

AGREEMENT IN PALESTINIAN ARABIC: THE MAIN CONTROLLER AND THE ROLE OF ANIMACY AND HUMANNESS.

Agreement is a pervasive and varied phenomenon which is evident in almost every language with a wide scope that functions across syntax, semantics, pragmatics, lexicology and morphology (Corbett, 2006). Agreement is well-presented in many languages excluding Palestinian Arabic that presents very interesting patterns which will help answer some of the questions including the effect of animacy (Comrie, 1989; Yamamoto, 1999; Belnap, 1991), coordination (Belyaev, 2015), CONCORD and INDEX features (Wechsler, 2003), and morphology (Baerman, 2005) on agreement. This research, up to the knowledge of the author, is the first to study agreement in Palestinian Arabic¹. The study looks at the general agreement patterns in Palestinian Arabic within the Noun Phrase and the modifying adjective(s) summarising the main agreement patterns used in Palestinian Arabic (Urban and Rural Dialects). This research answers the following questions: 1) What are the main agreement patterns obtained in Palestinian Arabic within the noun phrase and the modifying adjective(s)? The research shows that the main patterns are full agreement, deflected agreement and strict agreement patterns (Prochaz'aka, 2017; Al-Jarf, 2016; Belnap, 1993) with the possibility of shuffling the patterns in certain contexts or dialects. 2) What is the main controller of the agreement phenomenon in Palestinian Arabic? Research has shown that the head noun is the main controller as it maps its features onto the modifying adjective (Corbett, 2006); however, this study shows it is the speaker's cognition that determines the agreement pattern obtained. Speaker's perception and assigning different levels of animacy for the head nouns affects the choice of number marking (Barlow, 1988); for instance, plural is marked on the modifying

¹ Apart from Hoyt's (2000) MA dissertation that studied agreement only in existential and presentational Constructions.

adjective of animate nouns as opposed to the use of the singular adjectives for less animates and inanimate nouns². Moreover, the level of humanness speakers attach to the head nouns affects the choice of gender as non-human nouns are modified using the feminine gender³. Consequently, the research conforms with the Animacy Hierarchy (Haspelmath, 2013) with a slight modification. 3) What are other factors affecting agreement in Palestinian Arabic? The analysis shows that the templatic pattern of the singular form of certain adjectives observes some degree of syncretism between syntax and morphology in the plural form of these adjectives (Baerman, 2005); thus, the plural forms of these adjectives do not distinguish gender in the plural, a case which was perceived as a mismatch by some scholars (Corbett, 2006). Moreover, classifying the adjectives through Dixon's taxonomy (Dixon, 1982) shows that adjectives of colour and geometrical shapes obtain different agreement patterns from other adjectives.

To conclude, this research contributes to the study of agreement and especially the question of agreement factors.

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² Evidence shown in other languages; for instance, Oneida (Abbott, 1984).

³ This fact can be tracked historically (Ibrahim, 2014).

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