

Linguistics in the Gulf-3

The Department of English Literature and Linguistics in the College of Arts and Sciences at Qatar University is pleased to announce its third conference on "Linguistics in the Gulf" to be held on March 6-7, 2011.

- The Conference aims to achieve the following objectives
- Provide a common platform for scholars who are engaged in linguistic research in the region
- Promote the study of language in the region
- Emphasize the importance of linguistic research and of linguistics as a scientific field
- Address new problematics facing researchers in the linguistics of the region while contextualizing the discussion within broader historical and theoretical perspectives
- Bring researchers from the region and abroad to a productive exchange of ideas, debates and reflections on current and future developments in the science of language and in their respective areas of interest and scholarship

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Organizing Committee

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Haifa Al-Buainain
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Eirini Theodoropoulou
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Keynote Speakers

Elabbas Benmamoun
University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign

Variation on the same Theme: Comparative Syntax of Negation in Arabic Varieties

A cursory study of the realization of sentential negation in Arabic varieties reveals that it differs according to region and within the same region. However, based on a systematic study of their syntax we will demonstrate that they are subject to the same principles, which in turns confirms the hypothesis that the varieties share the same core syntax. We will use data from the varieties spoken in the Maghreb, Levant, and Gulf. In some varieties, such as those spoken in the Maghreb, there are two main ways of expressing sentential negation, by the discontinuous particles *ma-š* or the particle *maš(i)*. On the other hand, some Gulf dialects have two main negative particles, *maa* and *muu*. However, though the negative particles in the two varieties differ, they seem to have the same syntactic distribution. Thus, Moroccan *maši* and Kuwaiti *muu* are usually found in the context of nominal and adjectival predicates. By contrast, the Moroccan discontinuous *ma-š*, and Kuwaiti *maa* are found in the context of verbal, possessive and existential heads. We will argue that this is not due to the syntax of negation per se but rather to the temporal syntax of the Arabic clause (Aoun et al. 2010), which is clearly uniform across varieties, including Standard Arabic. Consider next the merger of pronouns and negation. Across varieties, a pronoun can be combined with a negative (*manni*, *ma-huwa-š*, etc.) to form a negative copula in the sense of Eid 1983). The distribution of this negative complex is restricted to non-verbal contexts (with nominal, participial, prepositional, and adjectival predicates). Again this follows from the syntax of clause structure: In verbal contexts, we will argue, the negative complex would disrupt the relation between tense and the clause, which is not the case in verbless sentences. In fact, it is this similarity in the clausal syntax that has allowed the Arabic varieties, including Classical Arabic, to evolve similar patterns of negative copulas. Thus, in Classical Arabic we have *laysa* which is historically a combination of the negative *laa* and a pronominal enclitic. This is exactly how the negative *muu* in the Gulf varieties evolved and what we are witnessing in other varieties of Arabic. In other words, because all the Arabic varieties share the same underlying syntax, they have been reproducing similar patterns. This conclusion has implications for issues of variation and the relations between the Arabic varieties.

Ali Idrissi

United Arab Emirates University and the University of Montreal

Research on the Structure of Arabic: Beyond Classical Distributional Data

A leading assumption in generative linguistics is that language is an abstract object that is ‘internal’ to its speakers and about which they have intuitions. By virtue of their linguistic knowledge, speakers can make judgments on _among other things_ the acceptability or unacceptability of a sequence of sounds (e.g., a complex onset, a syllable, a word, or a sentence) in their language. Armed with these intuitions, linguists observe the distribution and patterns of linguistic units (e.g., features, sounds, morphemes, words, phrases, etc...) to make generalizations and build theories of language. While it has been the practice of theoretical linguists to rely to a large extent on distributional data, in addition to considerations such as economy and simplicity, in building their theory(ies) of language, such data have often proven insufficient for enough substantive progress to be made. I briefly discuss the limitations of distributional data in some areas of research on Arabic morphology and argue that behavioral and developmental data do not only make up for those limitations but they also are another, and probably more revealing, type of distributional data which must be

accounted for. Recent research in Arabic has shown that brain-damaged adult (Prunet et al. 2000; Idrissi et al. 2008; Idrissi et al. 2010; Boudelaa et al. 2011) and neurologically intact adult and child speech data (Idrissi et al. 2009) can reveal dissociations which provide more insight than 'classical' distributional data and which are, theory-wise, equally relevant. Also, with the advent of sophisticated brain-imaging technologies, new ways to elucidate the mysteries of Arabic linguistic structure become available. The potential of research using techniques such as Electroencephalography (Boudelaa et al. 2010) and Magnetoencephalography to investigate Arabic word structure will also be discussed. Finally, a parallel is drawn between the dissociations observed in deviant and normal adult or child language or in brain responses to linguistic stimuli, on the one hand, and the regularities observed in (spoken or written) language data sets through standard methods of linguistic inquiry, on the other.

Papers Submission

We invite contributions in any area of research on the language scene in the Gulf region including, but not limited to:

1. Formal aspects of the Gulf spoken dialects (phonology, morphology, syntax, semantics)
2. Contact of the native Arabic dialects with other languages in the region
3. Linguistic variation Linguistic change Standardization and linguistic leveling language planning and language policies
4. Linguistic attitudes relation to Standard Arabic Language and the mass media
5. Discourse analysis of Arabic literary and non-literary texts
6. Second language acquisition in the Gulf.
7. Forensic linguistics in Arabic context
8. Computational linguistics and Arabic data processing
9. Neurolinguistics and bilingual language processing

The conference will also host two prominent keynote speakers. There will be a special session on new trends in linguistics which will not be limited to Arabic.

After the first two successful rounds of this conference, held in 2007 and 2009, this third event aims to bring together more researchers and experts investigating a wide range of topics related to the study of language in the Gulf region.

Submission of Abstracts

Abstracts (of 400 words max) should be submitted electronically as an attachment (in rich text format, or pdf (especially if especial characters are used). Please complete the [participation form](#) and send it with your abstract to the chair of the Conference Organizing Committee: Dr. Moneera Al-Ghadeer: malghadeer@qu.edu.qa

Deadline for abstracts: November 20, 2010. Receipt of abstracts will be acknowledged as soon as possible. Notification of acceptance will be sent by the beginning of January 2011.

Program

Linguistics in the Gulf III

March 6-7, 2011

Conference Program

First Day: Sunday, March 6, 2011

Venue: Conference Hall/Administration Building

9:00 AM. Welcome:

Moneera Al- Ghadeer (Chair of Department of English Literature & Linguistics, Qatar University)

9:10 AM. Opening Remarks:

Kassim Shaaban (Dean of College of Arts & Sciences, Qatar University)

9:30-10:15 AM. Keynote Address:

Elabbas Benmamoun (University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign)

Variation on the same Theme: Comparative Syntax of Negation in Arabic Varieties

Introduced by Eiman Mustafawi

10:15-10:30 AM. Coffee Break

10:30 AM-12:30 PM. First Session

Chair: Kassim Shaaban (Qatar University)

1. Strategies of Wh-questions in Jibbali

Murtadha J. Bakir (Dhofar University)

2. (Optionally) Verbless Constructions in Gulf Arabic Dialects

Maris Camilleri (University of Surrey)

Co-author: Duha Alaskar (Kuwait University)

3. Vulnerable Features of Heritage Arabic Speech

Abdulkafi Albirini (Utah State University)

Co-author: Elabbas Benmamoun (University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign)

12:30-1:45 PM. Lunch Break

2:00-4:00 PM. Second Session

Chair: Murtadha J. Bakir (Dhofar University)

1. A Study of the Phonological Structure and Representation of First Words in Arabic

Eman Abdoh (King Abdulaziz University)

2. The Phonetic Realization of Punctuation Marks In Arabic: Psycho – Acoustic Study
Mervat Fashal (University of Alexandria)
Co-author: Eiman Qasem(University of Alexandria)
3. Sociolinguistic Variation in Gulf Pidgin Arabic
Mohammad Al-Moaily (Newcastle University)
4. Diglossic Code-Switching by Saudis: Exploring Social Identity
Manal Ismail (King Saud University)

7:00 PM. Dinner at the Pearl

Second Day: Monday, 7th March

Venue: Conference Hall/Administration Building

9:00-9:45 AM. Keynote Address:

Ali Idrissi (United Arab Emirates University and the University of Montreal)
Research on the Structure of Arabic: Beyond Classical Distributional Data
Introduced by Darwish Al-Emadi

9:45-10:00 AM. Coffee Break

10:00 AM-12:00 PM. Third Session

Chair: Darwish Al-Emadi (Qatar University)

1. Baseline Data for Arabic Acquisition with Clinical Applications: Collecting Qatari Data
Haifa Al-Buainain (Qatar University)
Co-authors: Kimary Shahin (Qatar University)
Ranya Morsi (Qatar University)
Ghada Khattab (Newcastle University)
Feda Al-Tamimi (Jordan University of Science and Technology)
2. Semantic Forensics: Building an Arabic Semantic Ontology of Terrorism
Inas Youssef (Ain Shams University)
3. The Linguistic Impairment and its Relation to the Brain :a Neuro-Linguistic Study on Some Aphasic People in Yemen
Hasan Jaashan (Sanaa University)
4. Verbal Inflections in the Acquisition of Kuwaiti Arabic and Hijazi Arabic:A Comparative Study
Khawla Aljenaie (Kuwait University)
Co-author: Fatima Basaffar (King Abdulaziz University)

12:00-1:15 PM. Lunch Break

1:30-3:30 PM. Fourth Session

Chair: G. Richard Tucker (Carnegie-Mellon University)

1. Using Web Mining Techniques to Build a Multi-Dialect Lexicon of Arabic

Rania Al-Sabbagh (University of Illinois)

Co-authors: Elabbas Benmamoun (University of Illinois)

Roxana Girju (University of Illinois)

Mark Hasgawa-Johnson (University of Illinois)

Rehab Duwairi (Qatar University)

2. Rethinking Language Awareness – A (Meta)pragmatic Perspective

Peter Grundy (Durham University)

3. Language as Evidence: Cases on Forensic Authorship Attribution

Rahma Al-Busafi (Colleges of Applied Sciences, Oman)

4. Idioms of Body Parts in Hijazi Dialect of Arabic: A Study Based on Cognitive Semantics

Najah Ali Al-Jahdali (King Abdulaziz University)