

**LANGUAGE CHOICE AND LANGUAGE ATTITUDES IN A MULTILINGUAL
ARAB CANADIAN COMMUNITY: QUEBEC– CANADA:
A SOCIOLINGUISTIC STUDY**

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ABSTRACT: *This study aimed at investigating language choice among Arabs of Quebec–Canada. It also explored Arabs' attitudes towards Arabic, French and English in particular and factors involved in using these languages. In order to achieve the objectives of the study, the researchers selected a sample that consisted of (100) Arab respondents who reside in Quebec– Canada, covering different age ranges, gender, and educational backgrounds. The instrument of the study was a sociolinguistic questionnaire. Results showed that Arabs of Quebec– Canada have positive attitudes towards Arabic, English and French. They freely use their Arabic language in the domain of home and with family members, in worship places and when listening to the radio. In addition, they use English and French in Governmental offices and formal applications and in educational institutions. Results also showed that Arabs of Quebec mix these languages in the domain of neighborhood, with friends, and media.*

KEYWORDS: Language Choice, Attitudes, Arab Canadians, Sociolinguistics

INTRODUCTION

Languages, with their complex implications for identity, communication, social integration, education and development, are of great importance for sociolinguists. Human languages have changed in the age of Globalization; no longer tied to stable communities, they move across the globe, and change in the process. Most nations in the world are multilingual; speaking more than two languages. They contain ethnic groups in contact and frequently in competition. It is well known that there are basically three possible linguistic outcomes of prolonged contact of ethnic groups: language maintenance, bilingualism or multilingualism, or language shift. Languages influence each other; they expand, contract or die. According to Remysen, Wim, Reinke & Kristin (2012), the impact of one language on the lexicon, phonology, and syntax of another has long been considered vitally important for the understanding of language change, choice, and use. It is very rare that contact is between equals and more or less symmetrical. The characterized differences between communities such as power, size, wealth, prestige, and vitality are significant factors which often make speakers adjust their language- choice patterns during their life time and/ or from one generation to the next, along with the speakers' attitudes towards their languages.

Migration largely contributes to language contact and change. The community of immigrants faces great challenges whether to keep their mother tongue language actively in use, to shift to the dominant host language, or use their ethnic language side by side with the dominant official language of the host country.

Quebec and Arab Immigrants

Quebec is a vibrant multicultural province. It is home to Canada's second largest city, and the second largest French speaking city in the world. Since the end of World War II, more than 650,000 immigrants from over 80 countries have moved to Quebec, particularly to the multicultural city of Montreal. Statics and publications show that immigrants started to arrive

to Montreal in 1882. Iraq, Lebanon, Syria, Jordan and Palestine were ruled at that time by the Ottoman Empire until the end of World War I. This is why during that period, Arab immigrants from these countries were called either Turks or Syrians by Canadian authorities. Arab immigration is no different from that of other groups. Arabs immigrated to escape war, famine, religious persecution, political persecution, family disagreements or the love of adventure. To reach their goal, immigrants faced many trials and tribulations. Oppression under Ottoman rule, poverty, and the war between the Lebanese Maronites and the Lebanese Druze were the motivating factors for the early Lebanese immigration. Montreal and Quebec were the destination of first arrivals, but by time, in all the major cities, one could find Arab speaking people (Statistics Publications 2014).

According to Statistics Publications site, upon arrival, new Arab immigrants were processed by Canadian immigration offices. The new immigrants were mostly men. The majority had little or no education or skills. They understood trade based on their experience in the market place back home. Although some worked on farms, most sold goods door to door. Most did not speak English but communicated with their hands and fingers. They were determined and within a short time learned enough English to communicate. They did however mix their English with Arabic. The early immigrants succeeded because of hard work, good manners, generosity, courage and honesty. They developed a supporting network among themselves. Eventually some established wholesale businesses. Many stopped peddling and started grocery and dry goods stores. They also established churches, mosques and clubs. Many of their children became business and professional people of today.

The 1966 White Book Reforms which removed discrimination based on race, colour, religion or ethnicity was a benefit to Arab immigration. The immigrants of this period were educated. The majority had managerial, professional or technical skills with only a few being in the lower level of white collar occupations. In 1991 one of four Arab Canadians had a university degree compared to 10% of the Canadian population in general.

The post-WWII wave of Arab immigrants comprised a broader mixture of Christian groups and a substantial number of Muslims and Druze who were motivated by the desire to escape unfavorable social, economic and political conditions in their homelands. In the 1980s and the early 1990s, a large number of Convention Refugees arrived from countries of the Arab world (1983-1992), notably Somalia, Lebanon and Iraq. During the same 10-year period, (1983-1992), investors/ entrepreneurs came largely from Lebanon, Kuwait, Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates, but with strong representation from Egypt, Iraq, Jordan and Syria (Quebec City 2014).

According to the 2011 census, the Arab ethnic population numbered almost 2.2% in Quebec, 1.2% in Ontario. Arabs make 1.2% of the Canadian population. They are people from Lebanon, Egypt, Morocco, Syria, Iraq, Somalia, Algeria, Kuwait, Tunisia, Jordan, Saudi Arabia, Sudan and United Arab Emirates. Smaller numbers of Arab immigrants originated from Bahrain, Djibouti, Libya, Mauritania, Oman, Qatar and Yemen. Many of these Arab immigrants arrived as highly educated married couples with children.

The label "Arab Canadian" does not refer to one religious affiliation or country of origin but to a mixture of characteristics and beliefs that members of this ethnic group have assimilated from their family or have acquired in Canada. Of the people who described themselves as Arab in the 2011 census, 44% were Muslims, 28% were Catholic, 11% were Christian Orthodox; 5% were Protestant; and 6% had no religious affiliation. At present about 49% of the Arab ethnic group in Canada are of Lebanese origin; 13% are of Egyptian origin; 6% are of Maghreb origin; 5% are of Syrian origin; 5% are of Somali origin; 3% are of Palestinian

origin and 2% are of Iraqi origin (Demographics of Quebec). According to Demographics of Quebec site, the Arabs of Quebec whether were Muslims or Christians had a tendency to build their religious centers like mosques and churches immediately after their settlement. At the beginning of the 20th century, several Eastern Christian churches were founded Like St Georget Joseph church, and St Mark Montreal church and the Coptic Orthodox Church which were established following the arrival of large numbers of Coptic immigrants from Egypt.

Muslim institutions also developed to serve Muslims spiritually and socially. The first mosque in Canada, Al Rashid Mosque, was built in Edmonton in 1938. Since the 1950s Muslim immigrants from the Arab world, and from other parts of the Muslim world, came to Canada in large numbers and mosques have been established in virtually all major urban centers. Secular associations were also established by both the early pioneers and later immigrants to serve social, cultural, charitable and political needs. Memberships are usually mixed; in a few cases they are confined to youth, women, university students or professionals. Data collected from the pilot questionnaire conducted by the researchers showed that some national groups like Lebanese, Syrians, Palestinians, and Egyptians among others have established their own distinct associations for example, The Durzi Association, Tunisian Students Association, Gilgamesh Association, The Syrian Association, The Egyptian Association, and Al Albait Foundation. Only the Canadian Arab Federation is national in scope and membership. Several Arab Canadian associations have sponsored the publication of multi language (Arabic, English and French) periodicals; some newspapers are published by individual Canadian Arabs like Arab news, Al Watan, Mustakbal, Annahar, Venicia, Al Nas, Shorouk, and Al Ayyam.

Arab immigrants highly value education, both for themselves and for their children. They established many Arabic schools like Dar Al Iman, Ali Ben Abi Talib, JMC, Ecole Arabe Pour Enfants, Al Nour School, Yasmine Institution, and Al Salam School. Arabs of Quebec enjoy higher educational and occupational qualifications. They work as employees in the private sector or have professional careers as doctors, pharmacists, engineers, accountants...etc. The rest manage their own businesses such as grocery stores and restaurants (Population of Canada 2014). Quebec has famous Arab figures and intellectuals as Sam Hamdan a former minister, Nelly Kanu the Syrian council, Amir Khadir and Fatima Houda as Parliament members. Also, Karl Wolf, Christina Maria, Paul Anka, and Renie Angelil were considered famous Arab musicians. There are two famous radio stations in Quebec that broadcast in Arabic; Al Shark Al Awsat, and Moyen Orient radio station (Nizar Al Jouma, personal communication, February 14, 2013). This study aimed to explore language choice and language attitudes among Arabs of Quebec- Canada towards Arabic, French and English and to determine the extra linguistic factors that stood behind their language choice and attitudes. To achieve the objectives mentioned above, the study attempted to answer the following questions:

1. What are the factors that determine the linguistic choices among the Canadian Arabs of Quebec?
2. What are the attitudes among the Canadian Arabs of Quebec towards Arabic, English and French?

Results of this study cannot be generalized to all Canadian Arabs because the sample chosen in this study does not include all Arab Canadians in Quebec/ Canada. It is limited to the selected sample and the time and the instruments used in the study. This study was conducted in Quebec/ Canada and analyzed in Amman/ Jordan during 2013- 2014.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Although most of the world's population can speak only one language, a sizable number is able to communicate in two or more. Whenever speakers of two or more languages come together, a decision has to be made about which of these languages is to be used. It should be clear that many factors influence language choice, and may work either with or against each other, producing a complex web of interaction which makes the task of describing any language choice event extremely difficult. Language choice is a careful selection of word, phrase, clause or sentence of another language within the speaker's linguistic repertoire. For bilinguals and multilinguals, the occurrence of language choice seems natural, automatic and unplanned. Speakers choose an appropriate register, genre, style, medium, or tone of voice in relation to the interlocutor (who), topic (what), context (where) and medium (how) in every talk.

Fasold (1990) suggests that multilingualism serves as an interactional resource for the multilingual speaker. This means that one particular language may normally be used at home or with close friends, whereas another language may be used for commerce and trade, and even a third one for dealing with government agencies.

According to Gal (1987), the analysis of language choice in bi- and multilingual settings remains a crucial endeavor in sociolinguistic research. Early attempts by linguists and sociologists at describing language use in general quantitative terms have failed to account for the evident heterogeneity across communities, individuals and occasions. Theoretically refined tools are needed to explain why language X is used in situation x, and why language Y is used in situation y. Contrary to the widely assumed belief that language use is unsystematic, sociolinguistics has held as axiomatic that "A speaker's choice between varieties is also structured. It is systematically linked to social relationships, events or situations." (Gal, 1987, p. 287). Therefore, one of the fundamental issues in socially oriented linguistic disciplines is why a given linguistic variety is chosen to be used in a particular array of situations, while another variety is preferred in other circumstances.

Any speaker of any language has at his or her disposition a range of language varieties; Gumperz (1964) uses the term 'linguistic repertoire' to describe the range of styles which an individual needs to fulfill all his or her communicative needs in the most appropriate way. The speaker's ability to choose the appropriate variety for any particular purpose is part of his or her communicative competence; the choice is not random, but has been shown to be determined by aspects of the social organization of the community and the social situation where the discourse takes place. In this case the bilingual or the multilingual is not strikingly different from the monolingual; it is simply that a speaker has to choose not only between different varieties of the same language, but also between two or more different languages.

Furthermore, David (2006) argues that language choice is triggered by factors such as social status, gender, educational attainment, ethnicity, age, occupation, rural and urban origin, speakers, topic, place, media and formality of the situation. These findings are supported by Fasold (1990). Coulmas (1997) explains that people make linguistic choices for various purposes. Individuals and groups choose words, registers, styles, and languages to suit their various needs concerning the communication of ideas, the association with and separation from others, the establishment or defense of dominance. People are endowed with the ability to adjust their linguistic repertoires to ever new circumstances and construct their languages for certain purposes. Ferrer and Sankoff (2004) find that the language preference of a speaker is influenced by dominant languages. Therefore most bilinguals and multilinguals may choose a dominant language as a medium of communication because it provides them greater advantage, economic benefits, social networks expansion and better opportunities. The choice of a dominant language can be triggered by the wider acceptance and functions of that

language. Dominant language influences the language choice of a speaker. More prestigious language is usually favored as the medium of communication in various domains because of its wider social functions. Pillai (2006) shares the same point of view; dominant languages can be used in formal and informal domains of communication and help to gain prestige, better economic access in the community, authority and power.

Correspondingly, Piller (2004) believes that in multilingual society, the language spoken by a large community can be considered superior than those spoken by the minority. The community language is spoken by the majority and has a wider social function. Therefore using the community language serves more benefits to the speakers and it can be influential on their language choice because it helps expanding their social network. According to Holmes (2008), the use of dominant language expresses impersonal messages which create social distance between speakers. On the other hand, the choice of a less dominant language is useful to express personal messages because it helps the speakers to establish solidarity in interactions. Managan (2004) also believes that the choice of a dominant language provides people the prestige and the chance to socialize more with other people the thing that leads to a possibility of expanding the social network and gaining more economic success. Once a person becomes a member of a certain language group, this group becomes his or her social network and develops a sense of identity which can be revealed through language choice and manner of speaking.

According to Thomason (2001) language contact is the use of several languages in the same place and at the same time, and this usage would cause language change in terms that one language may affect another. Once a new language is learned, it becomes available as part of a speaker's stylistic repertoire. The selected language depends on several factors that determine certain language choice or usage, like the topic, the social scene, the relative status of speakers, their aspiration and feelings of identity. According to Petty & Cacioppo (1981), the term attitude should "be used to refer to a general and enduring positive or negative feeling about some person, object, or issue" (p. 6). Language attitudes deal with the speakers' feelings towards language (i.e. rich, poor, beautiful, ugly, sweet sounding, etc.) and language maintenance and planning. In other words, language attitudes are actually "the feelings people have about their own language or the language of others." (Crystal, 1997, p. 215). Dweik (1986) investigated language attitudes among three minority groups in Jerusalem; Armenians, Assyrians, and the Greeks. The sample consisted of 25 respondents from each group. Data were collected via questionnaires, interviews, and sociological information about each group. The results showed that the respondents had positive attitudes towards their ethnic languages and they used these languages consistently in all the domains mentioned in the questionnaire. Young (1988) explored language attitudes and language use in Taiwan. Surveys were given to 823 Chinese in Taiwan to measure their attitudes towards mother tongue dialects and Mandarin. Results showed positive attitudes towards mother tongue dialects, and substantial shifts towards the use of mandarin. Furthermore, Richards, Platt, J. & Platt, H. (1992) show that expressions of positive or negative feelings towards a language may reflect impressions of linguistic difficulty or simplicity, ease or difficulty of learning, degree of importance, and social status. Attitudes towards a language may also show what people feel about the speakers of that language. Sadanand (1993) maintains that "attitudes towards the use of different languages are motivated by people's perception of the role of each language and the functions it performs in relation to each other" (p. 124). Moreover, Dweik (2000) investigated the linguistic and cultural situation among the Chechens of Jordan. In his study, the researcher used a random sample of 100 respondents to answer a questionnaire about their linguistic and cultural backgrounds. The results of the study showed that the Chechens of Jordan had positive attitudes towards their language and culture, and that the third and fourth generations were proud of their ethnicity and Chechen identity.

People classify different languages or varieties as elegant, expressive, vulgar, musical, polite, impolite, pleasing or unpleasing (Holmes, 2008). This categorization has influenced the users' attitudes towards the language because it reflects who they are and represents the social groupings they belong to. As a result, people develop either a positive or negative attitude to other languages based on how the community identifies and labels them. A language becomes appealing to the speakers who have positive attitude towards it and prefer it in most interactions. On the contrary, if speakers have negative attitudes towards a language, they develop resistance in using it.

METHODOLOGY

The targeted population of this study consisted of all Arab Canadians who settled down in Quebec- Canada. All participants were Arab Canadians from different geographical backgrounds and have Canadian nationality. The participants were chosen on grounds of convenience and on the basis of availability. The researchers used the 'social network' model proposed by Milroy and Milroy (1978) and approached the subjects through a third party, as a friend of a friend who has access to the community. Two assistants who belong to the community helped the researchers to distribute and collect the language questionnaire. They distributed the questionnaire among their friends, people who worked with, some of their neighbors, and in some cases, they asked friends to distribute the questionnaire to some of their acquaintances who belong to the selected community.

A sample of 100 participants was selected to be the focus of this study. The sample showed a wide range of several important demographic variables i.e. age, gender, place of birth, occupation, marital status, religion...etc. It consisted of 73 males and 27 females of which 88 were married, 4 were engaged, 7 were single and one was widowed. Forty- five of the respondents reside in Arab neighborhood, 22 reside in Canadian neighborhood and 33 live in mixed neighborhood.

The sample also covered a wide range of educational levels. In fact, 59% hold B.A degrees, 33% hold diplomas, 3% hold M.A degrees and 5% hold PhD degrees. Regarding the respondents' work background, 24% are students, 19% have a business- related profession, 14% work in civil services field, 14% work as craftsmen, 21% work in the medical field and 8% work in the educational field

The researchers designed a questionnaire which was created specifically to fulfill the needs of the current study. The questionnaire was piloted and pretested before it was administrated to the sample in Quebec. It was written in English and Arabic, with a covering letter that explained the objectives of the questionnaire and how to fill it out. The questionnaire was adapted from Dweik (2000), Al-Rifa'i (2012), Nofal (2011) and Al-Nahar (2009). Some items were added, and others were modified to meet the needs of the current study. The questionnaire comprised two sections; the first one dealt with language choice which aimed to find information about the respondents' choice of language in different domains. Eight options were given to the respondents to choose from:

- | | | | |
|--------------------|---------------------|-----------------------------|---------------------|
| 1- Arabic | 2- English | 3- French | 4- Arabic & English |
| 5- Arabic & French | 6- English & French | 8- Arabic, English & French | 9- Other |

The second section included questions on language attitudes which aimed to explore whether the respondents' attitude towards a certain language plays a role in the process of language choice. The respondents were asked to report if they think a given language namely Arabic,

English, and French is 'useful', 'dominant', 'important', 'poetic' and so on. Finally, the questions on factors that support the choice of a given language aimed at identifying the reasons behind the respondents' preference of one language over another. For instance, the respondents were asked to choose which language expresses their Canadian nationality; which language expresses their ethnic identity; which language is required for work; which language they use when listening to Canadian radio stations.

RESULTS

Results Related to Question One

What are the factors that determine the linguistic choices among the Canadian Arabs of Quebec?

Results reported in Table (1) below showed the respondents' responses to the factors that support their choice of Arabic, English and French in Quebec-Canada. In answering this question, the respondents tended to provide more than one answer. In other words, they chose more than one language for certain questions. For example, when respondents were asked which language strengthens the social interactions, they unanimously chose Arabic, then 41 chose English and 45 chose French. A positive correlation was found between the role of home and family on the one hand, and religion and ethnic identity on the other, as being supporting factors for the choice of Arabic. All the 100 respondents confirmed that home and family played an important role in using Arabic, and that religion strengthened the use of Arabic along with the ethnic identity that could be fully expressed in Arabic. Ninety-five respondents reported that they listened to Arabic radio stations which were also another supporting factor for the choice of Arabic.

Table 1, Factors that Support the Choice of Arabic, English, French in Quebec

| Statements | Arabic (Freq) | English (Freq) | French (Freq) |
|--|---------------|----------------|---------------|
| Family and home play an important role in using... | 100 | - | - |
| Social interactions strengthen the use of... | 100 | 41 | 45 |
| Religion strengthens the use of... | 99 | - | - |
| Work requires using... | - | 63 | 77 |
| Canadian national identity is expressed in... | - | 84 | 76 |
| Ethnic identity is expressed in... | 100 | - | 4 |
| School, college and university education is in ... | - | 61 | 82 |
| Watching T.V stations is in ... | 66 | 70 | 79 |
| Listening to radio stations is in ... | 95 | 66 | 80 |
| Social networking sites are in... | 53 | 58 | 80 |

Regarding English and French; work, Canadian nationality, and educational institutions were clearly supporting factors for the choice and use of these languages. As for work, most respondents' answers indicated that both English and French were crucial work requirement and 80 of them showed that the Canadian nationality was expressed in these languages. Furthermore, 71 expressed that the educational institutions used these two languages. As for watching T.V stations and communicating at social networking sites, responses varied between Arabic, English, and French, but French had the higher responses, 80, English came second, 58, then Arabic with the least responses, 53.

Results Related to Question Two

What are the attitudes of the Canadian Arabs of Quebec towards Arabic, English and French?

Regarding attitudes towards Arabic, English and French, respondents were asked a set of thirteen questions. They reported positive attitudes towards these languages. Yet a sense of negative attitude was indicated in certain question concerning Arabic and French.

Results in Table (2) showed that out of 100 respondents, 99 gave positive attitudes towards English for being the most useful language with one respondent was undecided while 16 respondents thought that Arabic was the most useful language and 38 thought it was French. Similarly, strong positive attitude towards English was evident because 100 respondents indicated that English was the language which symbolized their Canadian national identity. Seventy respondents indicated that English was important to be used in all situations where 30 respondents indicated that French was important. French also had strong positive attitudes for being a dominant and the most prestigious language in Quebec.

Arabic on the one hand, had strong positive attitudes for being strongly connected to the ethnic heritage of Arabs and being a religious language. Arabic also shared positive attitudes along with French since 54% of the respondents indicated that it is a poetic language. Yet, on the other hand, Arabic was seen by all the respondents as the least important language in the province of Quebec and 87 respondents indicated that Arabic was difficult to learn followed by French language.

Table 2, Language Attitudes towards Arabic, English and French

| Questions | Arabic % | English % | French % |
|--|----------|-----------|----------|
| What is the most useful language? | 16 | 46 | 38 |
| What is the most beautiful language? | 69 | 4 | 27 |
| What is the most prestigious language? | - | - | 100 |
| Which language symbolizes your Canadian national identity? | - | 60 | 40 |
| Which language is connected with your ethnic heritage? | 100 | - | - |
| Which language is important to be used in all situations? | - | 70 | 30 |
| Which language is dominant in Quebec? | - | - | 100 |
| Which language is easy to learn? | - | 72 | 28 |
| Which language is difficult to learn? | 50 | 15 | 35 |
| Which language is poetic? | 46 | - | 54 |
| Which language is the least important? | 100 | - | - |
| Which language is considered religious? | 100 | - | - |

DISCUSSION

Discussion of the Findings Related to Factors Supporting Language Choice

Based on the data obtained from the questionnaire, a number of factors were identified that

contributed to the choice and use of one language or more. Results shown in Table (1) indicated that 99.9% believed that home and family, religion and social interactions played a significant role in choosing and using Arabic language. Data from Table (1) also indicated that the Arabs of Quebec believed that English and French identify them with the Canadian society and help them attaining the Canadian citizenship.

The overall responses concerning using English and French in educational institutions, work places and formal interactions were very positive. When the respondents were asked when they choose English or French, the majority commented that English and French are important for their educational advancement, good jobs and formal interactions. These findings agree with Fasold (1990) and Gumperz (1964) who pointed out that being multilingual speakers are able to choose particular language for particular purpose. The findings also agree with David (2006) and Coulmas (1997) who gave the notion that language choice is determined by the milieu in which the speakers find themselves; by the languages that coexist in this niche and then by their needs and the typological situation of the coexisting languages and that language choice is triggered by several factors like social status, gender, education, age, ethnicity, topic, place... etc. Moreover, the results agree with Thomason (2001) who pointed out that language choice depends on several factors like the topic, the relative status of speakers and identity. Furthermore, these findings agree with Managan (2004), Ferrer and Sankoff (2004), Pillai (2006), Holmes (2008) and Piller (2004) who demonstrated that dominant languages, prestigious languages and language preference determine language choice in multilingual communities.

Discussion of the Results Related to Language Attitudes

The results concerning language attitudes among Arabs of Quebec revealed that the respondents had positive psychological and linguistic attitudes towards Arabic, English and French. Regarding Arabic, the respondents considered it vital in their social and religious interactions. The majority reported that they dream and express inner feelings in Arabic. They also believe that Arabic is a poetic and most beautiful language. These findings agree with Dweik (1986) who showed that positive attitudes towards mother tongue language stem from pride and culture. English and French share similar positive attitudes among Arabs of Quebec. They regard them as a symbol of their Canadian identity and a means that facilitates better opportunities and easier access to educational and formal interactions. Furthermore, these languages are considered important because most TV channels, books, native Canadian friends and instructions use these languages. These findings agree with Sadanand (1993) who maintained that the attitudes towards the use of different languages are motivated by the speakers' perception of the role of each language and the functions it performs in relation to each other. The findings agree with Coulmas (1997) who maintained that people choose languages which suit their various needs and purposes. Moreover, the findings agree with Richards, Platt, J. and Platt, H. (1992) who pointed out that language attitudes may reflect the speakers' impressions of linguistic difficulty or simplicity, degree of importance and social status.

As for French, results suggest that it is the most prestigious language in the province of Quebec, the dominant language and the poetic language. These results agree with Ferrer and Sankoff (2004) who found that dominant languages influence the language choice of a speaker, and that the most prestigious language is favored as the medium of communication in various domains because of its wider social functions.

CONCLUSION

Quebec as a multilingual multicultural community offers a great field for studying language situations. The Canadian Arabs of Quebec, who live in this multilingual community, are able to choose Arabic, English and/or French according to the situation they find themselves in. Their choice is triggered by several factors like purpose, topic, and preference. Arabs of Quebec have positive attitudes towards Arabic, English and French. Their attitudes towards Arabic are positive, emotional, and stem from ethnic pride; whereas their attitudes towards English and French are positive because they see that these languages express their Canadian identity and are required in several important domains in the province of Quebec.

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Appendix

The Questionnaire

Dear participants,

We would like to express our gratitude in advance for taking the time in filling out the attached questionnaire which investigates the language Choice of Arabs in Quebec-Canada and the factors that support their choice of language in their multilingual community as an ethnic group. This questionnaire includes questions about demographic and community background of Arabs in Quebec, language choice in different domains and factors supporting language choice.

You have been selected because you are a member of the investigated community. We are interested only in obtaining the needed information that helps us find valid answers for the current study. Thank you very much for your cooperation in this study.

All information provided will be used by the researchers for only scientific research purposes.

Thanks in Advance,
The researchers

1. Factors that Support the Choice of Arabic, English, French and other Languages in Quebec

| Statements | <i>Arabic</i> | <i>English</i> | <i>French</i> | <i>Other</i> |
|--|---------------|----------------|---------------|--------------|
| Family and home play an important role in using... | | | | |
| Social interactions strengthen the use of... | | | | |
| Religion strengthens the use of... | | | | |
| Work requires using... | | | | |
| Canadian national identity is expressed in... | | | | |
| Ethnic identity is expressed in... | | | | |
| School, college and university education is in ... | | | | |
| Watching T.V stations is in ... | | | | |
| Listening to radio stations is in ... | | | | |
| Social networking sites are in... | | | | |

2. Attitudes towards Languages

| Questions | <i>Arabic</i> | <i>English</i> | <i>French</i> | <i>Other</i> |
|--|---------------|----------------|---------------|--------------|
| What is the most useful language? | | | | |
| What is the most beautiful language? | | | | |
| What is the most prestigious language? | | | | |
| Which language symbolizes your Canadian national identity? | | | | |
| Which language is connected with your ethnic heritage? | | | | |
| Which language is important to be used in all situations? | | | | |
| Which language is dominant in Quebec? | | | | |
| Which language is easy to learn? | | | | |
| Which language is difficult to learn? | | | | |
| Which language is poetic? | | | | |
| Which language is the least important? | | | | |
| Which language is considered religious? | | | | |