

Dialectal Features in Old Arabic Proverbs

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Abstract

This research aims at investigating the dialectal features in the old Arabic proverbs, because the old proverbs have retained a number of dialectal features. It seems that their richness in these features is due to the fact that these proverbs have been spoken in different environments because people transmit proverbs among themselves by way of dialects in the manner when the words are told and heard for the first time. The proverbs are like linguistic templates which do not change, and perhaps this helps to preserve the linguistic and literary values of proverbs. They are considered as a historical document which retains its original form more than any other type of language styles because they are not changed or modulated. The proverbs, according to their contents, have been said by all people from all social and intellectual categories, which makes them closer to the spoken linguistic reality among people, and that is why many dialectal features prevail in every linguistic environment.

The study of proverbs from the dialectal aspect has a great benefit because it is the language of the people, which is spoken or said at the event with no artificiality. The proverbs are considered a truthful mirror of the dialect, and dialectal scholars rely heavily on them. Especially when the proverbs are attributed to their original dialects, they have great value in establishing roots of linguistic diversity within a single linguistic frame.

It is known that proverbs are linguistic testimonies, thus linguists are interested in collecting and recording them, and also, grammarians quote them in their books, though the proverbs are apparently outnumbered by the citations from poetry and the Holy Quran. However, despite the fewness, they are important in their linguistic features, which were preserved by native speakers with brief wording and desired meaning.

This research will rely on the analytical and descriptive approach to demonstrate the dialectal features in the proverbs. I will study the features that illustrate linguistic diversities by native Arabic speakers by using sources from books of proverbs, dictionaries, grammatical books and other linguistic sources that will be mentioned in the content of this research.

Keywords: Old Arabic proverbs; dialect; common language; dialectal features

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