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The Phonological Features of Arabic Spoken by Non-Arabs in the UAE

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***Abstract*—Since the discovery of oil in the UAE and the economic boom that has followed, the population structure has changed dramatically. It has witnessed unprecedented jumps that are unparalleled anywhere in the world. Immigrants from different countries have started to find jobs in this country. Asians particularly those who come from India, Pakistan, and Iran have almost dominated the services sector in the country. It has been estimated that the UAE nationals have become a minority that does not exceed 10% of the total population of the country. This research has aimed to find out to what extent this new variety of language that has emerged could be referred to as Pidginized Arabic. It is based mainly on fieldwork, as there have been interviews with 100 people who represent the sample of the study. Thus, the study is descriptive and analytic by nature. The data of the interviews has been studied. It has been expected for this variety of Arabic to be affected by the UAE dialect, but it has been found out that there has been no significant influence on it. This research is restricted to the phonological aspect of Arabic. It has revealed that many Arabic sounds have been pronounced in a distorted way; some of them have been mispronounced; others are converted into many other alternatives. This has created the possibility of a state of misunderstanding to emerge.**

***Index Terms*—phonology, phonological features, pidginization, pidginized language**

I. Introduction

The aim of this paper is to point out the phonological features of the variety of Arabic that has been performed by the sample of the study. Such features will be derived from the analysis of the interviews that have been recorded with the participants of the study. A descriptive and analytical approach has been adopted in order to speculate on the distinguishing characteristics of this variety of language in the field of phonology. It has been found out that the developed variety of Arabic has shown features reflecting pronunciation difficulties of certain sounds of Arabic depending on the linguistic background of the projected speakers of the variety being studied. It has been noticed that some of the Arabic sounds have been pronounced properly without any difficulty while other sounds or consonants in particular have been pronounced differently or in a distorted way that these new created sounds represent the most important phonological features of this variety of Arabic Language.

Moreover, the researcher has discussed the phonological features of Arabic in general and compared them with the phonological features of the Arabic being studied. He has provided examples from the performance of the participants of the study.

II. Review of Related Literature

Many references related to this paper have been consulted, however, the discussion is restricted to those which handle the phonological features of pidgin languages in general and the phonological features of Arabic in particular.

A. Ferguson and De Bose (1977)

Ferguson and De Bose (1977) have talked about simplified registers, broken language and pidginization. They have regarded these topics as if they were one issue and defined them as being not full and not natural languages that constitute the traditional object of the linguist's study. All the three types are in a sense reduced if compared to full languages. At the same time, they are not natural since they do not serve as the normal mother tongue of a speech community. "Simplified registers" is used by members of a speech community to address people whose knowledge of the language of the community is less than normal. The second type which is **broken language** has been referred to as the imperfect approximation of a language by speakers of another language who are in the process of learning it. The third type which is the **pidgin** has resulted typically from the use of the two previous types in the same communication situations. The first type is a reduction of the target language while a pidgin is a reduction of both the source language and the target language.

They have also referred to the simplified register as the main feature associated with the pidgin languages. They have presented the characteristics of baby talk and foreigner talk to point out that they are similar to pidgin languages. They believe that **baby talk** is probably the most intensively studied kind of simplified register. It is the variety of speech that is regarded as primarily appropriate for addressing young children. They have presented the following characteristics of **baby talk**.

1. slow;
2. exaggerated enunciation;
3. greater overall loudness;
4. exaggerated intonation contours; full vowels for reduced vowels.
5- preference for CV and CVC syllables and reduplications;
6- simplification of consonant clusters;
7- avoidance or substitution of highly marked sounds;
8- interchange among l, r, w and y;
9- use of labialization and palatalization.
10- limited number of phonological simplifications (e.g. occasional addition of vowel to final consonant in English, **b** for **p** in Italian)

B. Le Page (1977)

Le Page (1977) has written an article in **Valdman** (1977) in which he has mentioned some characteristics of pidgin languages. He has considered **simplification** and **the reduction of redundancy** the main features of pidgins. He has regarded most of Ferguson's "foreigner talk" rules as simplification.

C. Versteegh (1984)

Versteegh (1984) has written a very significant book, which is directly related to the topic of this research. His book has the title **"Pidginization and Creolization: The Case Study of Arabic".** The author starts his research by handling the linguistic situation in the pre-Islamic era in the Arabian Peninsula. He says that the Arab tribes in the Peninsula spoke different dialects before the death of the Prophet, peace be upon him, in 630 A.D. Although each tribe had its own dialect, the Arab tribes shared what he calls an intertribal comprehensible variety of Arabic that was used in poetry. This variety of Arabic was referred to as "poetic koine". It is believed that the poetic koine has evolved from the dialect groups and it was affected with certain incorporating features from other dialects. He opposes the idea that dialects are classified into two main categories namely, Eastern dialects and Western dialects. He considers all the varieties of Arabic in that era one language with different registers and regional varieties. Concerning to the poetic koine, he considers it to be the elevated style or register which is used in poetry. He thinks that the Arabic language did not change, as both the colloquial and the literary language of the Arab tribes before Islam were identical to those, which prevailed for a long time afterwards. When the Islamic conquests began, the impact of sedentary civilization has affected the Arabic language. However, the Bedouin tribes have continued to use declensional endings for many centuries. When the people of the conquered lands accepted Islam, they have come to use Arabic and definitely, they have affected not only the form of spoken Arabic, but also the Bedouin tribes who start losing the declensional endings. In this way, a wholly new variety of Arabic which is characterized by a radical departure from the rules of the essentially uniform language of the pre-Islamic era has started to emerge. He has presented a long list of features that represent signs of pidginization of Arabic. Some of these features are:

1. the merger of /d̲/ and /d/;
2. the loss of the glottal stop;
3. the reduction of short vowels in open syllables;
4. the reduction of the opposition /i/ - /u/.

Versteegh has presented a series of points that he considers signs for the process of pidginization in Arabic. These points are:

1. The loss of the tense and aspect distinction. He comments on this sign that once certain parts or categories of a language are lost, they are lost forever. If a language loses the morphological category of the dual for instance, it is unlikely to recreate a dual in the subsequent stages.
2. The disappearance of phonemes that are regarded as specifically Arabic like the glottal stop /? /.
3. All dialects have tended to replace the diphthongs /ay/ and /aw/ with /e/ and /u/ respectively.
4. The disappearance of the interdental sounds /Ø/ and /ð/ and in most pidgins or dialects of Arabic.
5. Arabic dialects show a simplification in the phonological inventory as compared with the Classical language.
6. Emphatic consonants in Arabic are produced in an exaggerated and forceful pronunciation by foreigners.

D. Romaine (1990)

Romaine (1990) has presented the linguistic features of pidgins that have been presented by other linguistics. She has also used the very exact examples that they have presented. Romaine has discussed some of these theories in detail. She has started with baby talk, foreigner talk, simplification and imitation as the source of pidgins. She has quoted Hesseling's view that pidgins arose out of the imperfect learning of the model language on the part of the slaves. On the other hand, Schuchardt (1980) had a different view, which says that the reduced structure of pidgins comes out as the result of a conscious effort of simplification by whites in a master/slave relationship typical of colonial situations. She believes that the baby talk theory conflates two processes. She has presented the following features:

1. reduced language in form and function;
2. foreigner talk/baby talk theory.

E. Britannica (1962)

Britannica has presented the most common features of pidgin languages and provided examples on these features. **Simplification** is regarded as the main characteristic of pidgins. It extends to all aspects of linguistic structure (sounds, forms, constructions) as well as vocabulary. For example, in some varieties as in Melanesian pidgin, stress has come to be automatic on the first syllable of every word as in **b ɨkos** "because" and **m óshin** "machine". In almost all varieties of pidgin English, the two consonant sounds represented by English **th** have merged with **t** and **d** respectively as in **sout** "south" and **disfela** "this". Many speakers of Melanesian pidgin also merge **ch** and **sh** with **s**, as in **tumas** (from English "too much") and **masin** or **mashin** "machine". Users of pidgin often carry over habits of sound production from their native languages: for instance, many Melanesian languages have **mb**, **nd** as variants of **b**, **d** between vowels; and Melanesians therefore often pronounce tabak "tobacco" as **tambak** and **sidaun** "sit" as **sindaun**.

III. Research Methodology

In this part, the researcher presents the population, sample, design of the study and the instruments used for data collection. It also shows the procedures that were followed in conducting the study and the statistical method which was followed for analyzing the data in accordance with the questions of the study.

A. Design of the Study

This study is based on field work where a series of interviews has been conducted with 100 expatriates in Dubai. Those people are supposed to be users of a variety of Arabic which the researcher calls **Pidgin Arabic**. They are of different language backgrounds. The interviews have been mainly free talks through which the people interviewed have been given the chance to express themselves in Arabic freely and to talk about different issues.

There has been also a questionnaire with a variety of variables that the researcher thinks they are significant in their acquisition of the Arabic language. The variables of the questionnaire are: nationality, sex, job, religion, age, native language, years of stay in the UAE, level of education, level in the English language, income and knowledge of other languages. It is worth mentioning that the researcher has his justification for applying each of these variables, which is presented in the following discourse.

The nationality and the native language of the interviewees are thought to be significant variables since they determine to what extent the spoken Arabic language is affected by his or her mother tongue and vice-versa. Many languages tend to borrow lexical items from other languages. This is expected to affect the outcome of the interviewees while speaking Arabic. Moreover, many native languages of the sample of the study use the Arabic script. This is expected to affect the variety of spoken Arabic by the interviewees.

Religion in turn plays a vital role in learning Arabic particularly the Islamic Religion. The entire Muslim community holds the Arabic language with the highest regard as it is the language of the Quran and the language that is spoken in Heaven. Thus, Muslims are eager to learn Arabic. Moreover, there is more contact and communication between Muslims who are non-native speakers of Arabic and their Arabic native speaker brothers as they go to the mosque to perform their prayers there. It is expected for this variety of people to have a better command of Arabic than non-Muslim expatriates.

The variable of sex is thought to be very important since it determines the type of people each sex contacts as well as the language it uses. It is quite clear that housemaids for instance usually restrict their communication to the housewife and the children of the family. On the other hand, men who work in factories, shops, stores or as drivers usually communicate with a wider range of people who tend to use a wider range of vocabulary items. The researcher expects to find significant differences between males and females while analyzing their performance in using the Arabic Language.

The type of job performed by the interviewee is believed to be important as it determines the range of communication that might take place between expatriates and native speakers of Arabic where the medium of communication is Arabic. It is well known in the UAE that in certain institutions like banks, high-class stores and eminent corporations English is the main language of communication and that Arabic is rarely used. Consequently, it is not necessary for the employees of these institutions to know Arabic or learn it. On the other hand, some jobs that require direct contact or communication with all people including UAE nationals like drivers, salesmen and women, housemaids and servants, cooks and hairdressers need Arabic badly to make sure that there is a successful two-way communication between them and native speakers of Arabic.

The significance of the age variable lies in the fact that there is, what is usually referred to in language acquisition, a critical age for language acquisition. It is believed that children have a special ability for acquiring language especially between the age of 2 and 13. This theory has been introduced by Eric Lenneberg in 1967. However, other linguists have made other studies related to second language acquisition. Mc Laughlin (1981) has differentiated between first and second language acquisition because of the factor of age. Thus, she has divided the language acquisition into stages like pre-school children and school age children and adults. She has also cited Winitz who in turn has listed seven issues that are considered important while looking at differences between first and second language acquisition. The first two of these issues are related to age. Krashen et al. (1979) believe that the factor of age is very important in second language acquisition. They believe that a **younger is better**. This means that child second language acquisition learners are

expected to be superior to adolescents and adults in terms of ultimate achievement. This may justify the emergence of the variety of Arabic that is being used in the UAE which could be referred to as **Pidgin Arabic**.

Another variable which the researcher thinks of some importance in the second language acquisition is the period that the interviewee has spent so far in the UAE. It seems natural that the more the targeted people stay in the UAE, the more Arabic language they are expected to acquire. Every day, they may face new situations through which new lexical items, new grammatical structures and new language functions might be used. As days go by, it is expected for these linguistic items to reoccur every now and then. The reoccurrence of the language components will enforce their use and meaning in the minds of those who are learning the language. However, it is thought to be more useful for language acquisition if the situations of language learning are changing as well as the people whom the learner is dealing with. The researcher thinks that the variety or diversity of situations and people that the expatriates are dealing with is more important than the length of the period that the interviewee has spent in this country. An example that could clarify this point is that one of the interviewees has spent 35 years while another has spent only 3 years. If we compare the performance of that with the longer period with that of the shorter period, we would be amazed to find that the person who has spent 3 years has performed much better than that who has spent 35 years. It is unfair to associate the quality of performance to one variable only. There are of course other factors which have their own impact and should not be overlooked.

B. Population of the Study

The population of the study consists of all male and female non-Arab speaker expatriates who live in Dubai. According to certain studies, they represent over 85% of the total population of the UAE. It is worth mentioning in this respect that the researcher has focused mainly on workers whose jobs are closely related to UAE nationals and other native speakers of Arabic since there is a constant state of contact between them. Moreover, the language of communication between the targeted people and native speakers of Arabic is the Arabic language.

C. Sample of the Study

The sample of the study comprises 100 people 50 of whom are males while the other 50 are females. They have been chosen randomly depending on what can be termed as **availability** and regardless of their nationality, jobs, ages, years of stay in the UAE or any other significant variables. The most important criterion that the researcher has depended on is the agreement of the targeted people to the researcher to record their interviews as well as their ability to respond to the researcher's questions in Arabic.

The interview is a kind of free talk through which the interviewees are invited to talk freely on issues that are raised by the interviewer or the researcher. The aim of this interview is to get as much Arabic speech as possible from the participants of the study so as to analyze that speech and point out its features or characteristics. Such features are considered the criteria on which the researcher is going to judge whether the variety of Arabic the sample of the study speaks could be regarded as a pidgin or not.

Moreover, the process of interviewing was not easy at all; on the contrary, it was too difficult. The majority of people, particularly women, have refused to respond to the researcher and his questions once they realized that their voices were going to be recorded. Moreover, it could be easily noticed that the majority of the interviewees have exaggerated in praising the UAE and its people. This probably reflects the mental activity of those people and the fear of losing their jobs.

Another significant point to raise about the sample of the study is that they have learnt Arabic haphazardly without regular instruction or tutoring. The majority of the sample of the study cannot afford systematic or regular learning of Arabic, but they have learnt Arabic through contact with UAE nationals and other native speakers of Arabic.

Regarding the interview, it consists of a number of questions which have been chosen carefully to make sure that the interviewees are given chance to express themselves freely. Furthermore, they have covered different aspects of life so that there would be a variety of vocabulary items that are used to cover or express different aspects of life. The questions have been asked in complete sentences so that the interviewees would use complete sentences instead of simply individual words. If the interviewee fails to understand the question in Arabic or respond to it, it is repeated in Arabic or in some cases asked in English. One of the questions was a matter of repeating the following words: Salaah, Sabaah, mari$\underline{d}$, ya$\underline{d}$hak,? abu dabi, ?undur, Taaleb, Tayyeb, qaanon, qalam, le$\eth$aalek, mu$\eth$neb, haar, yahmel, xalaaS, xawf, gabbaas, galey, yuganni, gaaleb, muΘallaΘ, ΘalaaΘa. The aim of this question in particular is to find out how the phonemes /S/, /$\underline{d}$/, /d/, /T/, /q/, /$\eth$/, /Θ/, /h/, /x/, /g/ and /g/ are pronounced. The choice of these phonemes is based on the fact that they are difficult to pronounce by non-Arabs and they represent a problem in the process of communication with native speakers of Arabic.

D. Questions of the Study

This study is expected to find answers for the following questions on the form of Arabic being studied:

1) Is the phonetic form of Arabic being used in the UAE different from that of Classical Arabic?
2) Is the variety of Arabic used in the UAE a form of "Pidginized Arabic"?

E. Data Analysis

The analysis of data will pass through four stages: transcription, transliteration, counting and categorization of the features of the variety of Arabic being studied. In the first stage, the voices of the participants of the study have been transcribed in Arabic; every single word or sound is written down including all cases of code-switching or code mixing. Their speech has been written in its original form.

In the second stage, the transcription of the performance of the participants of the study is transliterated into English.

In the third stage, the words performed by each participant have been counted since the number of words being used has been regarded by many linguists as an indicator of the variety of language being used.

In stage four, the participants' performance has been classified according to the phonological features of their speech.

IV. Results and Discussion

In order to point out the features of each Arabic sound produced by the members of the sample, the researcher has discussed Arabic sounds that have been classified as problematic for the participants of the study.

Analysis of the participants' performance

It could be noticed easily from what has been presented and analyzed above of the phonemic features of the variety of Arabic spoken by the participants of the study that these features have created a new version of Arabic which could be best described as pidginized Arabic. To shed more light on the phonological features of this variety of Arabic, what follows is a detailed analysis of the performance of the participants of the study of question word repetition which asks the interviewees either to read specific individual words or simply to repeat them after the interviewer. This question has revealed that when the participants are asked to repeat, they simply imitate what they hear, consequently; their pronunciation of the words has been much better and completely different from their performance while they talk freely. The following analysis is based on the phonemes: **Ɵ, ð, h, x, S, T, d, d, g, g** and **q**. It shows all the forms that have been produced for each sound and the percentage of each form by men and women separately. The phoneme **/Ɵ/** has been pronounced in three different ways: **/Ɵ/**, **/t/**, and **/s/**. 32% of women and 40% of men have pronounced it as **/Ɵ/**. 52% of women and 24% of men have pronounced it as **/t/** and 16% of women and 36% of men have pronounced it as **/s/**. It is quite clear that the majority of the participants have produced new forms or have used alternatives for this sound. Moreover, there is a significant difference related to gender and the use of alternatives for 52% of women have pronounced it as **/t/** while only 24% of men have pronounced it in this form. On the other hand, 36% of men and 16% of women have pronounced it as **/s/**. There may be another variable which has its impact on this performance which is the nationality of the interviewees. Those whose native language is Urdu or similar to it, tend to convert the **/Ɵ/** sound into **/s/** more than **/t/** while those whose native language is Tagalog tend to convert it into **/t/** more than **/s/**.

The phoneme **/ð/** has been also pronounced in three different forms: **/ð/, /z/** and **/d/**. 70% of women and 38% of men have pronounced it as it is **/ð/**. It has been noticed that the majority of the participants who have pronounced it as **/ð/** tend to pronounce it differently in their free talk. The reason for this is attributed to the fact that in their free talk there has been no model to follow or imitate while in pronouncing the words of this question; they have simply repeated what they have heard. The variable of gender also seems to affect the pronunciation of this sound as 42% of men have pronounced it as **/Z/** while only 20% of women have pronounced it in this form. It is clear that more than twice men have pronounced it as **/z/** than women. Regarding the third form **/d/**, it has been found that 10% of men and 10% of women have pronounced it in this form. Converting the sound **/ð/** into **/z/** or **/d/** is not that strange since many dialects tend to convert it to these phonemes as it is mentioned above, but what is strange is the absolute absence of the impact of the UAE dialect which usually pronounces the phonemes **/ð/** as it is and never as **/z/** or **/d/**.

The phoneme **/h/** has been pronounced in three different forms namely: **/h/**, **/h/** and **/x/**. 65% of men and 49% of women have succeeded in imitating the sound and in pronouncing it properly. However, if their performance in this question is compared with their free talk, there will be great difference between them for the majority of both men and women tend to pronounce it as **/h/** instead of **/h/** regardless of their nationalities or any other variables. Concerning the other forms, 50% of women have pronounced it as **/h/** and 30% of men have pronounced it in this form. There is a significant difference between men and women in their performance, but this difference decreases when we compare their free talk. The sound **/x/** has been used on a very narrow scale as only 1% of women and 5% of men have tended to convert the **/h/** sound into **/x/.** The reason for having a high percentage of women and somehow some men who have converted this sound into **/h/** is attributed to the fact that their native languages do not have this sound in their alphabet.

The phoneme **/x/** has been pronounced in two forms: **/x/** which is its normal or ordinary form and **/k/** which sounds quite odd in Arabic. 95% of men and 83% of women have pronounced this phoneme as it is and without any alterations. This could be attributed to the fact that the native languages of most of the participants of the study have this sound in their sound systems. Since they are accustomed to pronouncing it in their own languages, they have not faced any difficulty in pronouncing it as it is. On the other hand, 5% of men and 17% percent of women have converted it into **/k/.** It is quite clear that the percentage of women who have used the sound **/k/** instead of **/x/** is quite high in comparison with their men counterparts. This could be referred to the fact that the sound **/x/** is difficult to pronounce particularly for those who are not accustomed to pronouncing it in their native languages and because their native languages like that of Tagalog do not have this sound in their sound systems. But it should be also taken into consideration that repeating and imitating a sound are not as difficult as using it casually in speech.

The phoneme **/S/** has been pronounced in two forms namely: **/S/** and **/s/**, 68% of men and 55% of women have been able to pronounce the **/S/** sound in its original form. However, the same people who have been able to repeat or imitate the sound have pronounced it as **/s/** while responding to other questions in the interview. This shows that even if this sound does not exist as a separate phoneme in the native languages of the participants of the study, they can pronounce it easily when they have a proper example to follow. It has been noticed also that 45% of women and 32% of men have pronounced it as **/s/** in spite of the presence of the proper example to follow or imitate. This reflects either a matter of carelessness or inability to pronounce the sound. When the participants have been asked about Arabic language and whether it is more or less important than English, about 25% of men and 48% of women have said that English is more important than Arabic. Those people are expected to show no interest in Arabic and to be careless while dealing with it despite the fact that they live in an Arab country whose official language is Arabic.

The **/T/** phoneme has been also pronounced in two forms namely **/T/** and **/t/**. It has been found out that this sound has been more problematic for women than for men. Only, 48% of women have been able to repeat words with this sound properly while 66% of men have been able to pronounce the same words properly. Again, the variable of gender seems to work strongly here since there is a big difference between the performance of men and that of women. On the other hand, 52% of women and 34% of men have pronounced these words converting the sound **/T/** into **/t/**. It has been noticed that in their casual speech or free talk, the majority of both men and women have tended to convert the **/T/** sound into **/t/**.

The phoneme **/d̲/** is probably the most problematic sound for nonnative speakers of Arabic. It has been noticed that it is rarely pronounced properly while the participants of the study use Arabic casually. This is because this sound is restricted to Arabic and does not exist in any other language. However, when they have been asked to pronounce words with the **/d̲/** sound, 60% of women and 56% of men have succeeded in pronouncing it properly. Moreover, it has been noticed that those who have failed to pronounce it properly have used several alternatives to replace it. Men have used the sounds **/T/, /t/, /d/, /d/, /ð/, /Z/** and **/z/** while women have restricted their alternatives to just three namely: **/T/, /ð/** and **/d/**. With regard to the frequency of their occurrence, it has been found that the sound **/d/** is the most frequent as 20% of women and 18% of men have tended to convert the **/d̲/** sound into **/d/**. Then comes the sound **/d/** as 18% of women and 15% of men have converted this phoneme into **/d/**. This is not strange since many native speakers of Arabic including the UAE nationals tend to convert the **/d̲/** sound into **/d/**. It has been also noticed that 6% of men have converted the **/d̲/** sound into **/Z/** while no women have done that. The percentages of the other alternatives are quite law as they are 2% of women and 1% of men who have used the sound **/T/** and for the sounds **/z/, /t/,** and **/ð/**, the percentages of use by men are 2%, 1% and 1% respectively while these sounds are not used by women to replace the sound **/d̲/** entirely.

The phoneme **/d/** is also expected to be problematic as much as that of **/d̲/**. Since it does not exist in many other languages particularly the native languages of the participants of the study, men as well as women have used it in six forms five of which are identical while the sixth form is different. 47% of men and 38% of women have pronounced it as it is without any changes, but it should be taken into consideration that these cases are just repetition cases as their performance has changed during their interviews. 21% of women and 26% of men have converted it into **/ð/**. On the other hand, 19% of women have converted the **/d/** sound into **/d/** whereas men have not used it in this form at all. Moreover, 18% of women have pronounced it as **/d̲/** while only 5% of men have used it in this form. 2% if women and 10% of men have converted the sound **/d/** into **/Z/**. 2% of women and 2% of men have converted the **/d/** sound into **/T/**. On the other hand, 10% of men have converted it into /**Z**/ while no women have done that.

The phoneme **/g/** has been repeated properly in the majority of its cases by both men and women. 83% of men and 77% of women have pronounced it as it is although it does not exist as a phoneme in most of the native languages of the participants of the study. However, even those who have pronounced it properly in the question of repetition, they have pronounced it differently in their free talk. On the other hand, it has been pronounced in three other forms by men and one other form by women. Men have pronounced it as **/ʔ/**, **/x/** and **/h/** with the percentages 14%, 2% and 1% respectively while 23% of women have pronounced it as **/ʔ/**. It could be noticed that all the alternative sounds that have been used instead of **/g/** are pronounced either from the same place of articulation or from places that are very near that is the back of velum.

The **/g/** sound has been pronounced in four forms by men and six forms by women some of which are of very low percentages that vary between one and five percent. 83% of men and 78% of women have been able to repeat the sound and pronounce it as it is. Women have pronounced it in five other different forms namely: **/g̲/, /k/, /h/, /x/** and **/g/** with the percentages: 10%, 5%, 5%, 1% and 1% respectively. It could be noticed that these sounds have almost the same place of articulation. Men in turn have used three different forms namely: **/g/, /g̲/,** and **/x/** with the percentages of 10%, 3% and 2% respectively. It could be noticed that there are significant differences between the performance of men and that of women. Ten percent of men have pronounced it as **/g/** while only one percent of women have pronounced it in this form. On the other hand, 10% of women have pronounced it as **/g̲/** while only 3% of men have pronounced it in this form. Moreover, 5% of women have pronounced it as **/k/** while no men have pronounced it in this form. The other differences are minor ones and they are not worth mentioning as they do not exceed 1% of differences. The reason for producing this variety of sounds instead of the sound **/g/** could be attributed to the fact that it does not exist in the native languages of the participants of the study.

The phoneme **/q/** has been pronounced in two forms: **/q/** and **/k/**. 60% of men and 75% of women have been able to pronounce or repeat the sound **/q/** in its original form while 40% of men and 25% of women have converted it into the sound **/k/**.

Analyzing the performance of the participants of the study in the question of repetition in particular shows that education can play a vital role in solving the phonological problems that foreigners speaking Arabic might face. The phonological features that have been created or invented by those people could be reduced to a minimum through being educated how to produce each phoneme properly. Statistics have shown that the majority of the participants of the study have been able to pronounce the majority of the sounds properly when there is a model to follow or imitate. However, when the model does not exist or when they use Arabic freely, the majority of them tend to convert these sounds into other forms.

Pronouncing Arabic phonemes in forms that are not used in Arabic is a kind of pidginization of the Arabic language. What makes the situation worse is the conversion of native speakers of Arabic of their speech into the distorted forms produced by nonnative speakers of Arabic when there is a kind of communication between them. In such circumstances, foreigners are encouraged to continue their corruption of the Arabic language. Moreover, using certain phonemes instead of others may create a state of misunderstanding through producing new words that might imply more than one meaning. The word **kaanon** in Arabic is completely different in meaning from the word **qaanon** as it means a stove while the word **qaanon** means a law. There are of course so many examples that could create such a misunderstanding.

The following table shows how the sounds that have been examined in the question of repetition have been produced and what alternatives have been used for each sound and the percentage of usage for each sound.

HOW CERTAIN ARABIC PHONEMES ARE PRONOUNCED

Phoneme	Forms	Percentage		Phoneme	Forms	Percentage	
		Men	Women			Men	Women
Ɵ	Ɵ	40%	32%	ḍ	ḍ	47%	38%
	t	24%	52%		Z	10%	0%
	s	36%	16%		ð	26%	21%
ð	ð	38%	70%		z	10%	2%
	z	52%	20%		ḍ	-	19%
	ḍ	10%	10%		d	5%	18%
ḥ	ḥ	65%	49%		T	2%	2%
	h	30%	50%				
	x	5%	1%	g	g	83%	77%
X	x	95%	83%		?	14%	23%
	k	5%	17%		ḥ	1%	-
S	S	68%	55%		x	2%	-
	s	32%	45%				
T	T	66%	48%	ġ	ġ	85%	78%
	t	34%	52%		ġ	3%	10%
d	d	56%	60%		k	-	5%
	T	1%	2%		g eng.	10%	1%
	ḍ	15%	18%		x	2%	1%
	ḍ	18%	20%		ḥ	-	5%
	ð	1%	-				
	Z	6%	-	q	q	75%	60%
	z	2%	-		k	25%	40%
	t	1%	-				

V. CONCLUSION

Concerning the distinguishing characteristics of this variety of language in the field of phonology, it has been found out that the developed variety of Arabic has shown features reflecting pronunciation difficulties of certain sounds of Arabic. On the other hand, some of the Arabic sounds have been pronounced properly. Those which have been pronounced differently or in a distorted way are mainly consonants. New sounds have been created. Others have been used in different other forms. The most important factor responsible for this diversity of pronunciation is probably the linguistic backgrounds of the participants of the study. They have tended to follow a variety of strategies to overcome the difficulties associated with the pronunciation of certain sounds. These strategies could be summed up in: deleting certain sounds, using sounds from their mother tongues to replace others that do not exist in their mother languages and converting certain sounds into other forms that represent allophones of these sounds. It has been noticed that the participants' performance changes dramatically when they are asked to repeat words with certain sounds. They have succeeded in producing the majority of the projected sounds in their proper forms. However, when they speak casually, they tend to convert these sounds into other forms. This shows that with some education for the participants of the study, their outcome will definitely improve. But since the majority of those people have low or limited income, they do not have any money to spend on their learning of Arabic. Pronouncing Arabic phonemes in forms that are not used in Arabic is a kind of pidginization of the Arabic language. Merging sounds or converting certain phonemes into others

has been presented by Encyclopedia Britannica as a feature of pidgins as in the case of merging **ch** and **sh** with **S** as in using the word **tumas** instead of **too much** and the word **masin** instead of **machine** in the Melanesian pidgin.

Versteegh in turn has referred to some phonological features which he regards as signs of Arabic pidginination such as:

1. the sound shift a/I in prefixes (taltala);
2. the velarizaion of the |t| sound in the cardinal numbers 13-19;
3. the merger of |d| and |ḍ|;

If we compare the features that have been concluded from the analysis of the performance of the participants of the study with those presented by **Versteegh,** we could conclude that they are almost identical or it could be noticed that the features of the variety of Arabic being studied are more distorted than those presented by **Versteegh**. What makes the situation worse is the conversion of some native speakers of Arabic of their speech into the distorted form produced by nonnative speakers of Arabic when there is kind of communication between them. Moreover, using certain phonemes instead of others may create a state of misunderstanding through producing words that might imply more than one meaning.

APPENDIX A

الاسم (اختياري) : العمر (السن) :
الجنسية : مستوى التعليم :
نوع العمل : عدد سنوات العمل داخل الإمارات :
الحالة الاجتماعية : عدد أفراد العائلة :
مستوى الدخل : اللغة الأم :
لغات أخرى: مستوى الإلمام باللغة الانجليزية:
الديانة :

هل لديك عائلة هنا ؟ نعم لا
هل لديك أقارب هنا ؟ نعم لا
هل تحب تعلم العربية ؟ نعم لا
اعتقد أن تعلم العربية أهم من الانجليزية نعم لا
في رأيي أن تعلم العربية يوفر فرصة عمل أفضل نعم لا
ارغب في تعلم العربية ؛لأنها اللغة الأم في الإمارات نعم لا
أرى أن تعلم الانجليزية أهم من العربية نعم لا

:يف تلفظ الكلمات التالية؟: صلاة, صباح, يضحك, مريض؟ أبوظبي, أنظر, طالب, طيب, قانون, قلم, لذلك, مذنب, حار, يحمل, خلاص, خوف, عباس, علي, يغني, غالب, مثلث, ثلاثة.

APPENDIX B

THE ARABIC PHONETIC TRANSCRIPTION SYMBOLS

	Voiceless (VL) or Voiced (VD)	Bilabial	Labio-dental	Dental	Interdental	Alveolar	Apico-Alveolar	Post-Alveolar	Palatal	Velar	Uvular	Pharyngeal	Glottal
Stops	VD	b				d				g			
	VL			t			T			k	q		?
Fricatives	VD		v	d	ð	ð	z	Z		g	g		
	VL		f		ϴ	sd	s	š		x		h	h
Affricates	VD							J tš					
	VL												
Nasals	VD	m					n						
Lateral	VD						I						
Trill	VD						r						
Semi Vowels	VD	w							y				

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