



THE IMPACT OF SUDANESE REVOLUTION ON CHANGING THE SOCIAL MARKER OF SUDANESE SLANG LANGUAGE

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Article Received:13/06/2020

Article Accepted: 12/07/2020

Published online:15/07/2020

DOI: [10.33329/rjelal.8.3.13](https://doi.org/10.33329/rjelal.8.3.13)

Abstract

This research aims at examining the effect of Sudanese revolution on changing the social marker of Sudanese slang language and spreading it among all the various categories of Sudanese society. The revolution helped in spreading a slang, which was mainly used by young people from certain social class in Sudan. Now most of these slang words become common and popular among all Sudanese people with their different layers. The study adopts the historical survey method in the theoretical framework of the study. Also, the study uses the analytic descriptive approach through the study. The researcher used a document-based approach as tool for collecting data. The study has come up with several findings and results such as: politicians, who used to speak formally and liked their words long, now changed their style by using this slang, which helped them getting lots of supporters and fans, this fact leads us to the conclusion that majority of Sudanese people speak this slang or like it because they think it is cool. Sudanese revolution gives legitimacy for this language variety to spread. Sudanese revolution affects the language privacy, by widening its users. It was used to be spoken by youth male and little percentage of females now all people young or old, male or female, educated or uneducated speak it. Although not all words are spoken but certain words have much popularity than others.

Key concepts: Sudanese Revolution – Sudanese slang language SSL – slang language – social marker

1.0 Introduction

Any language has a lot of variations, especially in the way it is spoken, Yule (2010:239). Since this research paper is about language and its varieties, and society, linguists describe this relation as sociolinguistics. What is the language? A common definition is that a language is a group of words that make sense and give a complete meaning. This definition serves the purpose of the research. The same language spoken differently in various geographical areas, ethnic group, professions....etc.

each one of these categories affects the language significantly. Sociolinguistics has determined certain criteria for languages and their variations. These criteria serve as specifications or determinants for the language or its variations. One of the most important criteria is the social marker of the slang. In this study, the researcher attempts that Sudanese revolution changed the social marker of Sudanese slang. The study aims at examining the effect of Sudanese revolution on changing the social marker of Sudanese slang language and spreading it among

all the various categories of Sudanese society. This research paper attempts to answer the following questions:

- 1- what is the social marker of slang?
- 2- What are the reasons behind the Sudanese revolution?
- 3- How does Sudanese revolution change the social marker of Sudanese slang?

The study is limited to the effect of Sudanese revolution on Sudanese slang.

The subjects of the study are the social marker of slang language, the Sudanese revolution (2018-2020). The study adopts the historical survey method in the theoretical framework of the study. Also, the study uses the analytic descriptive approach through the study. The researcher used a document-based approach as tool for collecting data. The researcher uses social correlate which includes "class, gender and age" to observe the change occurs to the Sudanese slang.

1.1 Sudanese Revolution

Sudan is an African country in North of Africa to more specific Northeast Africa. Sudan's neighboring countries are Egypt, Libya, Chad, Central African Republic, South Sudan, Ethiopia and Eritrea (Wikipedia). Sudanese revolution is categorized under the Arab Spring. Abdelsalam, explains in his article *The Arab Spring: Its origins, evolution and consequences* (2015:vi23) the idea of Arab spring, which emerged in the Middle East and North Africa (MENA), because of the long tensions and instabilities in the area. The recent Arab uprising have intensified volatility and turned this area into a veritable tinderbox whose potential for explosion has far-reaching national, regional and global implications. Sudanese revolution started in 19th of December 2018 and the spark was in Atbara, a city located in River Nile State in Northeastern Sudan. Till the revolution crowned with signing the Draft Constitutional Declaration between military and civilian representatives in 17th of August 2019. There were many reasons why this great revolution broke out such as: Economic mismanagement, which was the most crucial reason, including rising costs of

basic goods; austerity measures, including an end to wheat and fuel subsidies; currency devaluation; high inflation; and limits on ATM withdrawals. Anger at the dictatorship, totalitarianism, political repression, corruption and human rights abuses of Omar al-Bashir's government, including violent crackdowns on demonstrators (Wikipedia). Suliman Baldo & Lutz Oette blogged in *African Arguments* websites summarizing the need of this revolution in Sudan in an article titled *Sudan: A genuine, peaceful people's revolution in the making* (2019):

Addressing the many problems in the country is paramount. High on the agenda must be: respect for political, religious and cultural diversity; sustainable and equitable development; and rooting out corruption. Other priorities include rebuilding of the rule of law; respect for human rights; and justice for past wrongs.

Actually these are the most significant problem led to the revolution. For there, the time of Al-Bashir's regime that was a clear abuse and disrespect for political, religious and cultural diversity. Suliman Baldo and Lutz (2019) indicated that there are historical precedents for successful uprisings in Sudan in 1964 and 1985. As the spirit of democratic change quickly gave way to a return to authoritarian rule on both occasions, many analysts stress that lessons of past failures need to be heeded. The Sudanese revolution had so many goals and aims. Such as: changing the miserable situation that Sudanese people lived in since 1989 up to 2018 as well as the changing the reasons, mentioned earlier, that led to the revolution. Among the most prominent goal is removal of old regime and pave the way for civilian and democratic reigning in which all the observers acknowledged that this goal is successfully achieved. This peaceful revolution adopted certain methods to reach its aims and objectives. Such as, demonstration, strike action, riots, sit-in and online activism.

1.2 Sudanese Professionals Association

It is cited that in the Sudanese professionals association(SPA) website is that the beginning of SPA dated back to October 2016 when an alliance charter was drafted and approved by three of Sudan's largest professional groups which were The Central

Committee of Sudanese Doctors, The Sudanese Journalists Network and The Democratic Lawyers Association. These associations serve their professional purposes plus provide their professional point of view to the governments concerning the general interests. Therefore, SPA is a continuation for these association and currently comprised of more bodies for they share common goals and objectives towards Sudan's development announced in June 2018.

SPA is made of seventeen professional groups: (this list is adopted from SPA official website)

1. Teachers' Committee
2. Central Committee of Sudanese Doctors
3. Democratic Lawyers Association
4. Sudanese Journalists Network
5. Association of Democratic Veterinarians
6. University Professors Association
7. Sudanese Doctors Syndicate (the legitimate)
8. Committee for the restoration of the Engineers Syndicate
9. Central Pharmacists Committee
10. Sudanese Engineers Association
11. Sudanese Plastic Artists Association
12. Association of Animal Production Specialists
13. Health Officers Association
14. Central Committee of Medical Laboratories
15. Professional Pharmacists Assembly
16. Association of Professional Accountants
17. Association of Agricultural Engineers

We can say that SPA collects all good matches and the elites of enlightened cadres in Sudan. Above that all, SPA fortunately, gains the love and support of all Sudanese people.

1.3 What Slang?

The word "slang" has an interesting origin. It began as a dialectal word in northern England that was used to refer to territory or turf. Over time, it was used to refer to the people who would advertise and sell goods in particular locations. Eventually, slang became the term used to describe the colorful, informal speech these salesmen used to advertise their goods.(wonderopolis.org)

Most of linguists and historians proved that there is no certain clue about the origin of slang, but we can say that slangs are as ancient as languages. When two or more people communicate with each other in speech, we can all the system of communication that they employ a code (Wardhaugh,2006:3). The word *code* mention in the quote can be equal to the word *language* in the sense of the shared knowledge of the signals used in communication among speakers. Many definitions introduced by prominent linguists that cover the term and its specifications. slang Informal vocabulary, usually stigmatized, that often serves to mark out a subculture (Coleman, 2013 p: 229). All the definitions agree that slang is a variation of a language with informal vocabulary, informal expressions, informal grammar, informal structure and informal of every aspect patterning to slang. Informality is the key concept in slang. But informality requires certain conditions; such as; it would be impolite using slang language in formal setting. This statement made my research; thus, my research is about formalizing and normalizing of slang language. Other definitions indicate age as a significant factor. Uman (2016) mentioned that young people usually use slang in informal situation. Few studies mention something about gender and slang, yet gender is as important as age and social class. Annisa, Salma (2013) wrote a research paper on gender influence on slang used by teenagers in their daily conversation at school, and came up with remarkable findings that the total number that slang used by male teenagers (54,3%) and females (45,7%). Therefore, it can be concluded that male teenagers use slang more than females and it can also be understood that the tendency of males to use standard language is to show their machismo. In

Sudan and most Arab countries the percentage of female use slang is decreasing according to how strong social restrictions are there in that country.

1.4 Why Slang?

Some people think that the main reason behind speaking slang is to sound cool, but in fact, slang has other salient reasons than just sounding cool. Britannica encyclopedia provides some reasons for emerging of slang. *Slang emanates from conflicts in values, sometimes superficial, often fundamental. When an individual applies language in a new way to express hostility, ridicule, or contempt, often with sharp wit, he may be creating slang.* Generally, people create slang to maintain some sort of privacy for their own things and society and to serve the interest of insiders. Off course

1.5 Sudanese slang language SSL

Sudanese slang language is just like any other slang language is a very distinctive variety of a standard language. Sudanese slang is derived from Arabic language, modern SSL but includes some of English words used with their similar meaning in English or sometimes they have a meaning in Sudanese slang. A few last years, SSL has been rapidly changed and every new day brings with it a change in SSL.

1.6 Social correlates and SSL social marker

Yule, (2010:256) assumes that social markers are linguistic features that shape the language which occur frequently in speech which in a way or another mark the speaker as a member of a particular social group. Cohen (2012:594-600) confirms that an ideal marker must be:

- a- salient guide to social identity
- b- can be easily discriminated
- c- mainly characteristic of the individual and secondarily of a group
- d- comparable along uninterrupted dimension
- e- not easy to fake
- f- easy to inherit
- g- can be developed
- h- dynamic and flexible
- i- evolutionarily ancient and
- j- universal characteristic of all humans.

All these ten conditions are available in SSL.

The researcher tackles three important social correlates in SSL which are social class, gender and age. Under the title *What is slang?* We mentioned that slang is informal and used among young people in certain class and male teenagers use slang more than female. Slang in Sudan mainly used by street boys or homeless young people in street as a code which makes all those who can decode it as *insiders* and who cannot as *outsiders*. Sudanese people consider most of words in slang as taboo and a marker that the one speaks them is impolite and belongs to a lower social class, which includes, people in marginal areas around the three big cities "*Khartoum, Khartoum North and Omdurman*".

1.7 Method and material

Researcher adopts a document-based method which is a quick and simple way to add a comment block prior to a method. Components of the method. Here the researcher brought three formal declarations written in SSL and links for video in which the speakers use some slang words in public plus the remarkable video in which Head of Military Council used SSL to address all Sudanese people and to congratulate them on their own victorious revolution.

1.8 Data Analysis

No doubt everybody, in the time of revolution, eagerly waited to read the declarations of Sudanese professional Association which starts with "*ياو ياو*" which is borrowed from black American vernacular "*yo yo*" meaning "*you all*". People may think that the person who wrote these declarations in SSL spent his entire life in street, but the shocking fact is that his name is Mohanad Hamid, a pathologist in University of Khartoum (Abalraziq, 2019). Here the researcher uses four declarations by Sudanese Professional Association (see the appendix). These are formal declarations and statements and people took them seriously.

- 1- https://m.facebook.com/story.php?story_fbid=512608482977333&id=266143700957147

ياو ياو

جحفاني يا صنديد

خش عشان ترطب

يوم الخميس ما في أي ورجعة أو تصعيد

لا لساتك لا متاريس لا إشتباكات لا بمبان؟ -

كسرتو الحنك ولا شنو؟؟

عوافيبيبيك يا جاح،

ما حبا في السكات لكن زي ما عارف

عندنا ضيوف جايين من ألمانيا

عشان خاطرننا و خاطر حمدوكنا و خاطر سودانا الجديد فالل شنو،

نستكين و ننصف شوارعنا و نوريهم سماء السودان الصافية بدون
دخان اللساتك

الألمان جايين لبنا مانويل نوير يحرس معانا الثورة

وتوني كروز لتظبط البنية التحتية فالل شنو،

صبن اللساتك ليوم ثاني يا جاح

يوم الخميس ح نستقبل الوفد و نوريهم السماحة وكرم الضياف
الفينا و نقول ليهم ألمانيا يا أخت بلادي

إستلمت الفنيط

منتهي

محاسبه_قيادات_الشرطه#

واجبنا_حمايه_الثوره#

إعلام اللجنة المركزية

24/ 2020/2م

The declaration consists of 114 words, most of these words are slang language. People were highly interacted with it. It is the written form of SSL. All the declarations have the same features.

2“<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=l1mmFyS6VTs>”

The prove that Sudanese revolution changed the social marker of SSL, is the speech of Lt. Gen. Abdel Fattah Abdelrahman al-Burhan; is a Sudanese politician and Sudanese Army general who is currently serving as Chairman of the Sovereignty Council of Sudan, the country's collective transitional head of state. He used Sudanese Slang Language to address people. Despite the fact that he looks ridiculous to speak with SSL, but this speech

strongly supports the hypothesis of this research paper.

1.9 Results and findings

This study found that based on the method adopted, that Sudanese Professional Association declarations, statements and speeches used slang language to give the revolution a youth like look, besides, showing that they were for the lower social class in Sudan. So based on these facts the research has come up with several findings and results:

- 1- Sudanese Revolution legalized and formalized slang language.
- 2- Sudanese revolution changed the SSL social marker from being used among certain group of people with specifications to be both popular spoken and written language among Sudanese people with their different age, social class and gender.
- 3- politicians, who used to speak formally and liked their words long, now changed their style by using this slang, which helped them getting lots of supporters and fans.
- 4- Majority of Sudanese people speak this slang or like it because they think it is cool.
- 5- Sudanese revolution affects the language privacy, by widening its users. It was used to be spoken by youth male and little percentage of females now all people young or old, male or female, educated or uneducated speak it. Although not all words are spoken but certain words have much popularity than others.
- 6- Most of Sudanese people, if not all of them, now can understand most of SSL words and sentences.
- 7- Sudanese people changed their negative viewpoint towards slang language and turned into positive.
- 8- Sudanese revolution invades slang's privacy.

1.10 Conclusion

Based on the findings, four conclusions may be drawn. First, Sudanese slang language has been developed and for the first time it is formally used and written. This suggests changing the social marker of slang language. Second, it turns easy and spontaneous, cool to use slang language in to gain people's support and love. Third, using informal language like slang in formal setting like addressing political speech gives simple people some sort of confidence to speak their mind regardless to the kind of language they will be using. Fourth, Sudanese Slang Language lost its privacy.

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Appendix



<https://www.facebook.com/SdnProAssociation/posts/3347451378614859>



<https://www.facebook.com/SdnProAssociation/posts/3172806216079377>



<https://www.facebook.com/SdnProAssociation/posts/3408669339159729>



<https://www.facebook.com/SdnProAssociation/posts/3271191702907494>

video

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=l1mmFyS6VTs>

Lt. Gen. Abdel Fattah Abdelrahman al-Burhan is a Sudanese politician and Sudanese Army general who is currently serving as Chairman of the Sovereignty Council of Sudan, the country's collective transitional head of state.