# Choice of Phonetic Variables, /k/ and [č], in Al-Jaroushia Speech Community, Palestine: A Socio-phonological Perspective

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**Abstract**
This study aims to pinpoint the sex of the speakers as the most dominant social correlate intersecting with their socio-economic status (level and field of education and income level), addressee and age to determine the speaker's choice of phonetic variables /k/ and [č] ] in Al-Jaroushia speech community, Palestine. It strongly suggests that females, rather than males, pioneer in a trend towards more frequent vocalizations of standard Arabic phonetic forms. In order to achieve the purpose of this study, data was collected from thirty eight respondents by using a CD Recorder that recorded the answers of the test questions: *what is Nablus famous for, and what is a cat mostly afraid of?* The answers are respectively /knafi/ (a kind of sweet which Nablus city is famous for) and /kalb/ (dog), in both of which /k/ could also be realized (articulated) as [č]. Another major tool was interviewing the respondents on different occasions and in different social status quos. The study obviously reveals that the sex of the speaker is the major, most influential social correlate governing their choice of /k/ and [č] inasmuch as it intersects with the speaker's socio-economic status , addressee and age, setting up intricate patterns of social stratification.
*Key words:* sociolinguistics, social stratification, phonetic variables, social correlates

**Introduction**

Ascribing the choice of phonetic variables in people's speech to a range of social correlates has been an inevitable sociolinguistic trend. This study of the phonetic variables in Al-Jaroushia speech community discloses that the most frequently invoked social correlates of phonetic variables are roughly the socio-economic status (including the educational level and income level), age, addressee, and sex.

The study apparently pinpoints the sex of the speaker as the prime social correlate determining people's choice of phonetic variables in the Al-Jaroushia speech community. It is obviously premised on the notion that females tend to use more Standard Arabic forms than males do. It is also suggestive of how influential the field of study is in determining males' choice of phonetic variables, and more illustrative of the fact that educated males whose area of study is Arabic tend to use more standard forms than others. Added to that, this study demonstrates how sex intermingles with the addressee[i] and age of female speakers to determine females' choice of phonetic variables. It significantly stresses the impact of the level of education, income level of the addressee and the degree of solidarity to the addressee on females' choice of phonetic variables.

Sex difference constitutes the major component in each complex pattern: to show prestige, women are inclined to use the variable /k/ far more than men do; but men use the variable [č] far more than women do. In fact, the increasing use of /k/ instead of [č] among females, especially young and educated ones, is indication that women are leading a phonetic linguistic tendency towards more articulations of standard Arabic forms in Al-Jaroushia speech community. Besides, this study highlights the effect of the addressee's socio-economic status and degree of closeness or intimacy on the speakers' choice of phonetic variables. Women in particular are affected by their addressee's socio-economic status and the closeness of their relationship to their addressee. The closer the relationship is, the fewer/k/'s women use when addressing people. Underpinning this view, O'Grady et al. (1999, 547) point to the phonological entities of sociolinguists as 'sociolinguistic variables'. These variables are speech sounds that do not occur uniformly across a speech community or in the speech of an individual. O'Grady et al. (1999, 547) explain, "A particular variable may be realized one way in one speech variety and a different way in another speech variety." Likewise, a variable might be rendered one way by speakers when they are speaking cautiously and another way when in a more casual speaking style.

The most common phonetic variable that determines the degree of speakers' prestige in Al-Jaroushia village is /k/. This variable is either realized as [k] by prestigious or high-status speakers, or as [č] by people whose speech is non-prestigious or informal. Whereas speaking with [k], a Standard Arabic sound, is acceptable as a sign of esteem, [č] is the stigmatized form of [k]. The most frequently asked question "Does (s)he speak with [k] or with [č]?" underlines the noticeability of this trend in Al-Jaroushia speech community, especially when people intend to inquire about how prestigious and prescribed a person's language is. In English-speaking communities as well, "Probably the most common variable in English is (ing)" (O'Grady et al., 1999, 547). Since (ing) is a variable, it is not always realized the same way in speech. O'Grady et al. (1999) indicate that its two realizations are [in] and [iŋ]. The same word might be pronounced with one or the other realization by the same speaker or different speakers: *swimming* might thus be realized as [swimin] or as [swimiŋ].

O'Grady et al. (1999, 547) claim that these realizations do not occur randomly in speech: there are well-established correlations between the two realizations of (ing) and such extra-linguistic factors as the socio-economic status and gender of the speaker. The variable tends to be realized as [iŋ] by speakers of higher socio-economic status, by females and in formal situations.

Coulmas (2013, 48) further holds:

Many surveys have revealed a clear correlation with social stratification. The general pattern is that the portion of the reduce form -in' is highest in the lowest social group and lowest in the highest social group. Because of this, the -ing variant, which is preferred by the highest social group, is considered standard and more prestigious, while the -in variant is the vernacular form. The direction of the distribution is the same for both sexes in that male and female speakers of the lowest group choose -in more frequently than counterparts of the highest social group. However, when the data are broken down along gender line, an interesting difference appears.

In an earlier notion, which seems to sum up more than three decades of sociolinguistic research on the choice of phonetic variants, Labov (1990, 210) confirms that women seem to choose the standard forms or variants more often than men do, and that this inclination holds across all social strata, despite the fact that the variance between men and women is more noticeable in some than in others. Fasold (1990) stresses that using standard rather than vernacular forms allows women to sound less local and thus have a voice more suitable rejecting social expectation than place women in an inferior position to men.

As far as Al-Jaroushia speech community is concerned, whereas the former view of O'Grady et al. (1999) is unlikely to be comprehensive, the latter one seems quite comprehensive. This study of phonetic variations in Al-Jaroushia village suggests that sex is the most prevailing social correlate affecting people's speech. In fact, it, by and large, toes the line if compared with Coulmas (2013) , Labov (1990), and Fasold's (1990) studies: women tend to use more standard Arabic forms as they articulate more [k]'s more than men do.

The premise that sex is the most dominant social correlate is of crucial importance. In order to verify the effect of sex as an entity distinct from the other social variables[ii], the authors chose thirty eight respondents, twenty one of whom are almost uneducated, have a low-income level and are members of the same family. Whereas all males within the first family typically speak with [č], some females do not. To account for females fewer articulations of [č], the first thing the authors had to take into consideration was their age. The fact that those females whose age is over fifteen speak to the members of their family (such as their sisters, brothers and parents) with [č] has drawn the attention to the impact of the addressee on the choice of their speech trends. It turned out that females who are over fifteen speak with /k/ if their relationship to the addressee is not that close. Still neither age nor the addressee has depicted any particular effect on parents aged over forty five to mark their speech with /k/. To verify those conclusions, we had to examine the effect of sex on the members of the second family which ultimately produced the same results.

The fact that the eldest female (daughter) within each family is about thirty one shows age disparity between daughters and mothers who are over forty five. Perhaps this evidence is not

sufficient to firmly identify the age range of the females opting for /k/ in their speech under the influence of the addressee. This led the authors to look into other females' speech choices, especially, those whose age range is between thirty and forty one. It turned out that only those who are under forty speak with /k/ under the influence of the addressee. Therefore, it sounds rational to conclude that those females whose age ranges between sixteen and forty speak with /k/ under the influence of their addressee, displaying a clearly complex pattern of interaction between sex, on the one hand, and age and addressee, on the other.

The interaction of sex with the socio-economic status of respondents is one of a series of indications that sex is the most influential (or dominant) social variable. For example, whereas all educated females speak with /k/, educated males who speak with /k/ are only those who are affected by the type of education in the field of Arabic. This exhibits an interaction between education, sex, and the type of education.

Similarly, sex interacts with the income level of the speaker since high-income level females[iii] tend to articulate more /k/'s than high income level males do. Still, high-income level females' choice of phonetic variables is linked to the addressee's identity, socio-economic status and the closeness of their relationship to the addressee (as detailed below). This, roughly speaking, displays an interaction between income level, sex and addressee.

It should then be obvious that there are multifarious patterns of social stratification based on the interplay of more than one social correlate; and since sex is the social correlate which recurs and persists in each complex pattern, it is referred to as the most dominant or influential social variable impacting on the speakers' choice of phonetic variables in Al-Jaroushia speech community.

Compared to other studies same in nature, this has at least a similar, if not, a larger purpose. O'Grady et al. (1999), emphasises that with reference to the stratification of language, the social groups may be functions of the socio-economic status, sex, age, ethnic, or other characteristics of their members.

There is, however, some concern. As O'Grady et al. (1999, 543) put it, "while linguistic variation clearly does correlate with social variation, the result of particular studies may be based on invalid (or incomplete) assumptions made by the investigator who has failed to consider a full range of possible correlates".

To exemplify, Labov's (1972) assumption that the pronunciation of /r/ perfectly correlates with the socio-economic status of the salesperson at the high-ranked stores of New York City because they articulate more /r/'s than those at the lower-ranked ones could be incomplete. According to O'Grady et al.'s (1999) point of view, concentrating only on the socio-economic status of the salespersons, Labov (1972) is likely to be overlooking other range of social correlates (such as education, age and addressee) that would affect the salespersons' use of /r/ at the high-ranked stores.

Therefore, for the sake of precision, this study of Al-Jaroushia speech community takes into account the full range of all possible correlates affecting people's choice of phonetic variables, strongly suggesting that sex is the foremost social correlate. O'Grady et al. (1999) buttress the

notion that the sex of the speakers is a very crucial social correlate, indicating that the considerable attention paid to the socio-economic status in the past sociolinguistic studies 'obscured' the role of sex. O'Grady et al. (1999) add that sex, "may, in fact, be a more powerful underlying cause for the social differentiation of language than the socio-economic status" (p. 543).

In fact, this study of Al-Jaroushia speech community could also be viewed as a 'social network' analysis which pointedly enhances the view that as a result of different social factors at work  governing people's choice of phonetic variables, people of the same sex and socio-economic status do not necessarily speak in the same way (as detailed below). In this regard, there will be a comparison and contrast between this study, which examines the interaction of a range of different social correlates that yield complex patterns of social stratification of /k/ and [č] pronunciation, and that of Labov (1972), which demonstrates a simple pattern of social stratification of the /r/ pronunciation based merely on the socio-economic status of respondents.

### Research Methodology

In order to collect data from people, the authors recorded people's voices on CD recorder during spontaneous conversations. In order to test the assumption that sex is the prime social correlate which intersects with the speaker's socio-economic status, addressee and age to yield multifaceted patterns of social stratification, and, to prove that females use far fewer [č]'s than males in Al-Jaroushia speech community, data was collected from thirty eight respondents.

The hypothesis whether a particular speaker uses more /k/'s than [č]'s or vice-versa was successfully tested by the normal question mutually asked when two people meet, /keif ħælak/ (how are you?). The /k/ in /keif/ can also be phonetically realized as [č].

In addition, the authors usually asked each respondent two test questions whose answers have the sound /k/: what is Nablus famous for, and what is a cat mostly afraid of? The answers are respectively /knafi/ (a kind of sweet which Nablus city is famous for) and /kalb/ (dog), in both of which /k/ could also be realized (articulated) as [č].

Respondents were carefully chosen to carry out the objectives of this study. The authors visited and interviewed married couples and members of the same family. This cautious selection perfectly served the purpose of this study in its sociolinguist nature. For example, couples chosen to test the influence of the level of education of respondents on the way they speak have proven that wives rather than husbands are absolutely affected by education. Whereas the mere fact that a wife is educated underlies her choice to speak with /k/, the speech of husbands who could opt for /k/ is affected by their field of study, precisely, Arabic language. Four couples of respondents demonstrate this phenomenon.

To test the idea that the income level affects women more than men, two couples of high-income level were selected as an illustration. This notion proves, however, to be governed by the identity and status of the addressee. For a woman, if the addressee enjoys a high socio-economic status and she is not a close friend of the addressee, she speaks to them with /k/, otherwise with [č], unless she is an educated female. On the other hand, a high-income level man opts to speak with /k/ in three conditions: he is educated; he occupies a high-ranking professional position in

the society; and he is not a close friend to their addressee (as the example of the bank manager below shows).

With regard to addressee, in spite of the apparent recurrence of the fact that the addressee affects females' speech in particular, the authors have selected four uneducated respondents of a low-income level to illustrate the point that females are more influenced by the identity and status of the addressee. The four respondents belong to the same family: a mother, her son and his wife, and her daughter.

The fact that age affects females' choice of phonetic variables more than males' is mainly epitomized by two families in Al-Jaroushia speech community, each of which comprises at least four females whose age ranges between ten and thirty two, apart from the two males and the parents of each family: whereas age has no impact on whether men choose to speak with /k/ or with [č], younger females tend to pronounce more /k/'s rather than [č']'s. Three or four females whose age ranges between thirty one and forty illustrate this phenomenon. Needless to say, their response significantly depends on the identity and the socio-economic status of the addressee.

A final thing to note is that all names of respondents used in this study are not real and are only used to facilitate the process of referencing.

### Problems and limitations of the study

Data gathering was problematic; this study depends on data from particular respondents in order to correlate the way they speak to the different social factors. The fact that the addressee is a major social correlate which affects people's choice of phonetic variations makes data gathering a painstaking task. Therefore, interviewing particular respondents could barely serve the purpose this study seeks to achieve. Given this fact, the authors had to visit some respondents more than once, to say nothing of the inevitability of sometimes accompanying them to different places to investigate how they would articulate the sound /k/ in relation to the socio-economic status of their addressee. Whenever the influence of the addressee is evident on the respondents, women in particular, rather than men, opt to speak with /k/, otherwise with [č].

Distinguishing between the effects of the different social correlates is also another major problem. With exception of sex, there do not seem to be precise effects on a particular speaker specifically attributable to one particular social factor rather than other factors due to the interplay of the different social correlates which produce complex patterns of social stratification. Therefore, careful attention should be paid to interpreting respondents' choice of a particular phonetic variable in connection with their sex, socio-economic status (educational level and income level), addressee and age. For instance, when the authors look into the effect of the addressee on a respondent, one fact that helps the authors accurately detect the effect of the addressee on her/him is that the authors themselves have served as addressees due to the fact that the community they are studying considers them of high educational level. Furthermore, the process of differentiating between the effects of the different social variables is complicated. For example, if respondents are typically affected by their addressee, there should be a question about who is more affected: males or females? This study reveals that females are much more influenced than males, but which females are more affected: educated ones or uneducated ones, high-income level ones or low-income level ones, younger ones or older ones? Therefore, to

accurately verify the effect of income level rather than effect of the educational level, particularly on females, the authors had to select families where there are uneducated females, because the study shows that educated females speak with /k/ rather than [č]. Next, although sex is the major social correlate that interacts with all other social factors, it has to be reflected on separately, and accordingly investigated. Without envisaging sex as a discrete entity, it would not have transpired that age is the very social variable that affects sex in relation to the addressee. Age has apparently influenced younger females of low socio-economic status (uneducated and low-income level ones) to produce more /k/'s than [č]'s when they are talking to an addressee of high socio-economic status or to one who they are not familiar with.

Finally, males have shown that they are always far less influenced by social correlates than females. This could assign a marginal role to males in this study. Yet, the effect of social variables on males is explored, albeit with less focus.

**Data Analysis**
**Education and Choice of Phonetic Variables**
Despite all the problems and limitations illustrated above, this study explicitly reveals that educated females tend to use more [k]'s than educated males do. Most of the uneducated females who are over forty years old tend to articulate more [č]'s than [k]'s.  However, the field of education is a powerful factor that makes men pronounce [k]'s as frequently as educated women do. This implies that whereas the type of education is a powerful factor determining the frequency of [k] usage among educated males, the mere fact that a woman is educated underlies her choice of [k] rather than [č], irrespective of the field of education. It also explicitly signals age as a sociolinguistic correlate that particularly affects women rather than men (as detailed below): most of the uneducated women who are over forty speak with [č].[iv] Speakers one to eight illustrate all these facts in Al-Jaroushia speech community.

Respondent number one is Hekmat (all names mentioned  are not real but used to facilitate referencing), a teacher of Arabic.  Speaker number two is Afaf. She is a forty-five year old teacher of Mathematics, and wife of Hekmat. Speaker number three, Waleed, is a teacher of Arabic. Speaker number four, Hanan, forty one years old, is the wife of Waleed, uneducated however. Salam is informant number five. He is the holder of a BA in Chemistry. His wife, Maysam, thirty years old, is educated as well: she has a bachelor of Primary Education. Speaker number seven is Ghassan. He is not educated. Speaker number eight is Reem, twenty five years old, Ghassan's wife. She is not educated[v], either.

As Arabic is the first speaker's scope of study, he speaks with [k]. The authors could notice a lot of [k]'s in his speech in words such as [keif] (how), [knafi] (a type of sweet), and [kalb] (dog). In fact, this speaker has explicitly indicated, when we asked him "Why do you speak with [k] rather than [č]?" that he likes others to notice a tone of standard Arabic in his speech, as a teacher of Arabic. He says that the sound [č] does not exist in standard Arabic, so its use by a teacher of Arabic as a realization of main phoneme /k/ would seem awkward. On the other hand, his wife, Afaf, is a teacher of Mathematics. She speaks with [k]. She says [keif], [kunafa], and [kalb].

Speaker number three, Waleed, speaks with [k], as he is a teacher of Arabic. His justification for speaking with [k] is the same as Hekmat's. Waleed's wife, however, is uneducated. She speaks with [č] rather than [k]. She says [čeif], [čnafi] and [čalb]. Informant number five, Salam, has a bachelor of Chemistry. Though he is educated, he does not speak with [k], but with [č]. This provides clear evidence of how the type of education in the field of Arabic affects males' speech in Al-Jaroushia speech community: males whose field of study is Arabic speak with [k].

Speakers six and seven, Ghassan and his wife, Reem, are both uneducated. Ghassan speaks with [č]; he says [čeif], [čnafi] and [čalb]. His wife, Reem, twenty five years old, though uneducated, sometimes speaks with [k]: this depends on the socio-economic status of the addressee and how close (as a friend) she feels to her addressee. She, for example, speaks to us with [č], despite the fact that we are educated and she is not. This could be ascribed to the fact that we are close friends of hers. But she speaks to Adnan who is a rich merchant with [k]. Reem claims that her choice of phonetic variables mainly depends on how close to her the addressee is (as a friend), and then on the socio-economic status of the addressee: if the addressee is educated or of high-income level and he or she is not close to her, she speaks to him or to her with [k].

In fact, Reem seems also to provide evidence of how age affects females' choice of phonetic variables. For example, Waleed's wife, Hanan, forty one years old, often speaks with [č]. Unlike Reem (who is twenty three years old), Hanan's choice of phonetic variables is not governed by age, the socioeconomic status of the addressee or the closeness of relationship to the addressee.

### Income Level and Choice of Phonetic Variables

Income level is another socio-economic correlate affecting people's speech. Labov (1972) has carefully examined how this factor affects people's speech in New York City. He in fact provides an interesting example of the effect of 'social prestige' on a regional dialect, signalled in the New Yorkers' articulations of /r/.

Labov (1972)  holds "The so-called *r*-less dialect of New York City is so well-known that it is often the subject of humour"(p. 45), especially on the part of the New Yorkers who themselves speak it. It is commonly thought that speakers of the dialect completely lack /r/ in words such as *car*, *card*, *four*, *fourth*, and so on, but this is a misconception, as the intriguing study by the sociolinguist Labov (1972) reveals. Labov (1972) began with the hypothesis that New York City speakers vary in their pronunciation of /r/ according to their social status. Labov (1972)   interviewed salespeople at several New York City department stores that differed in price range and social prestige. Assuming that salespeople tend to "borrow prestige" from their customers, Labov (1972) predicted that the social stratification of customers at different department stores reflected a similar stratification of salespeople. These assumptions steered him to hypothesize that "salespeople in the highest-ranked store will have the highest value of (r); those in the middle-ranked store will have intermediate values of (r); and those in the lowest-ranked stores will show the lowest value" (p. 45). Labov (1972) chose three stores: Saks Fifth Avenue (high prestige), Macy's (middle level), and S. Klein (low prestige). He interviewed salespeople by asking them a question that would elicit the answer *fourth floor*: "Where are the women's shoes?"

The result seemed to fall in line with the hypothesis in an interesting way. For example, Labov (1972) finds that at Saks, thirty percent of the salespeople interviewed always pronounced both /r/'s in the test phrase, and an additional thirty two percent used some /r/'s; at Macy's twenty percent of the employees used all /r/'s, and an additional thirty one percent used some; and at S. Klein only four percent used all /r/'s, and an additional seventeen percent used some.

Logically speaking, Labov (1972) implies that most of the people entering the highest-ranked store are of high-income level; those entering the middle-ranked store are of middle-income level; and those entering the lowest-ranked store are of low-income level. Someone of low-income level does not usually get into the high-ranked store as they can't afford something there. This leads to the fact that only those of high-income level can enter the high-ranked store as it is only them who can afford things sold there. Labov (1972) assumes that the degree of prestige of those people is mirrored in the frequency of their pronunciation of [r] as they pronounce more [r]'s than other people do at the other two stores; and the salespersons at the high-ranked store borrow this prestige of [r] pronunciation from their customers whose income level is usually high.

The first thing to note about Labov's (1972) study is that he seeks to provide statistical figures substantiating the existence of 'social stratification' at the different department stores; for example, at the high-ranked store, Labov (1972) comes up with the result (figures) that thirty percent of the salespeople used ALL /r/'s in the test phrase, and thirty two percent used SOME. If the fact that they are of high socio-economic status accounts for the thirty percent of the salespeople's use of All /r/'s in the test phrase, what triggers the thirty two percent of the salespeople's use of SOME /r/'s in the test phrase? This study of Al-Jaroushia speech community pays considerable attention to such questions when testing the effect of each social correlate on speakers' choice of phonetic variables (as in testing the effect of the socio-economic status for example).

The small population in Al-Jaroushia speech community, about one thousand persons, and the fact that the authors live among the people of this society, make them aware of specific information such as the age and the educational background of each respondent. This makes the task of answering such questions considerably easier for us.

However, such questions could be difficult for Labov (1972) to handle due to the large number of respondents, and, more significantly, due to Labov's (1972) lack of personal information about his respondents. Labov (1972) has not lived in the community where he undertook his study, and neither could he have known specific facts such as the educational background and age of each informant. However, in addition to having particular and specific data about our respondents, for we live in Al-Jaroushia village, we have access to particular rather than casual respondents who are of interest to the purposes of our study.

Despite the fact that the authors do not usually have close relationships with everyone, it is not very unusual to visit them casually. This sort of visits is acceptable in this society. So we can easily interview particular people to see how they speak and even sometimes observe them at different times and places to test whether their articulations change in connection with other addressees apart from ourselves. The fact that *we are educated persons* is known to almost

everyone in this society and this seems to be in our favour as researchers. Therefore, as the people of this society view education as a source of high social status, we, as well as being interviewers, were able to take the advantage of playing the role of the addressee to verify whether or not respondents' choice of phonetic variables varies in relation to other addressees other than ourselves.

It is commonplace that the people of this society usually speak with [č] rather than with /k/. However, they (females in particular) are usually affected by their addressee's identity and social status. Although we ourselves as researchers speak with /k/, in order to identify the effect of our educational level on respondents, we had always to speak with [č] rather than /k/ to ensure that a particular respondent's shift to speak to us with /k/ rather than [č] is due to our high social status rather than thanks to the fact that we speak with /k/. In this context, it is not hard to assume that Labov (1972) was able to assess the effect of the educational background and age of respondents (females in particular) by considering his respondents' choice of phonetic variables (as will be shown below). This should seem quite reasonable if we take into account that most of Labov's (1972) respondents are female sales assistants. Contrary to Labov's (1972) findings, this study on Al-Jaroushia speech community shows that it is unlikely to take for granted that high-income level people always speak with [k] to manifest prestige. This study considers two types of high-income level people: educated people and uneducated people. Educated people include males and females. This study accurately depicts that uneducated males whose income level is high never speak with [k] to imply social prestige. However, educated males of high-ranking occupational positions as well as uneducated females whose income level is high use [k] to signal social prestige. Still, this fact entirely depends on the addressee's identity and socio-economic status. If the addressee is of high social status and has no close relationship to the speaker, speakers (females in particular) talk to their addressee with [k]. This lends more credibility to assumption that the sex (of the speaker) and the addressee interact with the income level of the speaker to provide evidence that sex, as the most influential social correlate, and the addressee, as a less influential one, significantly contribute to governing people's choice of phonetic variables in Al-Jaroushia speech community. The following respondents illustrate this fact:

Informant number nine is Hazem, a bank manager. His wife, Jihad, speaker number ten, is not educated but of high socio-economic status. When we visited Hazen at the bank he manages, Hazem did not speak to us with [k] to express prestige in his speech, as a bank manager whose income level is very high. He, however, seemed to opt for [k] when talking to the bank staff as an expression of prestige in his speech. This fact was apparently demonstrated in the word [kam] (how much) he said to one of his employees.

His wife, on the other hand, as a wife of a bank manager, speaks with [k] whenever she talks to educated people or those whose income level is high, especially, if they are not close to her. When she speaks to us, she speaks with [k]; she articulates some words with [k], as in [keif], [knafi] and [kalb]. However, in the same setting, when she speaks to her uneducated sister-in-law whose income level is not high, she speaks with [č] as in [čeif] and [čamer] (olive pickle). But she speaks with [k] to Adnan who is a rich merchant: she says [keif]. The question arising here is *why does Hazem talk to his employees with [k] and to* us *with [č]*? It does not seem rational to

assume that our level of education causes him to speak to us with [k]?  Holmes's (1992) answer to this question seems to cut the heart of the matter.

Holmes (1992, 247) holds that the addressees and their relationship to the speaker constitute effective factors if not the most crucial ones to the choice of phonetic variables. And how well you know someone or how close you feel to them is one important dimension of social relationships. "The better you know someone, the more casual and relaxed the speech style you will use to them."

In fact, one of us is Hazem's cousin, a close friend of his, and, we and he almost enjoy the same level of education. He, therefore, finds no point in speaking to us with [k]. It is likely that his use of [č] when speaking to us is a representation of a close relationship.

Speakers number eleven and twelve, Adnan, and his wife, Mahasen, are another interesting example of how sex interacts with the addressee's income level and social status to affect a speaker's speech. Whereas Hazem is a bank manager, Adnan is a well-known and uneducated merchant. Adnan's wife is an uneducated lady. She is considered as one of those who enjoy high status because of her husband's high income level.[vi]

Though Adnan's income level is very high, he never speaks to anyone with [k] to show prestige in his speech. And quite contrary to Hazem, who uses [k] when addressing his bank staff to show prestige in his speech and to maintain a social distance between him and his staff, Adnan never speaks with [k] to his employees. And when talking to us, Adnan uses [č] as in the word [čeif], [čnafi] and [čalb]. He never seeks to maintain some distance between himself and his employees. He never shows any phonetic variation when talking to his employees. Therefore, he keeps on talking to them with [č].When he was talking to one of his employees, we managed to hear pronunciations with [č] in words such as in [čeif] (how), [tu:lčarem] (name of a city), and [čamal] (has been completed). Surprisingly enough, Adnan does not speak with [k] even to his peers. Adnan once invited us for dinner. He invited one of his peers as well to the same dinner. His peer's name is Hakeem. Adnan keeps on speaking to Hakeem with [č] rather than [k] despite the fact that Hakeem speaks with [k]. On the contrary, Adnan's wife, Mahasen, talks to her husband's peer, Hakeem, with [k]. This is clear in words such as [keif] and [kursi] (chair).When Mahasen talks to her daughter's tutor, she speaks with [k],too. However, when she talks to us, she speaks with [č].  The first point to make here is that Adnan, as an uneducated male of high-income level, is never influenced enough by the addressee to adapt his speech to his addressee even though his addressee speaks with [k]. His wife, however, is obviously influenced by her addressee as to whether or not they are educated, of high-income level or speak with [k]; especially that Mahasen is not close (as a friend) to her addressee. We have mentioned above that Mahasen talks to us with [k]. The fact that we are as educated as her daughter's doctor has not affected her to speak to us with [k]. She says to us [čeif]. Is there any phonetic discrepancy?

The considerable attention O'Grady et al (1999, 543) pay to 'social network analysis should provide a concrete explanation to such peculiarities. O'Grady et al. (1999, 543)  maintain: A sociolinguist using the social network approach does not rely on large random sampling of population, but, rather, examines first hand from the perspective of participant-observer    the language use of a pre-existing social group. Just as more traditional sociolinguists may assume

that social stratification exists and that this has significance for the interpretation of data, researchers using the social network approach also make certain assumptions. These researchers attach importance to the nature of the relationship (and resulting interactions) of   a  speaker  and interpret linguistic variation in terms of the kinds and densities of   relationships   the   individual enjoys in various groups.

This is valid evidence that even within the same social network, there are linguistic phonetic variations. The formal and informal usage of some phonetic variables depends on the density of the network, which is related to the potential communication among members of the network and can be 'closeknit' or 'looseknit'.

Romaine (1994, 81) renders the concept of social network clearer maintaining "the concept of social network takes into account different socializing habits of individuals and their degree of involvement in the local community." Romaine (1994) adds that the use of network as an analytical construct does not require grouping individuals into social classes as "networks may cut across social class boundaries and they may also reveal differences within social classes" (p. 81-2).

With reference to O'Grady et al.'s (1999) and Romaine's (1994) framework of social network analysis, this study is likely to be viewed as a social network analysis of Al-Jaroushia speech community. In connection with Al-Jaroushia Speech community, this framework demonstrates that there is a *dominant* rather than an *absolute* social variables which govern people's choice of phonetic variables within a given social class. The social network analysis allows for perfect analyses of why a particular speaker within a given social class speaks contrarily to the way in which he or she is expected to speak. Whereas the social network analysis framework seems to be adequate to identify the complex patterns of social stratification affecting people's choice of phonetic variables in smaller speech communities (such as Al-Jaroushia speech community), Labov's (1972) framework of 'social stratification, which aims to identify simple patterns of social stratification that are a result of single social correlate (such as the socio-economic one) in larger speech communities (such as New York city), is unlikely to be tolerable enough to identify and account for the complex patterns of social stratification that result from the interaction of more than one social correlate.

For example, as far as Al-Jaroushia speech community is concerned, social network analysis demonstrates that sex is the dominant rather than the absolute social correlate that interacts with the other social factors such as the socio-economic status of speakers to show that educated or high-income level females articulate more /k/'s than males do. The social network analysis framework seems to debunk the notion that the level of education is quite a weak factor affecting peoples' choice of phonetic variables if compared to the impact of sex on educated speakers in Al-Jaroushia speech community; it demonstrates that while all educated female respondents pronounce all /k/'s in the test questions, educated males who speak with /k/ are only those whose field of study is Arabic. Therefore, not only does the social network analysis demonstrate the fact that sex interacts with the educational level of the speakers revealing that all educated females speak with /k/, but it also displays that it is the scope of education rather than the level of education which affects males' speech making them to opt for /k/.

Similarly, whereas it is assumed that all high-income level respondents speak with /k/, the social network analysis framework exhibits facts to the contrary; it suggests that high-income level respondents are affected by sex since female respondents of high-income level tend to pronounce more /k/'s than male ones do. However, the social network analysis discloses the fact that whether females of high-income level speak with /k/ or with [č] depending on the addressee as social correlate is unlikely to affect all male speakers of high-income level.

For example, Adnan and his wife, Mahasen, belong to the same social network, high-income level class. They, however, do not speak in the same way. Adnan, as a rich and uneducated male merchant, is never affected by his addressees' socio-economic status; but his wife, as an uneducated female belonging to a high-income level class, is influenced. Nevertheless, this depends on whether she and the addressee form a 'closeknit' or a 'looseknit' network. Mahasen and the researchers form a closeknit network. Therefore, she speaks to us with [č]. In contrast, Mahasen and her husband's peer, Hakeem, as well as her daughter's doctor constitute a looseknit network. Therefore, she speaks to them both with [k].

Similarly, Hazem and the researchers (ourselves) establish a closeknit network as cousins and friends. But his wife, Jihad, and the researchers form a 'looseknit network' as we are neither cousins nor close friends. She, therefore, speaks to us with [k]. Jihad and her sister-in-law set up a closeknit network, so Jihad speaks to her with [č]. This is another obvious evidence of how there are phonetic variations within the same social class.

**Addressee and Choice of Phonetic Variables**
Before talking about the addressee as a social correlate contributing effectively to determining the choice of phonetic variables in Al-Jaroushia speech community, it stands to our reason as both researchers and interviewers to clarify how our choice of phonetic variables can be influenced by our interviewees.

For example Peter Trudgill (1988), interviewing people in Norwich, found that his own speech shifted towards that of the people he was interviewing. In different interviews, the number of glottal stops he used instead of [t] in words like *better* and *bet* reflected accurately the level of glottal stop usage in the speech of his interviewee. Interviewing a lower-class person who used one hundred per cent glottal stops in these contexts, Trudgill (1998) used ninety eight percent of the possible contexts. But when he interviewed a person from a higher social group whose glottal stop level of usage was only twenty five percent, his own level dropped to thirty percent.

It is self-evident that Trudgill (1988) accommodates his own choice of phonetic variables to his interviewees'. In this way, Trudgill (1988) tries to elicit as many natural choices of phonetic variables as possible from his interviewees; Trudgill (1988) avoids making his interviewees feel that they are being monitored, adapting his own speech to theirs.

There are two main differences between this study we have conducted and the studies of Labov (1972; 1999) and Trudgill (1988) . Whereas Labov and Trudgill are not well-known to every person in the societies where they have undertaken their studies, we are almost to be well-known to our respondents. The second crucial point is that while Labov (1972; 1999) and

Trudgill (1998) are trying to account for the typical choice of social variables, we are trying to account for the exceptional: Labov examines the existence of a kind of social stratification in New York City. For example, his study yields that thirty percent of the employees at the Saks, a high-ranked store, used all /r/'s in the test phrase, and an additional thirty two percent used some. Labov (1972) finds that it is no surprise that thirty percent at this store used all /r/'s. This percentage is higher than the percentages found in similar surveys conducted at the other two stores. This signals a common social stratification, that the sound /r/ used at the Saks represents high prestige which employees borrowed from customers. This seems quite reasonable.

But how can Labov (1972) account for the violation of the norm of /r/ use at this store? What governs the exceptional fact that an additional thirty two percent used some /r/'s? An accurate answer to this question requires exact and relevant information about the respondents and their addressee's identity and socio-economic status, such as age and the socio-economic background of each respondent. It may also require the same relevant information about the addressee.

Therefore, the likelihood that we might account for the exceptional is higher than Labov's (1972; 1999) and Trudgill's (1998), as we belong to the society where we have conducted our study. In addition, the number of people in Al-Jaroushia village is very small, so a small number of respondents may authentically represent all patterns of phonetic shifts and the social correlates governing them.

Back to the question of the status and identity of the addressee, we can confidently establish a strong link between the addressee as a social correlate and the use of [k] and [č] as phonetic variables of the phoneme /k/. Al-Jaroushia speech community reveals an intricate interplay between sex and addressee. Whereas males in general are not affected by their addressee, females are; females who are usually under forty tend to speak with [k] rather than [č] if they are influenced by the addressee. This again depends on the income level and the educational level of the addressee. If the addressee is educated or of high-income level, females in particular speak with [k] rather than with [č] (accommodating their speech to that of their addressee's). Besides, it relies on whether the speaker and the addressee set up a 'closeknit' or a 'looseknit' network: if they are close friends, speaking with [k] is likely to be needless act for the speaker.

It is noteworthy that if the speaker and the addressee are relatives, this does not mean that they are close friends or they establish a 'closeknit' network. If a relative is educated, of a high-income level or not a close friend, females in particular tend to switch to [k].

This does not, however, mean that the degree of kinship is not important; a female does not make a phonetic shift when she is talking to her mother, father, sister, brother, sister-in-law or any of those with whom she establishes a closeknit network within the same family. If a female, however, talks to her cousin who is educated or of high-income level and who is not a close friend, she speaks to her cousin with [k] rather than [č]. "The better you know someone, the more casual and relaxed the speech style you will use in speaking to them" (Holmes 1992, 247). Speakers thirteen to sixteen represent this fact. They all belong to one family (one of the researcher's uncle's family) and live in one house. When they invited us to dinner, we

intentionally asked them separately about the name of a dish they prepared; the name of this dish contains the sound /k/, which could either be realized as [k] or as [č], [ʕakku:b]. It could also be realized as [ʕačču:b]. We could observe phonetic shifts, especially in the females' articulation.

Iman, speaker number thirteen, is a twenty-four year old and uneducated lady. She speaks to us with [k] as in [keif] and [ʕakku:b] (a name of a dish). Iman and the researchers are not close friends though we are cousins. We do not really make up a closeknit network due to the educational disparity between us and her. Thus, she speaks to us with [k] assuming she will deliver prestige-flavoured articulations that would make up for the fact that she is uneducated. Nonetheless, she speaks to her sister-in-law with [č]. She says [ʃo:či] (fork).

Speaker number fifteen, Reema, is Bashshar's sister. She is thirty years old. She speaks to us with [k], but she speaks to her sister-in-law (Iman) with [č]. When we asked her why she speaks with [k], she replied that [k] is a sound that exists in the Holy Quran, but [č] does not. Here she justifies her use of [k] from a religious point of view. Yet, this justification does not seem plausible as she speaks to her sister-in-law with [č]. Whereas she says to us [keif], she says to her sister-in-law [čeif] and [malič] (what is wrong with you?).

Holmes (1992) indicates "The women's speech reflects their social aspirations" (p. 231). For example, Jonathan Holmquist (1985) points out that in Ucieda, a small village in Spain, men have been forced to look outside the village to find wives. Many of the village women will not marry the 'local dairy' farmers because they do not want to remain in the farming villages. Holmquist (1985) tells also that the prospect of being stuck at home, as their mothers were, with the cows and the children simply is not very attractive.

Similarly, Al-Jaroushia village females, especially those of low socio-economic status seek a better life away from farming, or staying at home to tend their children. They find speaking with [k] as a way of expressing prestige, so a woman may attract an educated or a high-income level man who may marry her and offer a lifestyle which is better than the traditional lifestyle of her mother.

Speaker number sixteen, Khadra, sixty five years old, is Reema's and Bashshar's mother. She is never affected by any addressee to speak with [k]. She always speaks with [č]. She says [ʕačču:b] and [čeif]. This speaker could be representative of female speakers who are above forty and usually speak with [č].

### Sex and Choice of Phonetic Variables
With regard to sociolinguistic variables and sex, Romaine (1994, 79) stresses a link between sociolinguistic variables and sex. She states:

A number of sociolinguistic studies have found that women tend to use higher-status variants more frequently than men. This pattern was found, for example, with both post-vocalic /r/ and (ing).

Shnukal, in her (1978) Cessnock study, which she undertook in Australia, finds that males are more likely to use the /in/ (less standard) pronunciation than women are. Another

Australian study conducted by Shopen (1978) in Canberra yields the same result: women use more (ing)'s than men do.

Being in line with the results of the above mentioned studies, Al-Jaroushia speech community represents an obvious trend towards the use of more standard Arabic forms since women are leading a linguistic change towards more standardised Arabic articulations. Women's use of [k] is far more frequent than men's due to the upward use of [k] by the young female generation. It should, however, be indicated that age is a significant factor interacting with sex to determine females' frequency of [k] articulations in Al-Jaroushia speech community.

Meanwhile, we need to highlight the notion that immature females, whose age is below sixteen, speak with [č] rather than [k]. They might be unaware of the social significance of [k] usage to signal prestige. This could also be an indication that those females are still under the influence of their parents' traditional speech patterns, who speak with[č]. However, such awareness seems to be developing among females whose age, roughly speaking, ranges between sixteen and forty, as they use more [k]'s than [č]'s. This again depends on the addressee as we have mentioned above. For instance, older females, who are forty or over, use fewer [k]'s provided they are neither educated nor of high-income level. When those females are neither educated nor of high-income level, their use of [k] becomes addressee-incurred, as mentioned above.

It is likely that the fact that Al-Jaroushia speech community is conservative one affects younger females rather than older ones. The current contact younger females have with city people has led to a linguistic change. Younger females have started to simulate city people in their speech, especially, when speaking with [k], since the people of Al-Jaroushia consider [k] as a characteristic of city people's speech.

This seems quite plausible. One of the factors that may more attract young men, especially educated and high-income level ones, to city women than to village ones is that city women are characterized by their prestigious dictions. Most of the men in this village admit that they seek prestige in women's speech. Younger females in Al-Jaroushia seem to have become conscious of this fact, as most of the wives of majority of men whose socio-economic status is high are likely to be from the city. Therefore, it sounds that younger females opt for [k] in their speech as a marker of prestige to attract males. It could, nonetheless, be argued that younger women who are already married sometimes speak with [k], depending on the status of the addressee. If they are already married, should there be any need for them to speak with [k] to attract men?

Fatima, a young married woman in her late twenties from Al-Jaroushia, claims that married women should be more inclined to use more [k]'s than [č]'s. She tells us that women who live in a village should make men feel that village women have as much prestige in their speech as city women. She indicates that if a man does not feel so, he might take it as a justification to have a city woman for a second wife.[vii]Therefore, Fatima finds that showing prestige in speech before a husband's educated or high-income level friends would satisfy a man's pride in his wife.

Hazem, the bank manager, emphasizes this fact. He points out that he exhorts his wife to seek prestige in her vocalizations since this could enhance intimacy. Not only does he indicate that having a wife whose speech is prestigious could eliminate the possibility of considering city women for a second marriage, but he also stresses that prestige in women's speech is a sign of femininity.

Finegan et al. (1992) state that gender differences are not to be simply equated with sex differences. Rather, what is important is the cultural fact of gender: what it means to be female in a particular society, what it means to be male. Finegan et al. (1992, 378) posit, "We are aware of gender differences as marked by hair length, clothing, jewellery use and traditional household duties, just to mention a few. It should not be at all surprising, then, that language reflects the important social identity of one's gender role."

**Conclusion**
This study reveals that sex is the most influential social correlate interacting with the socio-economic status (type and level of education and income level) and the addressee to determine the choice of phonetic variables; age is the factor which interacts reciprocally with sex to govern females' choice of phonetic variables. There is no clear evidence of one social factor acting independently to exhibit clear-cut social stratification. It could however be inferred that sex is the most influential factor intermingling with all other social factors to determine the choice of phonetic variables in Al-Jaroushia speech community; generally speaking, women tend to use far more [k]'s (standard form) than men do. Yet, men articulate far more [č]'s (non-standard form of /k/) than women do. Although women's use of [č] depends most of the times on the interaction of sex with other social variables, it could firmly be concluded that females are leading a linguistic, phonetic change towards standard Arabic in Al-Jaroushia speech community.

Despite the fact that the status and identity of the addressee is a powerful social correlate in Al-Jaroushia speech community, sex is likely to be the major and the strongest social correlate. It is the major component of each complex pattern of 'social stratification' in Al-Jaroushia speech community as, on the whole, females tend to articulate far more /k/'s than men who, on the other hand, produce far more [č]'s than females do.

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**Notes**

[i] The addressee is crucially decisive of the degree of formality with which a particular person opts for to address others according to their identity and socio-economic status.

[ii] For further details, see 'Sex and Choice of Phonetic Variables' below.

[iii] Those females are uneducated; this choice tests the effect of income level rather than the effect of education on their choice of phonetic variables.

[iv] This fact will be discussed in detail when talking about the interaction of age with sex.

[v] The notion of 'educated' refers to fact that a particular speaker is a holder at least of a diploma in any field of study.

[vi] Uneducated women whose husbands are rich don't usually have jobs in Al-Jaroushia village; they are housewives. If a woman's husband's income level is very high, the wife's income is described very high, too. A husband's status reflects itself positively on his wife.

[vii] In Islam, it is possible for a man to be married to four women at the same time.

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**Appendix**
**Table of Respondents**

| Respondent | Sex | Age | Socio-economic Status | Addressee |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1. Hekmet | male | 53 | high as educated | ourselves |
| 2. Afaf | female | 45 | high as educated | ourselves |
| 3. Waleed | male | 47 | high as educated | ourselves |

| 4. Hanan | female | 41 | low not educated nor rich | ourselves |
| 5. Salam | male | 37 | high social status as educated | ourselves |
| 6. Maysam | female | 30 | high social status as educated | ourselves |
| 7. Ghassan | male | 33 | low as not educated nor rich | ourselves |
| 8. Reem | female | 25 | low as not educated nor rich | ourselves & Adnan |
| 9. Adnan | male | 45 | high as rich but not educated | ourselves |
| 10. Mahasen | female | 39 | high as rich but not educated | ourselves & a tutor |
| 11. Hazem | male | 36 | high as rich and educated | ourselves & an employee |
| 12. Jihad | female | 30 | high as rich but not educated | ourselves & her sister in law |
| 13. Iman | male | 24 | low as not educated nor rich | ourselves &Reema |
| 14. Bashshar | male | 33 | low as not educated nor rich | ourselves & city people |
| 15. Reema | female | 30 | low as not educated nor rich | ourselves &Iman |
| 16. Khadra | female | 65 | low as not educated nor rich | ourselves |
| 17. Maram | female | 7 | low as not educated nor rich | ourselves |
| 18. Duha | female | 14 | low as not educated nor rich | ourselves |
| 19. Asma | female | 16 | low as not educated nor rich | ourselves & Abed |
| 20. Sawsan | female | 23 | low as not educated nor rich | ourselves & her mother |
| 21. Fatima | female | 27 | low as not educated nor rich | ourselves |
| 22. Ibraheem | male | 6 | low as not educated nor rich | ourselves & Adnan |
| 23. Abed | male | 21 | low as not educated nor rich | ourselves & Adnan |
| 24. Tamam | female | 45 | low as not educated nor rich | ourselves & Mohammad |

| | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 25. Mohammad | male | 48 | low as not educated nor rich | ourselves |
| 26. Marwa | female | 8 | low as not educated nor rich | ourselves |
| 27. Sondos | female | 14 | low as not educated nor rich | ourselves |
| 28. Jamila | female | 16 | low as not educated nor rich | ourselves |
| 29. Maha | female | 31 | low as not educated nor rich | ourselves |
| 30. Mu'men | male | 12 | low as not educated nor rich | ourselves |
| 31. Zaid | male | 18 | low as not educated nor rich | ourselves |
| 33. Yusra | female | 50 | low as not educated nor rich | ourselves |
| 34. Saleh | male | 55 | low as not educated nor rich | ourselves |
| 35. Intisar | female | 33 | low as not educated nor rich | ourselves , Fatin&Layla |
| 36. Fatin | female | 39 | low as not educated nor rich | ourselves , Layla& Intisar |
| 37. Layla | female | 31 | low as not educated nor rich | ourselves , Fatin& Intisar |
| 38. Hanan | female | 41 | low as not educated nor rich | ourselves |