An Investigation into The Use of Endangered Languages in Different Domains in The Southern Society of Oman

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Abstract ID: 449
Event: Linguistics 2026 Paris
Subject: 3. Application linguistics
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Abstract

This paper aims to investigate the languages used in various domains (different settings) in the southern society of Oman and explores the possibility to what extent these languages will be preserved in the future. A number of 40 people from different age groups from the southern Omani society were involved in this study who speak Arabic, Jibbali, and Mehri. Through using a questionnaire and following a thematic analysis, the findings revealed that found both Jibbali and Mehri are used in informal domains within most age groups. Some younger participants were found to already be shifting their language use towards Arabic, even with their family and friends, which is an indication of a gradual shift from these minority languages to Arabic in the southern community which are unlikely to be maintained. Based on these findings, it is recommended that the Omani government take proactive actions to protect minority languages in Oman as encouraging and enabling their use in classrooms, as well as by creating linguistic corpora of these languages that can be used as learning resources.