

Language Diversity in Fadhila Farouk's the Mood of a Teenager (1999)

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Abstract:

This study examines the ways in which language diversity is manifested – as a sociolinguistic phenomenon – in the novel *The Mood of a Teenager* (1999) written by the Algerian writer Fadhila Farouk. To this end, the novel was descriptively scrutinized. The results do not only reveal the novel's richness of diverse dialectal elements but also substantiates the fact that the inclusion of distinct dialects along with standard language in any literary work will not make it indecipherable but a temptation that triggers voracious readers.

Keywords: Algerian; Dialect; Language Diversity; Literary Work; The Mood of a Teenager.

1. Introduction

Recently, dialect was vouchsafed a great deal of interest and importance not only by dialectologists but also by sociolinguists and writers. As far as literature is concerned, a copious amount of novelists from all around the world like Charles Dickens, George Eliot and Waciny Laredj to cite but few, attempted, and are still, to add robust vividness to their stories by skillfully employing dialect while writing. Lucila Hosillos in her *Interactive Vernacular, national literature* confirms, "life is the primal constituent element of literature" (Hosillos, 2006, p. 41). Accordingly, novelists endeavor to represent their fictional characters as real ones within a context that reflects the real social and historical status needed for the overall content of the work. They seek to deeply influence their readers to be fully involved in any literary work by the inclusion of diverse dialects according to every setting. For the present paper, the choice falls upon the Algerian writer Farouk Fadhila in order to investigate the dialect use in her novel entitled *The Mood of a Teenager* (Mizadj Morahiqqa 1999).

2. Defining Dialect

The definition of dialect has been one of the main cores of different debates between linguists. According to the Cambridge dictionary, dialect is "the form of a language that is spoken in one area with grammar, words and pronunciation that may be different from other forms of the same language." Thus, it is considered to be a variety of language, and speaking

one language implies speaking at least one of its dialects as pointed out by Finegan (2014, p. 12) “When we speak of a language - Chinese, Spanish, Arabic, Navajo, or any other- we are speaking of a set of dialects. Languages do not exist independently of their dialects.”

In the same vein, dialects are compartmentalized in terms of regional and social as Rickford (1997) states, “All languages, if they have enough speakers, have dialects –regional or social varieties that develop when people are separated by geographic or social barriers.” (cited in Tamasi & Antieau, 2014, p. 17). For instance, while the American English is considered to be as a national dialect, the Southern American English is regional. On this, it has been asserted by D. Kent (2004, p. 125) that “social dialects represent a speaker’s social stratification within a given society or cultural group. Regional dialects are associated with geographical location or where speakers live. Regional and social dialects may co-occur within language patterns of the same speaker.”

On the other side of the fence, Mc Arthur et al. (2005) point, “Standard, however, is in origin also a dialect and in the view of some linguists, can also and should be called the standard dialect.” (2005, p. 267). To put it differently, standard language differs from dialect in the sense that the former is the outcome of the standardization of the latter.

3. Dialect Within Literature

In order to depict characters in literary works as if they are in real life situations, writers avail themselves to the inclusion of dialects. Actually the implementation of dialect in literature is known as literary dialect which is according to Shorrocks (1996), “the representation of non-standard speech in literature that is otherwise written in Standard English...and aimed at a general audience.” (cited in Hodson, 2014, p. 117)

Nonetheless, the use of dialects in literature is not as easy as falling off a log. Writers need to be aware of the different dialects in order to hit the nail right on the head; otherwise, the sought after authenticity will not be achieved as emphasized by Strunk and White, "Do not attempt to use dialect [when writing] unless you are a devoted student of the tongue you hope to reproduce.” (cited in Ephron, 1990, p. 142)

However, in spite of the of the beauty and diversity that literary dialect offers to literature and its significance as “a means of characterization” (Pons-Sanz, 2014, p. 203), Serir believes that its use is not always welcomed (2012); it has some disadvantages as pointed out by Pons-Sanz, “Dialect is indicative of the character’s provinciality, rusticity, lack of education and even stupidity rather than actual geographic origin” (2014, p. 204). This means that the inclusion of dialect in literature may make the character seem an uneducated person who is socially inferior to someone who speaks the standard language.

4. Fadhila Farouk, the Autonomous Writer

Fadhila Farouk was born in Batna, in the east of Algeria in 1967. She raised to be one of the most prominent and highly praised Arabic writers. She shifted from studying medicine to pursue her dream of brushing up her writing skill. She wrote a set of novels, including *A Moment of Stolen Love* (1997), *The Mood of a Teenage* (1999), *The Discovery of Desire* (2005), and *Regions of Fear* (2010).

She is well known for her works that are directed to the defense of women and peace. She defies women's subordination to men, and encourages their autonomy in order to improve their status which is the case in the novel under discussion.

5. Fadhila Farouk's *the Mood of a Teenager* (1999)

The Mood of a Teenager is one of the most famous novels that could stand out from the crowd. Based on stories from her real life events, Fadhila Farouk narrated the story of a teenager called Louiza who from the beginning of the novel bemoans the fact of being a woman and expresses her deep sadness about her bad luck when she states: "I remember that happiness never visits my life except if it wears a mourning; I can say that it is a mean happiness" (Farouk, 1999, p. 10).

The protagonist of the novel is driven by the insatiable lust to slough herself from her uncles' authority. The story begins in Aris, a rural place in Awras, east of Algeria wherein the Berber dialect is spoken. Then as Louiza passes the Baccaureat exam, her father who is living in France obliges her to study Medicine in Batna (Awras's capital) under the constant pressure of her uncles. Moreover, Louiza finds herself between a rock and a hard place, either she accepts to wear the veil in order to study, or to stay at home. She expresses her deep irritation when she states, "We have always fallen prey to uncles' authority, relatives and neighbors... and sometimes to passers-by!!" (Farouk, 1999, p. 17). Consequently, she goes with reluctance to study Medicine, yet she totally fails. Thereby, she decides to break the rules by getting rid of the veil and by changing the field of study. Hence, she goes to Constantine in the East of Algeria to study literature wherein she meets new friends and begins new life especially after her cousin whom she loves betrays her.

It is worth mentioning that the novel was written in a time when Algeria was experiencing what is known as 'the Black Decade' which refers to the Algerian Civil War between the Algerian government and various Islamist rebel groups from 26 December 1991 to 8 February 2002. During this period many people died and the rest lived horrifying moments under constant feeling of fear. As the events unfold, Fadhila Farouk depicts how the protagonist has to overcome her problems in order to be a strong and a free woman. Louiza falls in love with a writer whose son loves her too. By the end of the story, Louiza becomes a well known writer, yet she loses the love of both men: the one she loves and the one who loves her.

6. Dialectal Features in the Novel

While delving into the novel, one comes across various dialectal elements that the writer has harnessed to present her work. Indeed, Arabic is the official language in Algeria along with the French language that is considered as a second language and is used mostly in academic staff. Even in daily speech, Algerians tend to incorporate many French words, which is due to the long term impact of the French colonization that started in 1830 and ended in 1962. Besides, Algeria is known for the presence of diverse varieties of dialects in different places. For instance, people in the east speak differently from those who live in the west and in the south. Every region's dialect is distinguished by its linguistic characteristics.

6.1. Drop of the Glottal Stop

It has been noticed in the novel the drop of the glottal stop from many dialectal words unlike in the standard Arabic ones (see table1.). It is the case in many parts in the east of Algeria where the spoken dialects differ from the standard Arabic.

Table 1. Instances of Dropping the Glottal Stop in the Novel

Structure in Arabic	Page Number	Dialectal Expressions	Standard Arabic Expressions and Meaning
بنت قسنطينة	80	/bent qesanti:na /	/ʔibnatu qesanti:na / Daughter of Constantine
على راسها تاج	84	/ʕela ra:s ha: Ta: dʒ/	/ʕala raʔsiha: ta: dʒ/ Literal meaning : a crown on her head Exact meaning: she thinks she's the best
الشايب	137	/əl ʃfa:jeb/	/əl ʃfa: ʔib/ Went gray
خايف	137	/xa:jef/	/xa: ʔif/ afraid
كاس حليب	219	/ka:s heli:b/	/kaʔsu hali:b/ A cup of milk
تنوضاي	220	/TeTwada :j/	/tatawadaʔi :/ do you wanna perform ablution ?
تاكل	221	/Ta:kul/	/ taʔkulo/ She eats
قولي لراسك	222	/qu:li l ra:sk/	/ qu:li li raʔsiki / Ask yourself !
يا بنتي	243	/ja benTi/	/ja ʔibnati:/ Daughter!

6.2. Negation

Negation in dialectal Arabic is presented either by the annexation of /ش/ /ʃ/ / to words, or by the inclusion of /ma:/ as it is shown in the following table:

Table 2. Instances of Negation in the Novel

Structure in Arabic	Page Number	Dialectal Expressions	Meaning
ما خلات ما والو	60	/ma: xela:T ma: wa: lu/	Nothing had happened
ما يهمنيش الوقت	79	/ma: yehamni:ʃ əl waqT/	I don't care about time
و لا متحببش	82	/Wela: maThabi:ʃ/	Or you don't like
ما تنبلش في فمها فولة	113	/ma:TaTbaleʃ fi : fumha fu :la /	She can't keep secrets
مانيش خوانجي	149	/Ma:nij xawa:ndʒi /	I am not traitor

الواحد ما يضمئنش عمره	221	/ əl waħd ma:yaɖmanʃ ʃomrah/	No one can know the day when he will die
ما تعييش روك	252	/Ma:Tʃaji:ʃ ru: ħk /	Don't bother yourself
ماكان والو	267	/Ma:ka:n wa:lu /	There is nothing

6.3. The Addition of /ʒi: /

One of the characteristic of the Algerian dialect is the addition of /ʒi:/ to some words mainly to name jobs like the word /xewa: nʒi:/ which means a person who betrays his friends or country.

6.4. The Generalization of the Plural

Other characteristic of the Algerian dialect is shown in the generalization of the plural as depicted in the following table:

Table 3. Instances of the Generalization of the Plural in the Novel

Structure in Arabic	Page Number	Dialectal Utterances	Standard Arabic Utterances and meaning
نردو	120	/nrudu: /	/Narudu / I will return it
نبعثولها	250	/nbaʃtu :lha : /	/nabʃaʊu laha: / We will send her
نحبو	251	/nħabu: /	/nuħibu / I love him

6.5. Altered Words

In addition to the aforementioned features, some words in the Modern Standard Arabic are totally or partly altered in order to create words in the Algerian dialect as illustrated in the following table:

Table 4. Instances of Altered Words in the Novel

The Form of the Feature	Standard Arabic Utterances	Dialectal Utterances	Structure in Arabic	Page Number
Contracted /t/	/Taħaraki/	/ħarki/	تحركي /حركي Move !	65
Phonemic change	/lastu/	/Ma:ni: ʃ/	لست/مانيش I am not	79
Phonemic change	/xoð/	/ʔadi:/	خذ /ادي Take !	139
Contracted /f/	/nisf/	/nos/	نصف/نص Half	145
Phonemic change	/ ʔaxdʒal/	/naħ ʃam/	اخجل/نحشم I feel shy	165
Phonemic change	/ʔinhadi:/	/nu:dʒi:/	انهضي/نوضي Get up !	233
Phonemic change	/ʔayna/	/wi:n/	اين/وين Where ?	249
Phonemic change	/lima: ða:/	/ʃla :h/	لماذا/علاه Why ?	289

6.6. Arabized Words

What differentiates the Algerian dialect from its counterparts is the inclusion of many Arabized words (the action of adapting a language or element of it to the phonetic or structure pattern of Arabic) as it is shown in the following table:

Table 5. Instances of Arabized Words in the Novel

Borrowed Words in the novel	Page Number	Meaning	Phonetic Transcription
الموستاش	83	Mustache	/əl mu:sTa: ʃ/
البرابول	110	Satellite Dish	/əl para:bu:l/
كرنفال	116	Carnival	/karnfa:l/
مسيو	121	Mister	/ məsju:/
بوليسي	130	Policeman	/pu:li:si:/
الفيرمة	132	Farm	/əlfɪ:rma/
كوادرها	142		/kwa:drha:/
البوليتيك	149	Politics	/əlpu:li:Ti:k/
لابلاس	207	Place	/la:pla:s/
الميزيرية	221	Misery	/əl mi:zi:rija/
الجينيريك	250	Generic	/əl ʒi:ni:r:k/
كوموندي	251	Demand	/ku:mu:ndu:/
البيتزا	269	Pizza	/ əl pi:Tza:/
جيريكان	290	Jerikan	/ʒi:ri:ka:n/

6.7. Blessings

While perusing the novel, the author noticed the presence of a set of blessing expressions that characterize the Algerian dialect speaker as it is shown in the following table:

Table 6. Instances of Blessings in the Novel

Structure in Arabic	Page Number	Dialectal expressions	Meaning
يعطيك الصحة	23	/yaʃti :k əl saħa/	May Allah reward you with a strong health
ربي يبقي الستر	130	/rebi : yebaqi : el seter/	May Allah
استغفر الله يا ربي	207	/ʔastaxfir la:h ja rebi:/	I beg for your forgiveness my God
ربي يعيشك	222	/rebi: yaʃjʃak/	May Allah give you a long life
ربي يقبل	223	/rebi: yaqbal/	May Allah accept
ربي يطول في عمره	296	/rebi: ytawal fi ʃomrah/	May Allah give him a long life

6.8. The Inclusion of French Words

One of the main features of the Algerian dialect is the wide use and integration of French words while speaking as a result of the French occupation of Algeria for 132 years. The following table illustrates some of the mentioned words in the novel under study:

Table 7. Instances of the Inclusion of French Words in the Novel

Structure in Arabic	Page Number	Dialectal expressions
Coupe garçon	Boy Cut hairstyle	55
Tiers monde	Third World	79
La classe	High Class	84
C'est normal	It's normal	84
يا محايينك Princesse	Princess	
c'est un exemple	It's an example	95
La discipline	Discipline	116
Tranquille	Quiet	209
En Général	In General	222
L'affaire	Affair	242
L'adresse	Adress	249
Le Feu Rouge	The Red Light	250
Monopole	Monopoly	250

6.9. The Inclusion of Berber Dialect

Since some parts of the story take place in the east of Algeria, where the Berber dialect is used, the writer has included some Berber expressions as if one is living there with the characters in the novel (see table 8).

Table 8. Instances of the Inclusion of Berber Dialect in the Novel

Structure in Berber Dialect	Structure in Modern Standard Arabic	Dialectal expressions	Meaning
اشممي يل اوسحار ذاي? Page 23	يا بني هل يوجد ساحر? هنا	/ja bunaja hal ju:ʒadu sa:hir hona: /	Son, is there any magician here?
يا نانا اكر سوكروار اج يوذان ادع دان Page 27	يا جدة، انهضي من الرواق اتركي الناس تمر	/ya: ʒada ʔinhaɖi : mina əl riwa:q wa ʔu Truki: əl na:sa Tamuru/	Grandmother ! let people pass!
اش هولادي اينيتاس اييقيل Page 27	يا ابنائي، قولوا له بان يتركني وشاني	/ja abna:ʔi: qu :lu: lahu biʔana jaTrukani: wa ʃaʔni: /	Dear sons, ask him to leave me alone !
يا ربي اضمضران	يارب، لتقلب هذه	/ya rab liTanqalib	Dear God,

الكرايا،،،،يا ربي ضرنيت Page 27	الحافلة،،،،اقلبها يارب	haḏiḥi əlhafila ʔiqlibha: ja: rab/	please overturn this bus!
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6.10. The Inclusion of Folkloric Elements

The novel is replete with folkloric elements that the Algerian dialect speaker uses in a great deal such as proverbs in order to convey a moral or a piece of advice as it is illustrated in the following table:

Table 9. Instances of the Inclusion of Folkloric Elements in the Novel

The Expressions Arabic	Page Number	Dialectal expressions
لا قديمة لا عمار بوزورو	25	/la: qdi:ma la: ʕama:r bu:zu:r:/
عوم بحرك	32	/ʕu :m baħrek/
الي فاتك بلبلة فاتك بحيلة	45	/ʔli fa:Tek bli:la fa:Tek bħi:la/
بوسة تشيح ويديها الريح	46	/bu:sa T ʃi:ħ wjedi:ha əl ri:ħ/
ياكل في الغلة ويسب في الملة	50	/ya:kol fi əl ɣla wyesab fel mela/
رانا كل في شاشية وحدة	79	/ra:na kul fi ʃaʃija waħa/
سال مجرب ولا تسال حكيم	94	/sa:l mʒareb wla:Tsa:l ħakim/
مسمار جحا	105	/mesma:r ʒħa:/
حشيشة طالبة معيشية	135 and 182	/ħʃi:ʃa ta:lba mʕi:ʃa/
عيشة وباندو	207	/ʕi:ʃa wba:ndu:/
المزود الرفيق شحال يهز من دقيق	221	/ el mezwad el reqi:q ʃħa:l yħaz men dq:q/
الراعي والخماسي تقايضوا على شي الناس	247	/ el ra:ʕi w elxama:si: Tqa:jdu: ʕqa:jdu: ʕla ʃi: el na :s/

7. Conclusion

To sum up, this paper attempted to examine the manifestation of language diversity in Fadhila Farouk's *the Mood of a Teenager* (1999). After a thorough reading, the author of this paper extracted varied features from the Algerian dialects that the writer mingled to meticulously sculpture her novel. Indeed, the inclusion of dialects along with standard language in a given literary work does not alleviate its beauty, yet it provides it with a special authenticity and an enthralling glamour. Thereby, the reader finds himself crippled by the manacles of the various occurrences as if he/she is the protagonist of the novel. In *the Mood of a Teenager*, the presence of diverse dialects triggers the reader to imagine the setting be it in Aris, or in Constantine.

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Appendix

Table 10. Arabic Letters and Symbols

Arabic Letters	Phonetic Symbols
ا	ʔ
ب	B
ت	T
ث	Ø
ج	dʒ
ح	ħ
خ	X
د	d
ذ	ð
ر	r
ز	z
س	s
ش	ʃ
ص	s
ض	d
ط	t
ظ	ð
ع	ʕ
غ	ɣ
ف	F
ق	q
ك	k
ل	l
م	m

Saadia Ouldyeou

ن	n
ه	h
و	w
ي	j
Vowel Signs: ‘ Haraka’: /a/ ,/i/ ,/u/	