

Geography of Sistan People While Speaking?

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Abstract

There is a principle of language which values one form for one meaning and one meaning for one form. This is a good principle from the perspective of the language learners. From the perspective of society, however, there is usefulness to have multiple ways of saying more or less, the same thing. This multiplicity, or linguistic variation, is also perhaps an important and even necessary aspect of the nature of language. The purpose of this study is to provide a descriptive account of dialect differences in Sistan area in order to show the geographical variation of dialect among the rural and urban people.

Key words *dialect, dialectal differences, Sistan region, Geographical variations, dialectal Geography.*

Introduction

Languages vary in a number of ways. One way of characterizing certain variations is to say that speakers of a particular language sometimes speak different dialects of that language. Sociolinguistics today is concerned more with **social variation** in language than with **regional variation**. However, if we are to gain a second understanding of the various procedures used in studies of social variation, we should look at least briefly at previous work in regional dialectology. That work points the to understanding how recent investigations have preceded as they have. Ward haugh (1993) puts it forward that ...

Studies of social variation in language grew out of studies of regional variation. (1993, p. 40)

Regional variation in the way a language is spoken is likely to be one of the most noticeable ways in which we observe variety in language. As we travel throughout a wide geographical area in which a language is spoken, and particularly if that language has been spoken in that area for many hundreds of years, we are almost certain to notice differences in pronunciation, in the choices and forms of words, and in syntax. Ward haugh (1993) declares that ...

There may even be very distinctive local coloring in the language which we notice as we move from one location to another, such distinctive varieties are usually called regional dialects of the language. (1993, p. 40)

Hudson (2000) claims that one of the crucial factors that can cause **Socialists** is geography. He further asserts that ...

When linguistic innovations arise and spread in a particular geographic region, their unity and relative isolation may focus and limit their spread, and, as a result, the innovations may become typical of the region. The regional varieties of a language which result, if these become recognizably distinct, are termed dialects. (2000, p. 426)

Language and Dialect

We first need to consider the concept of **language**. What does it mean to say that some variety is a language?

This is first of all a question about popular usage: What do ordinary people mean when they say that some variety is a

language? Having answered the question in this form, we may or may not wish to take language as a technical term, and say how we propose to use it in sociolinguistics. We shall want to do so if we find that popular usage reflects some kind of reality to which we should like to refer in sociolinguistics, but if we come to conclusion that popular usage reflects no such reality, then there will be no point in defining language more explicitly in order to use it as a technical term.

What then is the difference, for English speakers, between a language and a dialect? There are two separate ways of distinguishing them, and this ambiguity is a source of great confusion. Haugen (1966) argues that the reason for the ambiguity, and the resulting confusion, is precisely the fact that **dialect** was borrowed from Greek, where the same ambiguity existed. On the one hand, there is a difference of size, because a language is larger than a dialect. This is the sense in which we refer to English as a language, containing the total of all the terms in all its dialects, with **Standard English** as one dialect among many others (Yorkshire English, Indian English etc).

The other contrast between language and dialect is a question of **prestige**; language has prestige while dialect does not. If we apply the term in this sense, Standard English is not a dialect at all, but a language, whereas the varieties which are not used in formal writing are dialects. Richards, Platt, and Weber (1985) define a dialect as a ...

Variety of a language spoken in one part of a country (regional dialect), or by people belonging to a particular social class (social dialect or sociolect), which is different in some words, grammar, and pronunciation from other forms of the same language. A dialect is often associated with a particular accent. Sometimes a dialect gains status and becomes

the Standard Variety of a country.
(1985, p. 80)

Regional Variation

One of the major topics in sociolinguistics is the study of language variation and change with its inevitable relationship to social factors. In the earlier part of this country, the orientation of structural and generative linguistic theories discouraged the quantitative analysis of observed language behaviour. Linguists did not try to find out about the principles of language variation of how it might be related to linguistic change and to the social setting, so very little was known about it. An early study by John Fischer (1985) demonstrated that variation between ‘-ing’ and ‘-in’ (as in ‘talking’) in a group of children was influenced by social factors such as sex and social status. But most of the advances in studies of variation and change were inspired by the work of William Labov.

Ward haugh (1993) has pointed out that regional variation in the way a language is spoken is likely to be one of the most noticeable ways in which we observe variety in language. As we travel throughout a wide geographical area in which a language is spoken, and particularly if that language has been spoken in that area for many hundreds years, we are almost certain to notice differences in pronunciation, in the choices and forms of words and in syntax. He further declares that there may even be very distinctive local colorings in the language which we notice as we move from one location to another. Such distinctive varieties are usually called regional dialects of the language.

If we consider the most straightforward variety differences based on geography, it should be possible to identify what are called regional dialects within any larger variety such as English. Fortunately, there is a vast amount of evidence bearing on this question, produced by the discipline called dialectology, particularly by its branch called dialect geography. Mckay & Hornberger (1996) claim that ...

The study of regional dialects-varieties of a language which are spoken in different geographical areas – is among the oldest traditions is the systematic study of interlanguage variation; its roots are in the study of nineteenth century historical – comparative linguistics. (1996, p. 154)

Geography becomes an issue which the community that supplies the new influence is some distance from the one receiving the innovation. These cases involve a concept in spatial dialectology known as **focal points**, or in the terminology Trudgill (1974) uses, **central places**.

It is quite often the that an innovation spreads from a city or large town to another substantial- sized town in the same region, but has no effect at all or speakers in the countryside between them. This can be understood as the result of people in the smaller town having business or social contacts in the larger town, but not in any of the territory around either of them. In their face-to-face dealings in the other ‘central place’, people will begin to accommodate their speech by convergence towards the speech of their interlocutors. When they return, the others in the local community will begin accommodating to their speech and a new linguistic form enters the community as innovation.

Sistani Dialect in the literature

Lexicographers have recognized seven types of **Dari** language of them four are dead. They are Heravi, Segzi, Zavoli, Soghdi. The other three are Dari, Pahlavi and Farsi. Moeen Dictionary (Vol. 5) puts it forward that Sistani dialect is the continuation of the old Sagzi. It is spoken today by many people in the cities of Zabol, Zahedan, Gorgan, Sarakhs (Iran and Torkamenestan) and in some provinces of Afghanistan like Nimrooz and Farah.

Ravaghi (1364) claims that some written traces of Sistani dialect can be found in a translation of 'Koran of Ghods'. It is also claimed that some words and lexical combinations of the current version of the dialect are found in the three well-known historical books i.e. Tarikh-e Sistan (Bahar, 1314), Ehyaolmoluk (Setudeh, 1344), and Farhang-e Mohazzabol Al-asma written by Mahmood ibn Omar Zanji Sanjeri. There is no doubt that the authors of these books have been Sistani.

Among foreigner researchers who have done studies on Sistani dialect are Wery ho (1962), Gryanberg (1963), and Lazard (1970).

This Study

The purpose of the present study is to investigate the variety of language (Sistani dialect) spoken by the people living in rural areas, and forms spoken by the urban people, and tries to explore the forms of speaking by examining a dialogue between two Sistani females living in rural areas. All these are done in order to indicate differences between the linguistic features employed in different areas.

Research Question

The present study strives to answer the following specific research question.

“Is there any difference in dialect geography of Sistan people while speaking?”

Method

Subjects

The subjects of this study were the people living in both rural and urban areas of Sistan.

Data Collection Procedure

Two methods were employed for collecting the data: audio- recording and listening to occasional informal conversations between the participants involved in those conversations. The audio- recorded material and the occasional informal conversation material were transcribed subsequently by the researcher.

Prior to the using of these two methods, the research assistants were instructed to approach the subjects in a friendly manner and try to gain their cooperation and assistance, especially in the second method. All the information obtained from the participants is written on three tables. Table 1 indicates some of the forms spoken by the people of the rural areas. Table 2 illustrates some of the forms spoken by the urban people, and table 3 shows a dialogue between two Sistani females living in rural areas. All these tables are given in the Appendix section.

Results and Discussion

The results of this study reveals the fact, as it is shown in **Tables 1 & 3**, that rural areas of Sistan preserve **older forms** of Sistan local dialect. So, they are regarded to be 'conservative' in the sense that they not only has not forgotten the older forms of Sistan dialect, but also they use those forms, linguistically stable, in their daily conversation, inspite of being exposed to the formal way of speaking the Persian language by the listeners or addressees. However, urban areas of Sistan, as indicated in Table 2, are acknowledged to be innovative, unstable linguistically because when they are involved in a conversation, they fall down into two categories: (1) Those who absolutely abandon the regional dialect of Sistan and try to speak in formal Persian, despite of the overall use of the local dialect by their addressees. And (2), those who are moderate in their speaking, that is in their talking, they shift from formal Persian to the regional dialect of Sistan and vice versa.

The results firmly indicate that a sampling of such people from various locations throughout a wide geographical area like

Sistan will allow the dialect geographer to show where particular sounds, forms, and expressions are used and where boundaries can be drawn around these so that within the same region- Sistan- area “A” may be described as an area in which linguistic feature “X” occurs; whereas, area “B” and “C” has no instances of that feature. The results seem to confirm Wardhaugh’s (1993) notion that...

If there are sufficient differences between the linguistic features employed in areas “A” and “B”, then we may say that we actually have two dialects, “A” and “B”, of the particular language in question.

Pedagogical Implications

On the positive side, an increased awareness of regional and social variation can significantly enhance teachers and students mutual understanding and appreciation, and can offer teachers additional tools with which to enhance their students’ appreciation of literature, their ability to write and use a variety of styles, and their sensitivity to the diversity and richness of the speech communities in which their languages are used.

As a general conclusion, the findings of the present study confirm the claim that a close relationship exists between language and society. That is, through studying the linguistic behavior of individuals in a speech community one can obtain a great deal of information about the social characteristics of those individuals. In other words, social structure is reflected in language structure and language use. This study supports Chaika’s (1998) notion that language mirrors society.

Table 1
 “Some forms uttered by the rural people of Sistan”

کجا رفتی؟	اگچه بشدی؟
چرا رفتی؟	ورچه برفتی؟
بهت نگفتم که نروید؟	نرنگفتو که نره؟
حالت چطور است؟	دگه شتو استی؟
چی بگم، حالم خوب نیست.	چیزه بگو. احوال ندارو
بچه ها چطورند؟	گوچه گو شتو استه؟
همسرت چطور است؟	زنتو شتو استه؟
بیا بریم سر مزرعه.	بیه تیره سر کل.
زمین رو آب دادی؟	زمینه او داده؟
گوسفند، بز و گاو هم داری؟	مال چزه داری؟
گوسفندان و گاو هایت چطورند؟	گوسفندون و گوون تو شتو استه؟
گوسفند برای کشتن نداری؟	گوسفه ور کشته نداری؟
گندمها را درو کردید یا نه؟	گندمه ر درو کرده یا نه؟
بیا برویم	بیه تیره
حال دخترت چطوره؟	کنجه تو شتو استه؟
حال پدربزرگت چطوره؟	به پور تو شتو استه؟
حال مادربزرگت چطوره؟	بی بی تو شتو استه؟
چند تا پسر داری؟	چنتا پسر داری؟
اگر بروی تورا کتک میزنم.	اگه بره تره مزنه.
آیا رودخانه نوراب آب دارد؟	نورو او میاره؟
چرا دل به کار نمیدهی؟	ورچه خودخا و کار نمده.
دیگه نمیخوام ببینمت.	دگه تر نمخاهو بینو.
بپر	ورپر.
بخواب	خو شو.
غذا نمیخوری؟	نو نمخوری؟
چرا زدیش؟	ورچه اونه بزدی؟
دلیم میخواد.	دل مه ممخاهه.
میخوام برم گاو و گوسفندا رو بدوشم.	ته برا گوونو گسفنودنه بدوشو.
میدونی پسر نوروز چکاره هست؟	مفهمی پسه مشتتو نوروز چکاره شته؟
میگن معلم شده.	مه گه معلم شته.

Table 2
 “Some forms produced by the urban people.”
 A combination of formal Persian and Sistani dialect and formal Persian only.

من دارم می رم بازار. تو نمیه؟	تو نمی آیی؟
زندگی خوش میگذره.	زندگی خوش میگذره.
بچه هایت را سعی کن خوب تربیت کنی.	
قصد دارم یک ماشین بخرم.	
وعده سر خرمن مده.	
بزک بزک نمیر که بهار میاد.	سعی کن صبر و استقامت داشته باشی. بالاخره بهار میاد.
حالت چطوره؟	
خوبم، بد نیستم.	
خوش مگذرونی؟	
نه زیاد	
بچه ها چطورند؟	
خوبند	
خه درسه خا چطور هستند؟	با درسهایشان چطورند؟
پسر بزرگم درس نمخوانه.	پسر بزرگم درس نمیخواند.
مگه ترا نگفتو که اونو دبیرستان غیر انتفاعی ببر.	مگر بهت نگفتم پسرت را دبیرستان غیرانتفاعی ببر؟

Table 3

- الف: سلام علیکو ددجو
- اشتو استه عوالتو
 - چخبر از کل و کشته تو
- ب: وودده چش دنیا ساخته امی مشتی علی دشنکه نشتک که او در زمینه مه بیایه
- دگه منو باب مدس از دس کاریو ذل شته؟
 - باب مدس مخواست دم پگه بریه و گرو ننه بگیریه
 - ول مو که جو مترسید و که گرو گر بشی و مشدی
 - علی که وقد خستکیه نفسیو بریه و باب مدس
 - خاک ور سریو بشیه

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