the detailed description of the structural features of the language without any ***direct*** comparative analysis to its source(s). It dealt with the historical framework and adstrate/lexical influence of the creole. It also presented features in both the phonological, morphological and syntactic components of the language which I have explored in the second chapter of this research. In the comparative analysis I have presented, I have thoroughly examined the linguistic features in Wellen’s textbook and tried to compare them to their lexifying sources.

In Alan S. Kaye’s “Pidgin and Creole Languages: A Basic Introduction” He uniquely explores two areas in creole research that many linguists have not. First, it is probably one of the very few textbooks that focused on Non-European lexified creoles (Such as Juba Arabic and Nubi). Second, is that it provides the historical framework that led to such features in both Juba Arabic and Ki-Nubi which helped in the first chapter of this research. The book also includes many definition to pidgins and creoles and also early developing languages that do not fall into nether category. In the later chapters Kaye focuses on theories of pidgin and creole genesis. The book also provides a broad review on the whole field of creole genesis and a large quantity of references for future reading.

In the second chapter of this research, I presented Bickerton Language Bioprogram Hypothesis from Degraff’s “Linguistic Typology” in which he argues against the origins of creoles.

I then presented a counterargument by Owen’s. In all of his three articles: “East African Nubi: Bioprogram Vs Inheritence” ,”Nubi, Genetic Linguistics and Language Classification” and “Origins of Nubi” in which he explains that Nubi is a perfect counter-example to Bickerton's theories of creole language's formation. Nubi shows little resemblance to Bickerton's universal creole features and thus these features should not be labeled “universal”.

In Owen’s new article: “The morphologization of an Arabic Creole”, he discusses how Nubi has all the characteristics of a developing creole yet it differs in that it has a robust morphology. Its morphology is rather developed when comparing it to that of other creoles. In his paper he tries to look at the linguistic background that led to such robust morphology. Owens also discusses recent theories of creole genesis.

In Tammam Hassan’s book “ Strategies in Observing The Language” has looked into the history of arabcization and islamization in his theories and argued why label newborn dialects /lahdʒah/ as separate languages that need not to belong to Arabic. He also discusses Bickerton’s Universal Creole Features and questions the whole controversy of language vs dialect.

Ebn Alsakeet, on the other hand, has employed examples from modern European languages in his book The Miracle of Arabic”. He also figures that genetic linguistics is nothing but a matter of comparison. He too questions the whole theory of dialect vs language and arrived at the conclusion that Nubi is not very different, in terms of its structure, to the Morrocan dialect of the far west.

I then presented a comparative analysis between MA and its lexifying language MSA to support Hassan and Ebn Al-Sakeet’s arguments. I employed data from a collection of dialogues that I have audio-recorded from my Moroccan friends back home.

I then presented a morphological and comparative analysis of the MA dialect. I have managed to come up with conclusions regarding its similarities /differences to its source language MSA from Richard S. Harrell’s “ A Short Reference Grammar of Moroccan Arabic”. In this book Harrell presented a thorough research on the structural features: (phonological, morphological and syntactic) in Moroccan *darija.*

In Alan Kihm’s “Pidgin Creoles as A Scattered Sprachbund”, he discusses why some creoles are similar and what makes them different. He also questions whether they belong to a certain typological group and denies the assumption of a LB to classify these creoles as simply “similar”. He then concludes that the similarity found among creoles looks like what languages in a spranchbund or linguistic area have in common.

## Conclusion

In this research, I first tried to explore the origins of Ki-Nubi. There has been a widely accepted view of a creole discontinuity hypothesis by Bickerton where creole languages do not belong to a language family and certainly do not constitute a language family of their own. Agreeing to the latter theory, I argued against the anonymousness in the origins of creoles especially those with substantial lexifying influence such as Nubi. Nubi, with ninety percent of its lexicon derived from Arabic rather belongs to the Semitic language family. To support this view, I provided opposing views to Bickerton’s universal creole features predominantly those provided by Owens. Owens explains in his articles the uniqueness of the Nubi language in that it shows little resemblance to Bickerton's universal creole features and thus these features should not be labeled “universal”. He then figured, by observing the case study of the Nubi creole, that creoles’ structures are not the mere result of an innate language capacity or the mere lexifier and substrate influence of languages they have came into contact with. But rather, they are a result of combination of these two factors. I further supported this view by providing a comparative analysis of the Nubi language/dialect and its lexifying sources EA and SA. I then provided the innovative aspect of Nubi and specifically the great reduction in inflectional structure.

In the third chapter, I presented a hypothesis supported by many Arabic structurlists in regards to Modern Arabic genesis and Nubi’s potentials of being classified as a / lahdʒah/ “dialect”. I first gave a literature review to Tammam Hassan and Ebn Al-Sakeet’s hypothesis, I then supported their arguments by giving a comparative study between the dialects of The Far West and specifically the Moroccan dialect. In my study, I collected data from two of my Moroccan friends living in Saudi who are of pure Moroccan descent. Their dialect is considered the “white dialect” of Morocco and is practiced by the majority of speakers there. I then discussed the level of similarity between both dialects and their lexifiers. In the fourth chapter, I gave a literature review to all of the important books and articles that I have covered in the course of this project. It must be noted that further research needs to be done on the genesis of Arabic creoles/dialects.

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