

The Resurfacing of Arabic Qaf [q] in the Speech of Young Ammani Females: A Sociolinguistic Study

Rose Fowler Al-Hawamdeh

Department of English Language and Literature
Faculty of Foreign Languages, The University of Jordan
Amman, Jordan

Jihad M. Hamdan

Department of English Language and Literature
Faculty of Foreign Languages, The University of Jordan
Amman, Jordan

Abstract

The main objective of this study is to explore the factors that affect the absence of the glottal stop [ʔ] and as a result, the resurfacing of the standard Arabic *Qaf* variable [q], in certain lexical items of young Ammani females who associate themselves with the Jordanian Arabic *madani* ('urban') dialect of which [ʔ] is a predominant feature. In particular, the study explores why this absence occurs from the perspectives of the speakers themselves in relation to their own language choices. Empirical data are collected through the use of a closed questionnaire and a focus group discussion. The findings reveal that one of the major factors for the resurfacing of [q] is related to the influence of family dialect and social networks and not because the target words are of a religious or formal origin, as once they might have been attested in the speech of older generations.

Keywords: glottal stop [ʔ], Jordanian Arabic, Qaf variant [q], resurfacing, social networks

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Introduction

This is a sociolinguistic study, specifically in the area of dialectology, the study of "sub-standard, low status, often rustic forms of the language, generally associated with [...] groups lacking in prestige [...] [and] which have no written form" (Chambers & Trudgill, 1980, p. 3). It focuses on the factors which determine the resurfacing of *Qaf* ([q] henceforth) and the absence of the glottal stop ([ʔ]* henceforth) in certain lexical items of the speech of young Ammani females in Jordan who otherwise associate themselves with the *madani* (urban) dialect which is marked for its predominant use of [ʔ]. This objective comes in contrast to previous studies that have compared the use of other variants of /q/, i.e. [g], [k], [ʔ] or [q], in relation to social or geographical background, age or sex (Abd-El-Jawad, 1986; Abu-Haider, 1989).

Individual speakers of other Jordanian Arabic dialects (especially the younger generation) who also use [ʔ] tend to be influenced by the urban dialect through contact with Ammani speakers, as a result of mobilisation (Herin, 2010). The absence of [ʔ] in certain lexical items of young Ammani females (as opposed to speakers of other dialects) is significant since these speakers have predominantly reached the 'completion stage' i.e. [ʔ] is used in all the speech styles of their linguistic repertoire (Al-Wer & Herin, 2011, p. 62). In an earlier study, Haeri (1987) posits that [ʔ] is "associated with modernity and progress" (p. 176) and thus is more common in the speech of women. The fact that young women are the innovators of linguistic change is not an isolated phenomenon. As Shin (2013) states, "the role of gender differences in language change has been widely discussed in the variationist sociolinguistic literature. The broadest generalization is that women are at the vanguard of change in monolingual settings" (p. 135). Furthermore, Al-Tamimi (2001) and Al-Wer and Herin (2011) argue that young Jordanian females often lead the way in linguistic innovation in speech. In light of this, the researchers find it appropriate to select this section of the population to provide the data for the study reported here.

As the main feature of the speech of young Ammani females in Jordan who associate themselves with the urban dialect is the predominance of [ʔ], it is of real interest to examine why such speakers choose not to employ this sound in certain words even though this variant is central to their own speech variety. Based on the researchers' observations and preliminary data obtained from relevant informants, it was decided that focus would lie on seven factors (given as possible reasons in the questionnaire) for the resurfacing of the standard Arabic (SA) [q], and consequently the absence of [ʔ], as explained in more detail in the methodology section. One of the predominant factors focused on in the present study is that of social networks (Cheshire, 1982; Milroy, 1987) which can affect the linguistic choices of individual speakers as well as speech communities as a whole.

The Concept of Social Networks

A social network can be defined as "the aggregate of relationships contracted with others" (Milroy, 2002, p. 549), i.e. the whole makeup of one's relationships with various different people such as family members, friends, peer groups and, perhaps to a lesser extent, neighbours, trade associates and so on (Milroy & Milroy, 1997, p. 199). Milroy (2002) states that "[a] social network may be seen as a boundless web of ties which reaches out through a whole society, linking people to one another, however remotely" (p. 550). Milroy developed this definition from her own Belfast study in 1987, which established a direct link between social network and language use. Further, she

highlighted the relationship between low-status, non-standard speakers and the nature of close-knit communities (p. 178). Cheshire (as cited in Al-Wer, 2000) also found, on the basis of her study of adolescent friendship groups in Reading, a "systematic relationship between linguistic behaviour and social network" (p. 4). Milroy (1987) argues that it is possible to make some general statements about "the informal social relationships in which everyone is embedded" (p. 46). Based on this assumption, Milroy (1987) defines different types of social network as 'network zones' in which "each person may be viewed as a focus from which lines radiate to points (person with whom he is contact)" (p. 46).

Therefore, a given individual may have different order zones. A first order zone consists of people who are directly linked to an individual (X), e.g. his core family members and close friends. The second order zone consists of people that X does not necessarily know but might come into contact through people in his first order zone, e.g., a friend of a friend (Milroy, 1987). Though a third, fourth and nth order zone might be eminent "the first and second order zones appear, in practice, to be the most important" (Milroy, 1987, pp. 46-47). In relation to language, individuals are also under pressure to conform to the linguistic norms of their given first and (to a lesser degree), second zones in order to express solidarity and uniformity. In an earlier study, Milroy (1972) concludes that "[the theory of social networks] ultimately [...] can be used to account for variability in individual linguistic behaviour in communities, which is something a large-scale analysis like Labov's in New York City does not set out to do" (p. 21). Furthermore, Milroy (1987) believes that small-scale community studies are able to provide a more detailed account on the language variability of speakers, "particularly with reference to the less formal parts of the linguistic repertoire" (p. 21).

Historical Overview

Although Classical Arabic (CA) and its contemporary offshoot Modern Standard Arabic (MSA) are often perceived by most native Jordanians as superior to other dialect varieties (DVs), the latter still heavily persist (Hussein & Nasser, 1989). In order to contextualize our study, it is important to gain a somewhat broader perspective on the persistence of DVs and the decline of CA in Arabic-speaking communities today. While the study of dialectology has become common in the field of Arabic studies, until recently most university departments of Arabic have continued to concentrate on SA, with little emphasis on DVs (Versteegh, 2000, p.6). However, there has been a steady increase in the interest in DVs with Arab and Western linguists alike recording dialectal grammatical descriptions, as well as engaging in sociolinguistic analysis of grammatical patterns in the Arabic speaking world (Versteegh, 2000, p. 7). A question of great interest in Arabic sociolinguistics today is why DVs have continued to flourish in comparison to the decline of CA usage.

Historically, Arabs were known for the richness of their language and ability to use CA, yet today it is DVs that are commonplace. It has been suggested that historical factors have played a large part in the current linguistic situation of the Arabic-speaking world. Al-Wer (1997) argues that when the Arab Islamic Empire began to weaken in the sixteenth century and the Ottoman Turkish rule expanded over the Arabic-speaking provinces, considerable pressure was placed on the Arabic language. Turkish replaced Arabic in state administration and was even adopted by Arab officials. Furthermore, illiteracy in the Arabic-speaking communities prevailed, which was

somewhat ignored by Turkish rulers who failed to establish schools leaving it to mosques to provide some elementary education, mainly reading, writing and religion. Subsequently, there was a general decline in the use of CA. By the nineteenth century, the number of people who had knowledge of CA decreased significantly. Further, the domains of the language became limited to mainly religious settings. However, at the beginning of the twentieth century with the end of Turkish rule, "there were signs of a revival of the Arabic culture in general" (Al Wer, 1997, p. 253).

Within modern Arabic studies, there is a growing and continuing debate as to the most effective and relevant factors that impact the linguistic context of the Arabic speakers (Al-Wer, 2000). In the past, Ferguson (1959) drew comparisons between CA and the spoken dialects by applying the concept of 'diglossia' to such speech communities, when "two or more varieties of the same language are used by some speakers under different conditions" (p. 325). However, Haeri (as cited in Chambers, 1995, p. 143) posits that "Classical Arabic is not a synchronically relevant variety of modern day Arabic on a par with the living vernaculars". Moreover, Abd-El-Jawad (1987) notes that in the past, sociolinguists have tended to "equate the terms 'prestige' and 'standard'; consequently [considering] Modern Standard Arabic (MSA) as the only prestige variety in all settings" (p. 359). He further suggests that there are "also local or regional varieties which act as local spoken standards competing with MSA in informal settings" (p. 359). Kaye (1972) also argues that Ferguson's work is much too simplified to be applied to Arabic.

Al-Wer and Herin (2011) state that the emergence of [ʔ] (as a non-standard variant of /q/) in Jordanian Arabic occurred through contact with urban Levantine dialects, noting that the most significant influence came from urban Palestinian due to the migration of Palestinians to Jordan after the 1948 Arab-Israeli war. As a consequence, the intermingling between Jordanians and Palestinians led to the emergence of [ʔ] in local dialects, perhaps initially through the borrowing of individual lexical items. They go on to argue that women have led the way in this linguistic innovation, as a means to elevate their social status. This innovation occurred most notably between the 1950s-70s (especially in the linguistic centre of Amman), when [ʔ] was quickly incorporated into their speech and thus paved the way for younger generations to follow (p. 73). Additionally, a significant number of girls who grew up in [g] or [q] speaking environments have even started to use the [ʔ] variant in their speech (El Salman 2003, p.413).

The variant [ʔ] is not "intrinsically 'softer' or 'feminine'" (Al-Wer & Herin, 2011, p. 71), when compared to other variants of [q], but the fact that it is used more by women has led to this classification, which makes many male speakers feel prohibited from using it. A study by Al-Essa (2009) of dialect contact in Jeddah in Saudi Arabia also suggests that women are more innovative than men in adopting new features typical of the variety spoken by the broader community. Sadiqi (2003) further advocates that variations in speech may be due to 'space dichotomy'. In this case, it is argued that the public space (where standard Arabic is used) is associated with men, whereas the private space (in which dialect varieties are commonplace), is associated with women (as cited in Al Wer, 2014, p. 398). However, Bassiouney (2010) concludes that in particular instances (in this case, an Egyptian talk show on political and social issues) women are more likely than men to adopt standard Arabic.

Although the urban dialect holds the most prestige in Amman in relation to the other spoken varieties (especially in relation to females), this is not the case in other areas of Jordan such as the north. In a fairly old study by Hussein and El-Ali (1989), the urban dialect was ranked least favoured by the sample, as opposed to the Bedouin dialect which was considered the most prestigious, highlighting the fact that speakers tend to stay loyal to their own varieties (p. 37). To examine the extent to which the results of this study still hold, further research is needed. The missing link in the literature and what this study aims to address is why young Ammani females who have passed the completion stage still choose, in certain contexts, to use the SA [q] as opposed to the variant central to their own variety, i.e. [ʔ]. Haeri (1997) argues that the use of [q] itself (in Cairo) is related to lexical choice as the deciding factor in its use, rather than a structural rule. What remains is to identify the factors that constrain this lexical choice in the speech of young Ammani female speakers of Jordanian Arabic, the main focus of our study.

Research Questions

The study seeks answers to the following questions:

- (1) Which words (out of the 37 items provided) are more likely to be pronounced with [q] or [ʔ], respectively?
- (2) What reasons (out of a given list) are associated with the resurfacing of [q] (and hence the absence of [ʔ])?

Methodology

In order to examine the extent to which young Ammani females use the SA [q] variant instead of using their usual [ʔ] in certain lexical items and to establish the reasons for doing so, the researchers employed both quantitative and qualitative measures, in the form of a closed questionnaire and a focus group. The total number of questionnaires originally distributed was 200 but after refining the sample in relation to urban speakers (excluding non-urban dialects and non-Jordanians), the responses of questionnaires from 70 female students at the University of Jordan were valid for analysis. They belonged to four specializations, viz., 16 (23%) Arabic Language and Literature, 12 (17%) Islamic Shariah, 25 (36%) Foreign Languages and 17 (24%) Business. All subjects acknowledged themselves as urban speakers who predominantly use [ʔ] for the SA [q], and therefore the variants [g] and [k] were excluded. The subjects were selected from different majors to further examine if there was a correlation between language use and major. For example, it was useful within the context of the study to examine whether subjects studying Islamic Shariah and Arabic Language and Literature are more likely to use [q], say for religious or formal language use.

The questionnaire consisted of two sections. The first section was intended to elicit demographic data including subjects' personal and family dialect and type of specialization. In the second section, the subjects were presented with 37 lexical items (the underlying form of which contains the variable [q]); they were asked to state whether they use the variants [q] or [ʔ] in each case. A significant number of the words provided were deliberately selected by the researchers with the knowledge that such words are expected to be pronounced with [q]. This was done in order to help the researchers establish the reasons behind such usage.

The subjects were also provided with seven potential reasons for their language choice between the use of [q] or [ʔ] in addition to a free eighth reason, 'other'. However, none of the

subjects stated different reasons to those already provided. The reasons were as follows: (1) 'I feel the word has a religious origin', (2) 'I feel the word relates to the dominant *fusha* (SA) form', (3) 'This pronunciation is from a dialect I don't want to associate myself with', (4) 'I feel there is stigma in using the other form', (5) 'I wish to imitate my friends', (6) 'I like the pronunciation of this form with this word (personal preference)', and (7) 'It is my family's dialect so I find myself naturally conforming to it'.

The qualitative element of the study came from a focus group discussion which involved 15 female Jordanian students at the University of Jordan who predominantly associated themselves with the urban dialect. These subjects were prompted by the researchers to discuss a number of issues related to the use of [ʔ] and [q] in their speech such as the extent to which their family affects the way they speak and the main reasons for the resurfacing of [q] in particular lexical items and hence the absence of [ʔ]. Answers given by the focus group provided rich qualitative information in support of the quantitative data collected from the questionnaire.

Results and discussion

As was mentioned in the previous section, two sets of data were collected; quantitative from the questionnaire group and qualitative from the focus group. Below is a presentation and discussion of the results.

Analysis of the quantitative data

This subsection presents and discusses the results related to the two study questions. The subjects' preferences for either [q] or [ʔ] will be addressed followed by the reasons underlying their choices.

Preference for [q] or [ʔ]

Table 1 presents the percentages of [q] or [ʔ] responses given by the subjects. A closer look at the table indicates that the following 11 words were pronounced with [ʔ] by at least 70% of the subjects: *qahwa* 'coffee', *qamiis* 'shirt', *qalam* 'pen', *qabl* 'before', *qamar* 'moon', *muqrif* 'disgusting', *miqqaṣ* 'scissors', *maqluuba* (Jordanian dish), *qaṣd* 'intention', *qaliil* 'small amount' and *qaal* 'said'. These are all high frequency 'everyday' words, which may explain the subjects' tendency to pronounce them with [ʔ]. Interestingly, although the majority of subjects (61%) used [ʔ] for *qirsh* 'ten fils' (as opposed to 39% for [q]), they showed significantly different behaviour with its hyponym *qirsh* 'shark' where 91% of them opted for [q]. This difference in pronunciation perhaps originally occurred in the speech of older generations of the urban dialect to distinguish between the two words, with younger speakers unconsciously following suit. Further, *qirsh* 'shark' is not perceived as a 'frequent and everyday word' in contrast to its money-based cognate.

As for [q], 23 (62%) out of 37 words were pronounced with [q] by more than 80% of the subjects. It seems that the subjects tended to use [q] for words linked to formality such as *qabas* 'flame', *qawm* 'nation', *qathf* 'throwing', *qimma* 'mountain peak', *qanata* 'became desperate', *qabas* (name of a newspaper), *quut* 'food', *qanaaḍa* 'content', *qaṣam* 'oath', *qindiil* 'lantern', *qasiima* 'document', *qadh* 'libel' and *qamʔ* 'oppression'. The word *qabr* 'grave' was the only lexical item where subjects were almost equally divided with 51% of them opting for [q] and 49% for [ʔ], which may be explained in terms of idiosyncrasies particular to individual speakers. Only one subject pronounced *dimashq* 'Damascus' with [ʔ] while the majority (99%) used [q].

Interestingly, *al-quds* ‘Jerusalem’ (although being a religiously significant location in Islam) was pronounced with [q] by a lower percentage of subjects (81%) than *dimashq* ‘Damascus’.

Table 1. Percentage of subjects who pronounced each of the given words with either [q] or [ʔ]*

Target word	[q] (%)	[ʔ] (%)	Target word	[q] (%)	[ʔ] (%)
1. <i>dimashq</i> ‘Damascus’	99%	1%	20. <i>qathf</i> ‘throwing’	97%	3%
2. <i>al-quds</i> ‘Jerusalem’	81%	19%	21. <i>qa:sf</i> ‘bombardment’	96%	4%
3. <i>qazam</i> ‘dwarf’	96%	4%	22. <i>qindiil</i> ‘lantern’	91%	9%
4. <i>qanata</i> ‘became desperate’	97%	3%	23. <i>qasam</i> ‘oath’	93%	7%
4. <i>qadh</i> ‘libel’	84%	16%	24. <i>qasiima</i> ‘document’	87%	13%
5. <i>tuqa</i> ‘piety’ (girl's name)	96%	4%	25. <i>qaal</i> ‘said’	30%	70%
6. <i>qursaana</i> ‘pirate’	93%	7%	26. <i>qasd</i> ‘intention’	27%	73%
7. <i>qabr</i> ‘grave’	51%	49%	27. <i>muqrif</i> ‘disgusting’	24%	76%
8. <i>qarrara</i> ‘decided’	87%	13%	28. <i>qalam</i> ‘pen’	21%	79%
9. <i>qimma</i> ‘peak’	97%	3%	29. <i>qahwa</i> ‘coffee’	17%	83%
10. <i>qumama</i> ‘rubbish’	97%	3%	30. <i>qamar</i> ‘moon’	23%	77%
11. <i>qawm</i> ‘nation’	99%	1%	31. <i>qamiis</i> ‘shirt’	20%	80%
12. <i>qirsh</i> ‘shark’	91%	9%	32. <i>miqqas</i> ‘scissors’	24%	76%
14. <i>qabas</i> (name of a newspaper)	96%	4%	33. <i>burtuqaal</i> ‘orange’	61%	39%
15. <i>qabas</i> ‘flame’	99%	1%	34. <i>maqluuba</i> (Jordanian dish)	24%	76%
16. <i>quut</i> ‘food’	96%	4%	35. <i>qaliil</i> ‘small amount’	29%	71%
17. <i>qirsh</i> ‘ten fils’	39%	61%	36. <i>qabl</i> ‘before’	23%	77%
18. <i>qamʔ</i> ‘oppression’	80%	20%	37. <i>qaraʔa</i> ‘read’	89%	11%
19. <i>qinaaʔ</i> ‘mask’	96%	4%			

*All target words are transcribed here with /q/ (i.e. the underlying form)

On the sidelines of presenting and discussing subjects’ sound preferences, Table 2 shows the distribution of [q] and [ʔ] occurrences in terms of specialization. As is clear, the ratio of subjects who chose [q] in each of the four majors is remarkably high in comparison to their use of [ʔ]. This result is not completely unexpected as some of the words provided were selected by the

researchers with the knowledge that many speakers of the *madani* dialect tend to pronounce them with [q]. This was in fact purposely done in order to elicit the reasons behind such usage.

Table 2. Distribution of the use of [q] and [ʔ] in terms of specialization

Specialisation	No. of subjects	Total usage of [q] and [ʔ] per specialisation*	No. and % of [ʔ] usage	No. and % of [q] usage
Arabic	16	592	103 (17.4%)	489 (82.6%)
Islamic Shariah	12	444	148 (33.3%)	296 (66.7%)
Foreign Languages	25	925	341 (36.9%)	584 (63.1%)
Business	17	629	212 (33.7%)	417 (66.3%)
Total	70	2590		

*Total usage = No. of subjects in each specialization x 37 (i.e. the no. of target words)

The percentage of Arabic students who use [q] (82.6%) as opposed to [ʔ] (17.4%) is comparatively greater than the other specializations, most likely due to the fact that these subjects are more conscious of the SA [q] and are more familiar with it through their specialist classes and academic interactions. However, the percentage of Islamic Shariah students who use [q] (66.7%) as opposed to [ʔ] (33.5%) is not as high as expected, given the fact that Standard Arabic is also predominantly used in this major and that [q] is the variant normally used in religious contexts. This rather surprising result may be ascribed to the belief that such subjects are more sensitive to [q] in formal religious contexts, e.g. class or prayer, than in neutral and general texts and contexts, let alone when interacting with isolated lexical items as is the case in this study. In fact, the Islamic Shariah students' overall use of [q] (in relation to the words provided) is similar to that of Foreign Languages students (63.1%) and Business students (66.3%). The results in Table 2 clearly indicate that the subjects of all specializations have shown a significant preference for [q] in pronouncing the target items. Furthermore, the results suggest that the reasons for using [q] in certain lexical items is constrained by variables that go beyond academic specialization, to say the least.

Reasons for [q] or [ʔ] usage

Table 3 shows the number and percentage assigned by the subjects for each of the reasons suggested in the questionnaire for the use of [q] or [ʔ].

Table 3. Number and percentage of responses for reason preferences assigned by the subjects for the use of [q] and [ʔ]

Reason	No. of [q] or [ʔ] usage for each reason		% of [q] or [ʔ] usage for each reason*	
	[q]	[ʔ]	[q]	[ʔ]

1. 'I feel the word has a religious origin'.	65	0	2.5%	0
2. 'I feel the word relates to the dominant <i>fusha</i> (SA) form'	509	67	20%	2.5%
3. 'This pronunciation is from a dialect I don't want to associate myself with'	53	26	2%	1%
4. 'I feel there is stigma in using the other form'	51	42	2%	1.6%
5. 'I wish to imitate my friends'	30	20	1%	0.8%
6. 'I like the pronunciation of this form with this word (personal preference)'	267	133	10.3%	5.1%
7. 'It is my family's dialect so I find myself naturally conforming to it'.	761	566	29.3%	22%
Total	2590		100%	

*% for reason = number of actual use of the variable ([q] or [ʔ]) associated with x reason ÷ total number of possible production of the variable (70 x 37 = 2590) x 100

It is interesting to note that for all subjects, the highest percentage is given to the reason 'It is my family's dialect so I find myself naturally conforming to it', for both [q] and [ʔ] (29.3% and 22% respectively). This suggests that the subjects are very much tied to their first zone social network. For [q] specifically, this is followed by 'I feel the word relates to the dominant *fusha* (SA) form' (20%) and 'I like the pronunciation of this form with this word (personal preference)' (10.3%). The second highest response (5.1%) for the use of [ʔ] was 'I like the pronunciation of this form with this word (personal preference)'. Unexpectedly, for the reason 'I feel the word has a religious origin', only 2.4% of responses were given to this answer. Percentages associated with other reasons are also significantly low across the board. For instance, the percentages for the reason 'I wish to imitate my friends' was only 1% for [q] and 0.8% for [ʔ]. Hence, we can conclude that there was a general preference for [q] in relation to the 37 lexical items provided. This preference was for the most part, related to a desire to conform to family dialect (whether [q] or [ʔ]), across all four specializations.

Analysis of the qualitative data

Here, we present and discuss the possible rationale behind the reasons given by the questionnaire group (whether high or low in percentage). These justifications were provided by the focus group, as well as commenting on their own personal motivations for the use of [q] (as opposed to [ʔ]) regarding particular lexical items. The rationale behind employing a focus group was to provide detailed information in terms of subjects' own perspectives on their language use, which can help

the researchers confirm (or otherwise) the findings derived from quantitative data collected from the questionnaires. As Edley and Litosseliti (2010) suggest, focus groups are "a mechanism by which one party (i.e. the interviewer) extracts vital information from another (i.e. the interviewee)" (p. 157).

The main reason given by the focus group for replacing [ʔ] with [q] in particular lexical items (in comparison to the questionnaire sample (29.3%)) was related to their family (first zone network) dialects, i.e. the dialect they had been raised to speak. There was a general consensus that they had subconsciously acquired these particular lexical items from their families which were then reinforced by wider social networks such as friends, classmates, tribe, workplace environment, neighbours and other members of the community. In other words, as one participant suggested, "it is not the case that we make a conscious decision to use [q] [in certain lexical items], but it's more because of the way we have been brought up". It seems that young Ammani females wish to adhere to their family dialects out of pressure to conform and out of a sense of solidarity and group identity. According to Ryan (1979), "[certain] varieties basically persist because the speakers do not want to give them up" (p.155). In this context, Gubuglo (as cited in Ryan, 1979, p. 147) refers to the "value of language as a chief symbol of group identity". However, in relation to the present study, it is not the case of a particular variety *per se*, but an actual specific feature of pronunciation. Nevertheless, it is relevant in highlighting the extent to which elements of language can serve to unite the people who use them.

Twenty two percent of the questionnaire group stated that they use [q] with words like *qaṣam* 'oath' *qasiima* 'document' and *qadh* 'libel' because they think that the use of this variant relates to the dominant *fusha* (SA) form. On discussing such words with the focus group, they suggested that the use of the vernacular [ʔ] here is deemed inappropriate in formal contexts, adding that they would naturally use [q]. Sawaie (1987) posited that university students idealize the standard variety [q] and associate it with education. In this regard, the focus group also mentioned that (in line with formality) education had a role to play in the [q] usage. Many of them reported that the words they acquired at home with [q] were standardised in the written texts they were exposed to at school. For example, one participant stated, "the classroom acts as confirmation to what we already know". In support of this finding, Abdel-Jawad and Abu Radwan (2013) argue that "SA pronunciation [q] assumes supremacy in formal settings" (p. 5). Yet, as Al-Wer (2000) suggests, "it is not level of education *per se* which correlates with linguistic usage, rather that level of education is actually an indicator of the nature and extent of the speaker's social contacts" (p. 3).

Personal preference of a particular form entails that a particular pronunciation is preferred by the speaker, i.e. they happen to prefer using [q] or [ʔ] depending on the particular word. This was the third highest reason stated by subjects in relation to [q] (10.3%) and the second highest for [ʔ] (5.1%), which suggests that [ʔ] (and the use of [q] for particular lexical items), along with the *madani* dialect in general, is an admired and sought after variety. In relation to words of a religious derision or connotation which account for 2.5% of subjects' use of [q], some of the focus group suggested that speakers who used [q] here were motivated by its occurrence in similar words in the Holy *Qur'an* and *Hadith* ('sayings of the Prophet Muhammad'). For example, *tuqa* is a girl's name which is derived from *taqwa* 'piety' and thus [ʔ] is considered inappropriate (96% of subjects

chose [q] for this lexical item). Only one percent of subjects' responses indicated that they don't use [ʔ] for certain lexical items because it is used in a dialect they don't want to associate themselves with. Some of the focus group commented that although [ʔ] is in fact a central element of the Ammani urban dialect, certain items pronounced with [ʔ] are associated with varieties other than *madani*. Hence, the standard [q] variant is used in this context. For instance, three subjects said that the girl's name *tuqa* pronounced with [ʔ] is associated with some Egyptian dialects, so young Ammani females prefer to use [q].

Regarding stigma attached to using the other form (two percent of responses by the questionnaire group gave this as a reason for [q] and [ʔ] usage, respectively), some of the focus group expressed that they would be stigmatized for using [ʔ] with regard to particular lexical items such as *qasf* 'bombardment', *qathf* 'throwing' and *qumama* 'rubbish'. They ascribed this to the fact that the majority of Jordanian Arabic speakers (even from other dialects) use [q] at least for the last two words, and therefore [ʔ] would sound unusual here. The same can be said for the use of [ʔ] with *qirsh* 'shark' which all of the focus group agreed would sound 'ridiculous'; hence, perhaps due to fear of being stigmatized by their first zone social networks (i.e. family and friends, colleagues etc.), young Ammani females tend to avoid it.

Other reasons of significance given by the focus group (not provided in the questionnaire) were that they felt that using [q] was a sign of respect to the listener as well as gaining respect themselves as women in a male-dominated society. As one participant put it, "If I want to be taken seriously, I use [q], especially in formal situations". This observation is in line with the general belief that the variant [q] holds prestige in more formal situations and thus it was felt by respondents the most appropriate to use. The variant [q] in some instances was also described by the focus group as sounding more "natural" as if using [ʔ] in these cases indicates "putting on an accent".

In summary, having provided the percentages of preference for the use of either [q] or [ʔ], as well as the various potential reasons for the use of [q] as opposed to [ʔ], the data suggest a general trend towards echoing family dialect as the most significant reason for subjects' use of [q]. As the present study shows, first order zones were the most prominent in affecting language use amongst young Ammani females. The researchers of the present study further argue that the salience of the media, literature and textbooks affect Ammani females use of [ʔ]. For instance, words like *dimashq* 'Damascus', *al-quds* 'Jerusalem' and so-called *al-qaʔida* 'Al-Qaida' are rarely or never pronounced with [ʔ], which infiltrates the psyche of the general collective, whereby the pronunciation of [q] (as opposed to [ʔ]) is considered the norm.

The researchers suggest that while historically [q] was probably borrowed by older generations for certain factors pertaining to religion and formality, this is not the case for young Ammani females. For example, words like *al-quds* 'Jerusalem' (a highly revered location in Islam), the name *tuqa* 'piety' (derived from a religious origin), or words like *qanata* 'became desperate' (from classical Arabic) are predominantly pronounced by *madani* speakers with [q]. Yet, young Ammani females are often oblivious to the reasons for doing so and simply follow the norms of their family dialects. This is reflected in the fact that even students of Islamic Shariah and Arabic stated that they use [q] in certain instances because it is their family dialect, rather than

for religious reasons that one might expect in comparison to other specialisations (see Table 2). In a nutshell, the study has shown that Ammani females' first zone social network (in this case, family) help to maintain and promote their usage of a particular variant in certain lexical items, which is also to some extent reinforced by education.

Conclusion and recommendations

The findings suggest that there is a strong relationship between family dialect and social networks and the absence of [ʔ] in particular lexical items in the speech of young Ammani females. Females who consider themselves speakers of the urban dialect use [q] in a relatively small set of words which unveils the subconscious echoing of the dialect of their immediate social network. More specifically as discussed earlier, because Jordanian society consists of strong and dense social networks predominantly made up of first zone networks, the findings show that Ammani females adhere to the language norms of their family. Social networks perform the function of a norm enforcing mechanism, in this case with specific reference to linguistic behaviour.

Further work in the field might include contrastive research drawn from empirical data collected in other Arabic-speaking countries, to establish if patterns exist between the general findings of this study and the speech patterns of other communities. The role of education in relation to young Ammani females' speech, and its effects on the influence of family dialect may also be examined in a future study. Another interesting line of research might relate to whether a correlation exists between reasons given by older generations of the *madani* dialect for the use of [q] in certain lexical items (resulting in the absence of [ʔ]), with younger Ammani speakers (as investigated in the present study).

Notes

The following special symbols are used to represent some unique Arabic consonants as shown below:

Symbol	Features
ʔ	voiceless glottal stop
ħ	voiceless pharyngeal fricative
kh	voiceless uvular fricative
ṣ	voiceless emphatic alveo-dental fricative
ḍ	voiced emphatic alveo-dental stop
ṭ	voiceless emphatic alveo-dental stop
th	voiced inter-dental fricative
q	voiceless uvular stop
sh	voiceless alveo-palatal fricative

About the Authors:

Rose Fowler Al-Hawamdeh graduated with a Masters of Arts in Applied Linguistics and TEFL from the University of Portsmouth, UK. She is currently studying for her PhD in linguistics at the University of Jordan, Amman. Her interests lie in Arabic sociolinguistics, the acquisition problems faced by Arab learners of English, and applied psycholinguistics.

Jihad Hamdan is a Professor of Linguistics at the University of Jordan. He is currently the Editor-in-Chief of the International Journal of Arabic-English Studies. He has published extensively in psycholinguistics, lexicography, translation and contrastive linguistics. Most of his papers have appeared in international journals such as World Englishes, Babel, and International Journal of Lexicography.

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