

Colloquial Arabic as a decolonial language: the case of linguistic hybridity in Jordanian satirical writing

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In Arabic language, a distinction is often made between Classical Arabic and Modern Standard Arabic, *fuṣḥā* (formal language) and *‘āmmiyya* (colloquial Arabic), and literary language and vernacular expressions. In this article, we reassess these frames to critically analyse the use of linguistic hybridity in Colloquial Jordanian Arabic (CJA), which mixes formal and vernacular Arabic expressions, and sometimes English loanwords, as a decolonial linguistic strategy, particularly in Jordanian satirical writing and culture-specific expressions. We argue that such a usage critiques both the concept of diglossia and dominant linguistic practices related to standard discourse or elite language. By focusing on Ahmad Hassan Al-Zou’bi as a significant case study in Jordanian satirical writing, we have found that CJA has challenged hegemonic frames of diglossia and marginalisation of local Jordanian colloquial expressions. It has echoed a ‘decolonial turn’ that has transformed Jordanian satirical writing into a site for denaturalising cultural knowledge production outside the colonial gaze and language power relations.

More Information

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