THE IMPACT OF SEX, ORIGIN, AND ATTITUDE ON THE PHONOLOGICAL ACCOMMODATION AMONG UNIVERSITY STUDENTS IN IRBID

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by

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LIST OF PHONETIC SYMBOLS

Arabic Letter	IPA Symbol	Sound Description
أ	ʔ	Voiced glottal stop
ب	b	Voiced bilabial stop
ت	t	Voiceless dento-alveolar stop
ث	Θ	Voiceless interdental fricative
ج	dʒ	Voiced post-alveolar fricative
ح	ħ	Voiceless pharyngeal fricative
خ	x	Voiceless velar fricative
د	d	Voiced dento-alveolar plosive
ذ	ð	Voiced interdental fricative
ر	r	Voiced alveolar trill
ز	z	Voiced alveolar fricative
س	s	Voiceless dental fricative
ش	ʃ	Voiceless alveo-palatal fricative
ص	ṣ	Voiceless emphatic alveolar fricative
ض	ḍ D	Voiceless emphatic dento-alveolar stop
ط	ṭ	Voiceless emphatic interdental fricative
ظ	ðˀ	Voiced emphatic interdental fricative
ع	ʕ	Voiced pharyngeal fricative
غ	ɣ	Voiced velar fricative
ف	f	Voiceless labio-dental fricative
ق	Q q	Voiceless uvular stop
ك	k	Voiceless velar stop
ل	l	Voiced dental lateral
م	m	Voiced bilabial nasal
ن	n	Voiced alveolar nasal
ه	h	Voiceless glottal fricative
و	w	Voiced labio-velar glide
ي	j	Voiced palatal glide

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

CAT	Communication Accommodation Theory
SAT.	Similarity Attraction Theory
SIT.	Social Identity Theory
AT	Attraction Theory
MSA	Modern Standard Arabic
JA	Jordanian Arabic
CA	Classical Arabic
S	Subject
V	Verb
JUST	Jordan University of Science and Technology
JP	Jordanians of Palestinian origin
MJ	Male Jordanians
FJ	Female Jordanians
MP	Male Palestinians
FP	Female Palestinians

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KESAN JANTINA, ASAL USUL DAN SIKAP TERHADAP AKOMODASI FONOLOGI DALAM KALANGAN PELAJAR UNIVERSITI DI IRBID

ABSTRAK

Penyesuaian fonologi, atau konvergensi fonologi, menggambarkan fenomena di mana individu menyesuaikan gaya pertuturan mereka untuk lebih sejajar dengan pertuturan pasangan bicara mereka. Tesis ini meneliti kesan tiga pemboleh ubah sosial iaitu asal usul, jantina, dan sikap terhadap penyesuaian fonologi menggunakan pemboleh ubah fonologi (q), (D), (Θ), dan (ð) sebagai indikator keterlihatan untuk penilaian ini. Seramai enam puluh orang responden telah dipilih untuk menggunakan kaedah persampelan kuota dan data dikumpulkan melalui soal selidik berstruktur yang dibahagikan kepada empat bahagian iaitu demografi, pengenalan diri, penggunaan pemboleh ubah fonologi, dan sikap. Selain itu, temubual mendalam telah dijalankan dengan dua belas orang responden, yang dibahagikan sama rata berdasarkan asal usul dan jantina. Data daripada soal selidik dan temubual dianalisis secara deskriptif, manakala bahagian sikap soal selidik menggunakan skala likert yang menilai dari sangat bersetuju (1) hingga sangat tidak bersetuju (5). Penemuan menunjukkan corak konvergensi fonologi yang berbeza. Wanita dari latar belakang Palestin luar bandar menunjukkan konvergensi adalah kepada bentuk pertuturan bandar, manakala rakan Horani mereka menunjukkan konvergensi separa kepada variasi bandar. Lelaki dari latar belakang Palestin luar bandar cenderung mengadopsi varian tempatan Horani bagi pemboleh ubah (Q), sambil mengekalkan konservatif dengan pemboleh ubah fonologi yang lain. Kajian juga mencatat bahawa standardisasi [q] bergantung pada sifat perkataan atau formaliti konteks pertuturan. Selain itu, didapati bahawa varian

Palestin luar bandar [k] hampir pupus dalam kalangan penutur asalnya. Walau bagaimanapun, untuk pemboleh ubah yang lain, varian vernakular masih berterusan dalam kalangan lelaki dari kedua-dua asal usul, manakala wanita menunjukkan tahap konvergensi yang berbeza kepada bentuk bandar kerana dipengaruhi oleh asal usul penutur. Penyelidikan ini adalah berpandukan Teori Penyesuaian Komunikasi (CAT) di mana ia mencadangkan teknik penyesuaian fonologi merentas kumpulan asal usul dan jantina boleh dikaitkan dengan hubungan sosio-sejarah dan norma sosial yang sedia ada. Kajian menekankan bahawa penyesuaian mesti berlaku pada tahap optimum, seperti yang ditentukan oleh norma sosial dan kecekapan dalam variasi alternative bagi mengelakkan persepsi negatif seperti kehilangan identiti. Kajian ini menekankan kepentingan kesedaran budaya dan kecekapan fonologi dalam menentukan tahap konvergensi yang sesuai. Penyelidikan memberi pandangan yang berharga dan berpotensi memberi pendekatan baru bagi meneroka variasi bahasa.

THE IMPACT OF SEX, ORIGIN, AND ATTITUDE ON THE PHONOLOGICAL ACCOMMODATION AMONG UNIVERSITY STUDENTS IN IRBID

ABSTRACT

Phonological accommodation, or phonological convergence, describes the phenomenon where individuals adjust their speech styles to align more closely with their interlocutor's speech. This thesis delves into the impact of three social variables—origin, sex, and attitudes—on phonological accommodation, using the phonological variables (q), (D), (Θ), and (ð) as indicators of salience to examine this phenomenon. A total of 60 participants were selected using a quota sampling method, and data was gathered through a structured questionnaire that is divided into four sections: demographic, identification, phonological variables use, and attitude. and in-depth interviews with twelve respondents, evenly distributed by origin and sex. The questionnaire and interview data were analyzed descriptively, while the attitude section of the questionnaire used Likert scale that rates from strongly agree (1) to strongly disagree (5). The findings revealed distinct patterns of phonological convergence. Females from rural Palestinian backgrounds showed complete convergence to the urban speech form, whereas their Horani counterparts exhibited partial convergence to the urban variety. Males from rural Palestinian backgrounds tended to adopt the Horani local variant of the (Q) variable, while remaining conservative with the other phonological variables. The study also noted that the standardization of [q] depended on the word's nature or the speech context's formality. Moreover, it was observed that the rural Palestinian variant [k] was nearly extinct

among its native speakers. However, for other variables, the vernacular variants persisted among males from both origins, while females displayed varying degrees of convergence to urban forms, influenced by the speaker's origin. This research, guided by the Communication Accommodation Theory (CAT), suggests that phonological accommodation across origin and sex groups can be attributed to socio-historical relationships and prevailing social norms. It emphasizes that accommodation must occur at an optimal level, as defined by social norms and the competency in the alternate variety, to avoid negative perceptions like identity loss. The study underscores the importance of cultural awareness and phonological competency in determining the appropriate extent of convergence. This investigation offers valuable insights and potentially pioneers a novel approach to exploring language variation.

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Introduction

This study posits that the adaptation of speech styles among Jordanian university students towards their interlocutors, particularly in adopting the communication mode prevalent in a multidialectal society where over three distinct dialects coexist within the same speech community, remains an underexplored aspect of phonological behavior. The scarcity of academic research in this area may stem from a lack of theoretical foundation or a limited appreciation for the significance of studying a critical component of communication, wherein individuals endeavor to align their speech style with that of their conversational partners. This research aims to address a portion of this gap. Consequently, it focuses on assessing the reliability and validity of student accommodation preferences in relation to social factors such as sex and the speaker's origin.

Accommodation refers to the process through which a speaker modifies their speech to become more similar to that of another speaker. This modification can manifest across various dimensions, including content, accent, speech rate, and pausing, as identified by Giles and Smith (1979). Additionally, changes can occur at the syntactic level (Pickering & Ferreira, 2008) and the phonetic level (Babel & Bulatov, 2012). This thesis investigates how Jordanian university students phonetically accommodate one another during conversations, considering factors such as sex and origin, as well as the influence of their attitudes on accommodation. This chapter outlines the thesis by presenting its objectives and structure.

1.2 The Locale Background

This section offers a background that encompasses the city's geography, population, and history. This foundation will facilitate an understanding of the context related to the city's expansion and its influence on the linguistic behavior of its residents, reflecting the diverse composition of the city's population.

1.2.1 Geographical Background

Irbid city, situated in the far northwest of Jordan and approximately 50 miles north of Amman, finds its location within the Yarmouk River basin, roughly 15 kilometers north of the urban center (Al-Khatib, 1988). The city occupies a position on the highland plateau and is part of the Horan Plains, stretching from north of Salt to south of Damascus (Al-Wer, 2004). The fertility of the Horan Plains, recognized for their role as the Roman Empire's granary before the Muslim armies' conquest, underscores the region's agricultural significance (Tarawneh & Naamneh, 2011). Spanning an area of about 325 square kilometers, as reported by the General Statistics Department, Irbid lies in proximity to the Palestinian border to the west and the Syrian border to the north. Its strategic location has historically established Irbid as a critical trade center for Jordan and the surrounding region (Jawarneh, 2021). Serving as a vital crossroads, Irbid offered routes to Palestine in the west, Syria, Lebanon, and Turkey in the north, Iraq in the east, and the Arab Peninsula in the south, further distinguishing itself as a caravan station on the route from Cairo to Damascus (Jawarneh, 2021).

Regarding its borders, the city is encircled by the governorates of Ajloun, Jerash, and Balqa to the south, and by the Mafraq Governorate to the east (Irbid Spatial Profile, 2022). The old city, established atop a Roman artificial hill known as Al Tall,

stands as one of the most significant historical landmarks in the city center (Al-Khatib, 1988). Due to rapid urbanization and population displacement stemming from political unrest, the city has grown from a modest village into Jordan's second-largest city (Tarawneh & Naamneh, 2011). Its expansion reached from the vicinity of Al Tall to include the western and northern fields (Tarawneh & Naamneh, 2011). Figure 1.2 illustrates the city's extensive growth.

Figure 1.1 Irbid location in Jordan

Adapted from https://www.worldmap1.com/map/jordan/irbid/Irbid%20map.gif/

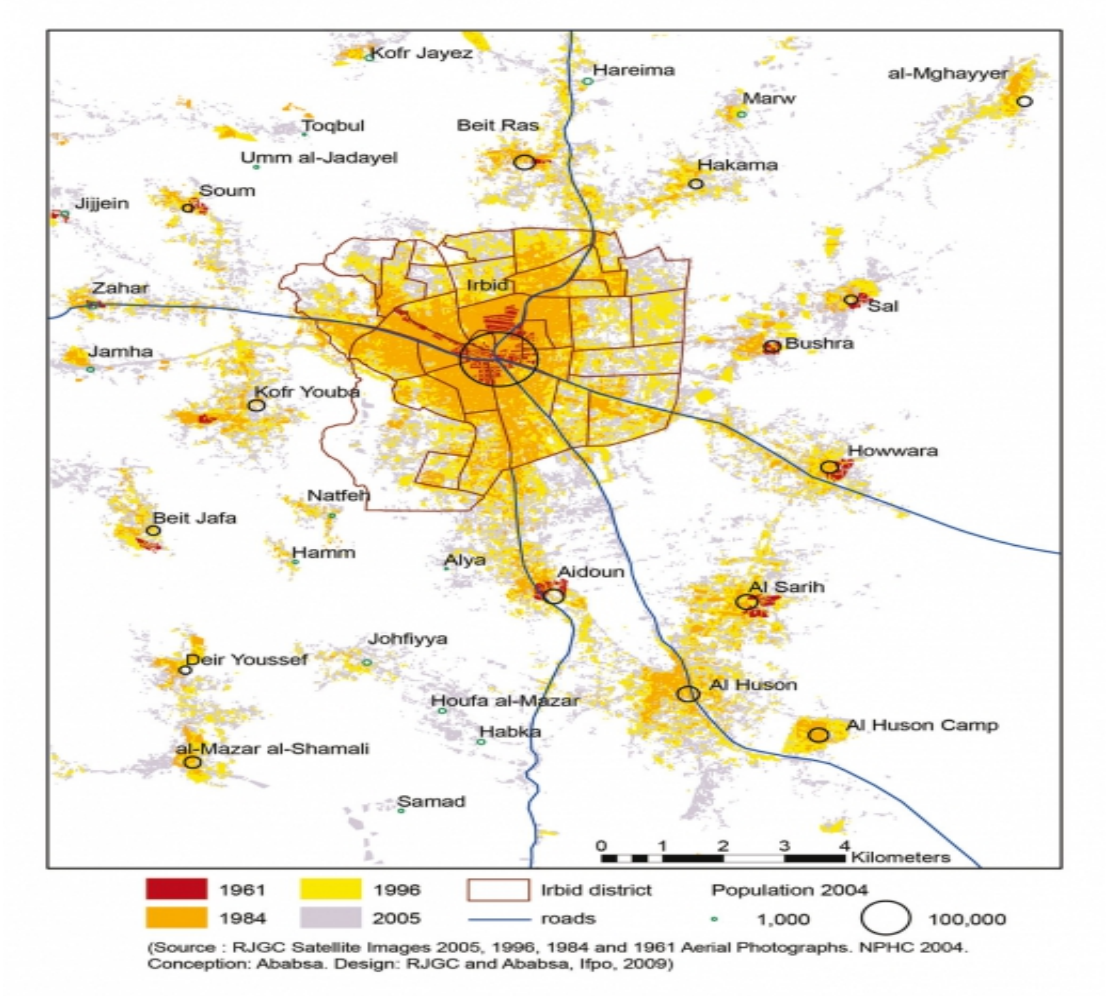

Figure 1.2 The expansion of the city (1961-2005)

Adapted from https://books.openedition.org/ifpo/5048

1.2.2 Historical Background

Recent archaeological excavations have revealed that Irbid was inhabited in ancient times, with settlements dating back to the Bronze Age around 3000 BC and continuing into the Iron Age around 2500 BC (Shawaqfeh 1964, p. 14, as cited in Al-Khatib 1988). Known in antiquity as Arabella, Irbid was a significant urban center during the Greek, Roman, and Islamic periods. Evidence of its historical importance is reflected in the archaeological sites found within the city and its surroundings, marking its status as part of the Capitolias. This designation referred to the ten most

crucial cities in the region during Greek and Roman times. Following the Battle of Yarmouk in 636 AD, Islamic forces captured the city from the Romans (Al-Khatib 1988). In the Mamluk period, it served as a service station for pilgrims traveling from Turkey, northern Iraq, and southern Russia, according to IrbidPlan.gov. However, during the Ottoman era, the city experienced neglect, leading to an influx of robbers and bandits. This decline was attributed to the empire's weakening and the rise of other urban centers such as Damascus, Tripoli, and Aleppo (Mahafza 1973; Shawaqfa 1964, cited in Al-Khatib 1988).

1.2.3 The Demographic Background

The remarkable transformation of Irbid from a small village in the 19th century to Jordan's second-largest city, with a population exceeding 1 million today (National Statistics, 2015), is largely attributable to its advantageous location in the fertile Horan plains and its position as a pivotal trading crossroad leading to Palestine in the west, and Syria and Turkey in the north (Tarawneh & Naamneh, 2011). The population began to surge significantly at the start of the 20th century, reaching 2,000 by 1912 (Baedeker, 1912, cited in Tarawneh & Naamneh, 2011). Following the establishment of the Emirate of Transjordan, the population was recorded at approximately 3,500 in 1922 (Yasin, 1984) and increased to 15,000 by 1937 (Konikoff, 1946, cited in Tarawneh & Naamneh, 2011).

A pivotal moment in the city's demographic expansion occurred in 1948 with the influx of Palestinian refugees displaced following the creation of Israel, marking the most significant increase in population (Al-Khatib, 1988; Al-Tamiami, 2001; Tarawneh & Naamneh, 2011). UNRWA records from 2022 indicate that the refugees, numbering around 4,000 and residing in camps, supplemented the original population.

Additionally, the annexation of peripheral villages and rural-urban migration played critical roles in augmenting the city's population. For instance, the incorporation of Al Barha village into the municipal administration added 2,500 residents (Tarawneh & Naamneh, 2011).

Furthermore, the influx of a new wave of Palestinian refugees significantly increased the population to 40,000 (Abdel-Jawad, 1981; Al-Wer, 2004; Tarawneh & Naamneh, 2011; Al-Khatib, 1988). Economic revitalization within the city further encouraged villagers to migrate, thereby contributing to its demographic expansion. The influx of immigrants persisted beyond 1967; notably, the conflict in Iraq during the 1990s prompted a significant exodus of Jordanians of Palestinian origin who were residing in Kuwait. Consequently, the population surged to 350,000, as reported in the Statistical Yearbook (2004). The population growth continued, with the metropolitan area's population reaching 56,300, according to Macrotrends (2023). The subsequent figure illustrates the trajectory of urban growth from 1910 until 2023.

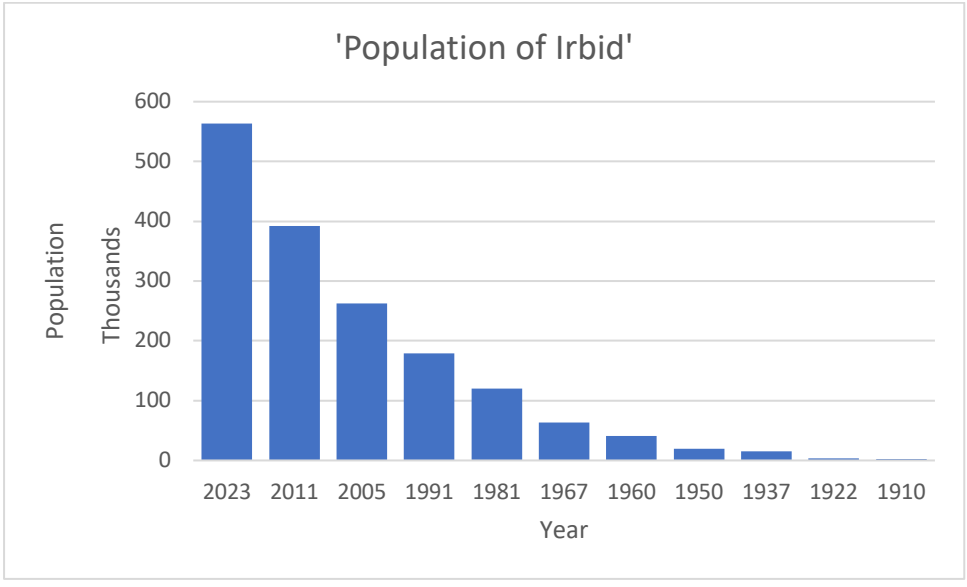

Figure 1.3 The Rise of Population from 1910-2023 adapted from (Macrotrends, 2023)

Finally, as discussed above, it becomes evident that the waves of immigration have significantly impacted the demographic fabric of the city, a topic that will be further explored in the following section.

1.2.4 Population Types of Irbid

Before the significant influx of refugees began to alter the city's demographic composition in 1948, the inhabitants of the city were primarily categorized into two main groups: migrants and locals, as noted by the Court of Islamic Affairs (cited in Tarawneh & Naamneh, 2011). The migrant groups comprised Christians, Damascenes (Shwam), and Nabulsi individuals. Christians migrated from the nearby villages (Al-Khatib, 1988; Tarawneh & Naamneh, 2011), while individuals from Damascus sought refuge from French persecution (Al-Khatib, 1988), and the third group hailed from Nablus, a city in the West Bank (Tarawneh & Naamneh, 2011). Additionally, there were migrants from the villages surrounding the city, known as Horanis, who lived in the Horan plains adjacent to the city. These rural residents, the original inhabitants of the northern parts of Jordan, traditionally engaged in agriculture and cattle grazing. The economic development of the city attracted many of these individuals to settle in the metropolitan area (Al-Khatib, 1988; Tarawneh & Naamneh, 2011).

Regarding the locals, they are Horanis and represent the indigenous inhabitants of the city. These inhabitants are primarily categorized into two groups: the seven kharazat, who reside in the upper part of the well, and the ordinary locals (Tarawneh & Naamneh, 2011). This classification stemmed from the Ottomans' system of property ownership. Families possessing such a document were referred to as Kharazat, whereas those without were considered the normal, original inhabitants of

the city (Tarawneh & Naamneh, 2011: 620). This demographic composition of the city existed before the refugee waves in 1948, 1967, and 1990. These influxes significantly altered the demographic composition not only of this city but also of major urban centers in Jordan, such as Amman and Zarqa (UN-Habitat, 2022).

Consequently, new camps, including the Irbid Refugee Camp and Azmi Al Mufti Camp in Al Hussun (southern suburban Irbid), were established in the city. These refugees were granted citizenship, officially integrating them into the country's population. According to certain statistics, these newcomers were estimated to constitute half of the city's population (UN-Habitat, 2022). It is important to note that the guest community exhibits less homogeneity compared to the host community. Nearly all residents, whether indigenous or migrants (with the exception of the Nabulsi and Shwam), identify as Horanis.

The guest population divides into ruralites (Fallahin in Arabic) and urbanites. This distinction arises because, as Al-Khatib (1988) notes, urban centers in Palestine have ancient roots, unlike in Jordan, where urban centers have emerged more recently, flourishing after the latter half of the 20th century (Al-Wer, 1991; Abdel Jawad, 1981; Al-Khatib, 1988). Therefore, it is common to observe individuals of high status residing in elite areas while their relatives live in rural or impoverished areas (Al-Khatib, 1988). This situation underscores the Horani people's affiliation with their traditional tribes, irrespective of their socioeconomic status.

Regarding Jordanians of Palestinian origin (JPs), the ruralites, or Fallahin, originally settled in the rural areas of central Palestine, whereas the urbanites came from major Palestinian cities such as Jerusalem, Haifa, Jaffa, Nablus, and Hebron. In terms of population within the city, the Fallahi Palestinians are more numerous than

the urban Palestinians. Consequently, the Fallahi Palestinian group, along with the Horani group, constitutes the largest demographic not only in Irbid but across the entire kingdom (Abdel-Jawad, 1981; Al-Khatib, 1988; Al-Wer, 2004; Tarawneh & Naamneh, 2011).

1.2.5 The Family in Jordan

Before delving into the dynamics of the family structure in Jordan, it is important to acknowledge the diverse types of family configurations present, ranging from the nuclear family to the broader constructs of 'bigger family,' kindred ('ħamu:le'), clan ('faxð'), and tribe ('ʕaʃi:ra') (Abu Ain, 2016). The foundational level comprises the wife, husband, and their offspring. The next level expands to include immediate relatives such as parents, grandparents, uncles, and aunts. Subsequently, the third level encompasses larger familial groups linked by blood relations. The fourth level primarily consists of two or more related kindreds. The apex of this hierarchy, the tribe, integrates multiple large family groups. This structured division underscores the notion that, from the nuclear family up to the tribal level, members typically uphold robust relational ties. Moreover, this framework is regulated by specific social norms that guide interactions within and across these family units.

The strength of familial or tribal connections varies among different origin groups, with Horani families exhibiting stronger ties compared to their Palestinian counterparts. This difference partly stems from the Palestinians' dispersion due to their refugee status, not only across Jordan but also in neighboring countries (Al-Khatib, 1988). Furthermore, the displacement from their homeland has led to a weakening of tribal bonds among Palestinian families (ibid.). In contrast, Jordanian families, reflecting broader Eastern societal norms, place a significant emphasis on shared social

principles and values (Giles et al., 1991). This societal structure is evident in the customs regulating family members' relationships. Common practices include family members residing together until marriage and even afterward, married individuals frequently visiting their parents, particularly on weekends. Moreover, the family structure accords considerable importance to sex and age, positioning the father at the helm, followed by the eldest brother who assumes a position of respect after the father (Hamamy et al., 2006).

1.2.6 Women in the Jordanian Society

To grasp the linguistic dynamics in Jordan concerning sex, it's critical to examine the treatment of women both historically and in contemporary times. Gal's research (1978, cited in Al-Khatib, 1988) serves as a foundational reference for this discussion. It is noteworthy that the conditions of women from both primary origin groups in Jordan share remarkable similarities (Al-Khatib, 1988). This commonality extends to proverbs that portray women as subordinate and depict them as sources of vulnerability (Marashdeh, 2012). Such portrayals are rooted in the broader context of Eastern cultures, including both Palestinian and Jordanian societies, which impose numerous restrictions on women's social lives.

In the realm of employment, the participation of women in public life is significantly restricted, as outlined by researchers including Peebles et al. (2007), Abdel Jawad (1981), and Al-Khatib (1988, 1995). This restriction contributes to a higher unemployment rate among women compared to men, partly due to employers' hesitancy to hire women. Employers often cite concerns about maternity leave and the associated financial implications as reasons for this reluctance. Moreover, certain

sectors, such as tourism, are predominantly male-dominated, influenced by social norms that criticize women's direct interaction with tourists (Peebles et al., 2007).

Facing these challenges, societal perceptions tend to limit women to roles in teaching and nursing, while managerial and leadership positions are deemed more appropriate for men (Peebles et al., 2007). Additionally, the reluctance of women to work in the tourism sector is highlighted by Peebles et al. (2007), noting concerns over harassment and the perceived impropriety of staying away from home during the night. Despite these barriers, which notably include obstacles to higher education, there has been significant progress in improving women's situation compared to the past.

Al-Khatib (1988) notes that women historically faced higher rates of illiteracy compared to men, a disparity rooted in social norms that discouraged female education. Such norms were based on the belief that schooling would hinder women's ability to contribute to agricultural labor, which required full-day commitments. Furthermore, traditional marriage practices limited women's autonomy in choosing their spouses, further restricting their life choices and opportunities (Peebles et al., 2007).

1.2.7 The Historical Relationship among Groups in Jordan

The current study focuses on the phonological accommodation among different origin groups in Jordan, highlighting the historical dynamics and their evolution. It is important to note that, despite the lack of formal statistics distinguishing the two main origin groups in Irbid, the Horanis and rural Palestinians are identified as the most significant (Al-Khatib, 1988; Tarawneh & Naamneh, 2011; Abu Ain, 2016). Moreover, the involvement of refugees in local governance began to increase gradually and at a slow pace (Tarawneh & Naamneh, 2011). This gradual participation stemmed

from their enduring connection to their homeland and the novelty of their interest in the host society.

In the 1960s, the participation of newcomers in municipal elections saw a significant increase. Presidents of municipalities encouraged refugees to purchase land and engage in trade as a strategy to rejuvenate leadership. This encouragement led to an influx of refugees and migrants from nearby villages, who were motivated to establish their own businesses. Additionally, accusations were levied against the Palestinian Liberation Organization for attempting to take control of Jordan (Abu Ain, 2016), leading to military conflicts between the Jordanian army and Palestinian guerillas. These events paved the way for a new dynamic between the Horanis and Palestinians (Tarawneh & Naamneh, 2011). Consequently, the state leadership began to prefer the employment of indigenous individuals (those residing in the city prior to 1948) in critical roles within official bureaucratic institutions, aiming to strengthen the control of the host community over the guest community (Jarrar, 2019). Tarawneh and Naamneh (2011, p. 629) illustrate this point with an example from one of their informants, who stated:

> "Such areas of work are exclusive to Jordanians [...] by the end this is good for us because this has directed us to work in the private sector and to accumulate wealth more than them [...] we dominate the economy."

The 1980s marked a period of economic growth that increased employment opportunities irrespective of origin (Al Wer, 2011). Refugees capitalized on this opportunity, finding employment in the expanding private sector (Tarawneh & Naamneh, 2011). With indigenous people predominantly occupying bureaucratic positions, the host community demonstrated greater vitality compared to their

Palestinian counterparts, notably in key state roles such as the army and police, which were almost exclusively theirs (Jarrar, 2019).

Subsequently, the previously tense relationship between the two groups, strained by past conflicts, significantly diminished (Al-Tamimi, 2001). Intergroup marriages and friendships became common, with Jordanian Palestinians and Horanis marrying each other (Al-Khatib, 1988). Recent times have seen a reduction in overt discrimination between the groups, allowing individuals, regardless of their origin, to be employed across various institutions. However, remnants of the past negative relations still persist, particularly reflected in the linguistic behavior during intergroup interactions (Al Wer, 2011).

1.3 The Linguistic Background of the Study

This section initiates with a classification of Arabic in Jordan. Subsequently, it will focus on an analysis of language in Jordan, specifically addressing issues of standardization and colloquialization. The final part will elucidate the linguistic system inherent to the colloquial dialects in Jordan.

1.3.1 The Classification of the Arabic Varieties in Jordan

The classification of Arabic in Jordan is subject to debate. Ferguson (1959) identifies Arabic as exhibiting diglossia, characterized by two primary varieties: the standard variety, represented by Modern Standard Arabic (MSA), and the colloquial variety. MSA, derived from Classical Arabic (CA), is predominantly used in religious contexts, including the Holy Quran, the sayings of Prophet Mohammed (i.e., Al-Hadith), and ancient poetry and prose (Al-Saidat & Al-Momani, 2010). Ferguson categorizes these varieties based on their domains of use, assigning the standard

variety to high (H) domains, such as official and written communications accessible mainly to educated individuals, and the colloquial variety to low (L) domains, prevalent in spoken communication and accessible to people regardless of their educational background.

Several linguists, including El-Hassan (1977) and Mitchel (1980), as cited by Al-Tamimi (2001), challenge the diglossic classification of Arabic. They argue for the existence of intermediate varieties bridging the standard and colloquial forms. El-Hassan (1977, cited in Al-Tamimi, 2001) identifies Educated Spoken Arabic (ESA) as a median dialect predominantly used by the educated. This classification, however, faces criticism for its reliance on variable speech styles that oscillate between formal and informal registers based on the social context and the relationship with the audience (Al-Tamimi, 2001). This study will focus on the analysis of language use within specified domains (formal/informal or colloquial MSA), recognizing MSA as both the formal language of Jordan and the official language across the Arab world (Al-Khatib, 1988).

Following a brief review of the standard and intermediate dialects, it is pertinent to explore the classification of colloquial varieties within Jordanian Arabic (JA). Initially, the linguistic landscape of Jordan was uniform, lacking diversity (Bergsträsser's atlas, 1915, cited in Al-Wer & Herin, 2011), a condition attributed to the small and homogeneous population at the time, primarily comprised of Horanis (Tarawneh & Naamneh, 2011). The establishment of Transjordan marked the arrival of new demographic groups in the city, as previously discussed, leading to a diversification of the linguistic situation. This diversification arose from the influx of

migrants such as Damascenes and Nabulsi (Tarawneh & Naamneh, 2011; Al-khatib, 1988), resulting in two predominant dialects: the rural Horani dialect and the urban dialect spoken by Shwam and Nabulsi. The linguistic complexity increased further after 1948 with the first wave of Palestinian refugees (Al-Khatib, 1988; Abdel Jawad & Radwan, 2013), introducing new linguistic elements to the dialects of Irbid, notably the integration of rural Palestinian forms into the city dialects.

Considering the diverse linguistic landscape, dialects in Jordan categorize into four primary groups: the Bedouin dialect (referred to by the term 'jigul,' meaning 'he says'), the rural Jordanian dialect (known as the 'bigul' group), the rural Palestinian dialect ('bikul' group), and the urban dialect ('biʔul' group), as outlined by Cleveland (1963). Cleveland also notes that the speakers of the rural Jordanian and rural Palestinian dialects constitute the majority, with urbanites forming the smallest demographic group. Furthermore, the urban dialect encompasses the dialects of major cities such as Jerusalem, Damascus, Beirut, Hebron, Nablus, and Jenin.

Building upon this classification, Sawaie (1994, as cited in Al-Tamimi, 2001, p. 42) introduces an "ethno-geographic distribution," which he divides into a 'city dialect' and a 'rural dialect.' He elaborates:

> “We have two distinct linguistic situations in Trans-Jordan. On the one hand, we have a 'city' dialect or 'city' dialect that is/are used in cities in Trans-Jordan. On the other hand, we have several 'rural' dialects that are in actual use in various parts of the country.”

The classifications previously mentioned align with Al-Khatib's (1988) categorization, which is based on Nomadic-Sedentary and Urban-Rural-Bedouin distinctions. Within this framework, dialects can be classified into two primary types:

Nomadic and Sedentary. The Nomadic dialect pertains to the language of nomads living in the southern and eastern deserts of Jordan, as identified by Cleveland (1963). Conversely, the Sedentary dialect encompasses the languages spoken by those residing in rural areas or cities. According to this categorization, rural Palestinians and indigenous rural populations are classified under the Rural category, whereas the Urban classification applies to original city inhabitants. The Bedouin category is designated for the dialect of nomads in the deserts. The following table illustrates how consonants may be distinctly realized across each group.

Table 1.1 The Realization of the Three Consonants /q/, /k/, and /Θ/of/q/ (Cleveland, 1963)

Type of dialect	/q/	/k/	/Θ/
Bedouin	[g]	[ʧ]	[Θ]
Horani	[g]	[ʧ]	[Θ]
Urban	[ʔ]	[k]	[t]
Palestinian	[k]	[k]	[Θ]

He further notes that this classification may not be entirely accurate, as distinctions among dialects extend beyond just one aspect to include differences in phonology, morphology, vocabulary, and syntax. Similarly, the Urban-Rural-Bedouin classification, while useful, oversimplifies the linguistic landscape. Although rural and urban Palestinian dialects share certain linguistic features, significant differences still exist between them.

1.3.1(a) The Linguistic Analysis of MSA and the Colloquial JA

This study will examine Arabic in Jordan, focusing on Modern Standard Arabic (MSA) and Jordanian Arabic (JA). The choice is informed by the minimal differences

between Classical Arabic (CA) and MSA, with the primary variations occurring at the lexical level, whereas syntax and phonology largely remain consistent (Al-Tamimi, 2001). MSA serves as the standardized language across the Arab world, functioning as the language of the media, the medium of instruction in educational settings, and the language for official documentation and transactions. On the other hand, JA is the dialect used in everyday conversations and informal settings. Accordingly, this section will succinctly explore the distinctions between these two linguistic codes across various levels, including phonology, morphology, syntax, and lexicon.

Suleiman (1985) argues that the colloquial dialect of Jordan has evolved through a process of simplification or leveling from Modern Standard Arabic (MSA). At the syntactic level, Jordanian Arabic (JA) omits the inflections central to MSA's system. Specifically, the short vowels /a/, /u/, and /i/, which in MSA delineate cases such as the causative, nominative, and prepositional, are absent in JA. For instance, 'al waladu' ('the boy' in MSA) becomes 'alwalad' in JA. Furthermore, while MSA employs a dual system for verbs, nouns, and adjectives, JA merges dual forms into the plural category. An illustrative example is the adjective 'zarqaa' ('blue'), which in its dual form is 'zaqawaan' in MSA but becomes 'zuruq' (plural form) in JA. Sentence structure also varies, with MSA favoring a verb-subject (V S) order, whereas JA typically uses a subject-verb (S V) construction. The differences between these linguistic systems are further detailed in the table below.

Table 1.2 The Sentence Structure Difference between MSA and JA (Suleiman, 1985)

Variety		S V	V S
MSA			yamʃi al waladu walks the boy
JA		al waladu yamʃi The boy walks	

The differences between Modern Standard Arabic (MSA) and Jordanian Arabic (JA) extend beyond grammar to encompass phonetic variations as well. Al-Khatib (1988) notes that MSA comprises 28 consonantal segments, while JA features 38. This increase includes consonants such as ‘p’ and ‘v’, which are present in JA due to the incorporation of loanwords. Additionally, JA incorporates phonemes like /g/, /ʧ/, /ʒ/, and a dark /L/, none of which are found in MSA. A notable case is the emphatic interdental /ḍ/, prevalent in MSA but only appearing in limited instances within the urban dialect of JA. Furthermore, while the consonants /s/, /k/, /ʤ/, and /ʃ/ have distinct phonemic roles in MSA, in JA, these sounds sometimes act as allophones for other phonemes. The allophonic realizations of certain phonemes are detailed below.

/q/ ----------[q] [g] [ʔ] [k]

/Θ/ ---------[t] [s]

/k/ ----------[ʧ]

/ʤ/ ---------[ʒ]

/l/----------[L]

Suleiman (1985) provides examples illustrating how phonemic and allophonic variations can alter the meaning of words in Modern Standard Arabic (MSA) when compared to their counterparts in Jordanian Arabic (JA) and other dialects. For instance, the word 'kalb' translates to "the dog" in MSA, but in the rural Palestinian dialect, due to the allophonic treatment of [k] as representing the phoneme /q/, it might be understood as 'heart'.

Beyond phonology, notable differences also emerge in the lexicon between the two language varieties. A substantial amount of vocabulary present in MSA does not exist in JA, and JA often exhibits a more limited set of synonyms compared to MSA. Suleiman (1985) categorizes these lexical variations into three main types:

1- The difference between the two varieties is only limited to the ‘inflection reduction’.
2- The meaning of a word is expressed in different forms.
3- A greater tendency in JA to incorporate loanwords from other languages than is the case with MSA.

1.3.1(b) The Linguistic Analysis of the Colloquial Dialects in Jordan

Previously discussed, dialects in Jordan are primarily distinguished by their treatment of the (Q) variable. The Horani and Bedouin dialects are known for using [g], the urban dialect is recognized by [ʔ], and the rural Palestinian dialect utilizes [k]. While these phonetic variations serve as fundamental identifiers, each dialect also possesses unique linguistic features. The subsequent subsections will detail the analysis of these three dialects, taking into account their distinctive characteristics.

1.3.1(b)(i) The Urban Dialect

The urban dialect is primarily characterized by its distinctive phonological features, as outlined in studies by Fallahi and Horani (2004). This dialect exhibits a consonantal system that diverges from those of rural dialects in Jordan, with the consonants /Q/, /D/, /θ/, and /ð/ being pronounced as [ʔ], [dˤ], and either [z] or [d]. In terms of vowel sounds, the urban dialect shares similarities with rural Palestinian dialects, particularly in the fronting of the back vowel [u], as in the word [zibde] rather than [zubde] (Abu Ain, 2016). This dialect also mirrors the Fallahi dialect in raising the feminine ending for /a/ to [e], as seen in the pronunciation of /maglu: ba/, a traditional dish, as [maglu: be] (Al-Wer, 2004). Morphosyntactically, Al-Wer (2004) indicates that the urbanization process of the Amman dialect has led to a neutralization of sex distinctions in masculine and plural nouns, resulting in forms like /minkum/ or /minkun/ evolving into [minku].

1.3.1(b)(ii) Horani vs. Rural Palestinian

Herin (2013) demonstrates the homogeneity of Horani dialects, making them comparable to other dialects. Both rural Palestinian and Horani varieties exhibit similar consonantal systems, with distinctions primarily in the realization of /q/ and /k/. In rural Palestinian dialects, /q/ is pronounced as [k], whereas in Horani dialects, it is [g], except when followed by /t/, where it becomes devoiced as in /wakit/ meaning ‘time’. For standard borrowed words, the Horani dialect retains [q], while the Palestinian dialect articulates a more back [K] (Al-Khatib, 1988; Abdel-Jawad, 1981; Herin, 2013). Regarding /k/, it undergoes unconditional affrication in the rural Palestinian dialect, as in ratʃaðʔ ‘he ran’, but in Horani, affrication occurs conditionally in the

context of front vowels, for example, /haðˤi:ʧ/ ‘this one’ (Al-Khatib, 1988; Abu Ain, 2016). The feminine ending /a/ is raised to /e/ in the rural Palestinian variety, contrasting with its preservation as /a/ in Horani, illustrated by the word /ħilwe/ in Palestinian and /ħilwa/ in Horani (Al Wer, 2000).

Herin (2013) and Al-Khatib (1988) detail that the Horani dialect is characterized by features such as velarization and gemination. Cantineau (1946, as cited in Herin, 2013) discusses emphatic Arabic consonants like /T/, /S/, /D/, and /ðˤ/, noting that their occurrence is either inherent or dependent on their position within the syllable and word. He observes that emphatics are limited to labials (/b/, /m/, /f/), liquids (dark and light /r/ and /l/), and velars ([g] and [k]), emphasizing that their role includes preventing the raising of the vowel /a/. For instance, Horanis pronounce /baɣuL/ as ‘mule’ with a dark [L], contrasting with rural Palestinians who opt for a light [l] after fronting the back vowel to /baɣil/. Horanis also prefer a velarized [G] in [GabuL] for ‘before’. Gemination in Horani manifests when /tha/ doubles to /tt/ following an /a/ at a word boundary, exemplified by [iʕmilitta] ‘I’ve done it.’

The variations extend beyond phonology to morphology. Horanis typically use the template CaCu: C, whereas Palestinians often elide unstressed vowels, leading to an onset cluster, as seen when /faTu:r/ ‘breakfast’ becomes /fTu:r/ in the rural Palestinian dialect. The free pronoun /ana/ ‘I’ is pronounced as /ani/ in Horani, and the third person plural pronoun ‘they’ is articulated as /humma/ in Horani and /humme/ in rural Palestinian (Herin, 2013).

1.3.1(c) Summary of Arabic Classification

In conclusion, the diverse composition of the Jordanian population allows each group the flexibility to either adapt to or distance itself from others. This dynamic is most effectively understood through an examination of the linguistic behaviors of each group. The decisions to accommodate or not are influenced by socio-historical factors and social norms that shape interactions between groups. Therefore, to analyze the phenomena of linguistic convergence and divergence among these groups, it is most suitable to utilize the Communication Accommodation Theory as proposed by Giles and colleagues.

1.3.2 The Language Situation in Irbid City

The sociolinguistic landscape of Irbid City features two variations of the same language coexisting: Modern Standard Arabic (MSA) and several colloquial varieties. This scenario is not unique to Jordan but is a common feature across Arab nations, known as diglossia. In this context, two forms of Arabic operate concurrently for different purposes. The "high" variety, or MSA, is reserved for formal occasions and carries a sense of national prestige. On the other hand, Jordanian Arabic, with its colloquial dialects, predominates in informal settings, facilitating communication within the community and embodying local prestige (Al-Khatib, 1988, 1995).

Regarding local prestige, debates persist over which colloquial variety holds greater esteem. This division stems from subjective perceptions rather than objective criteria (Sakarna, 2005). Al-Sughayer (1990) posits that the Horani variety claims higher prestige due to its closeness to MSA. Conversely, Abdel-Jawad (1986)

attributes greater prestige to the urban Palestinian dialect, associating it with major urban centers like Jerusalem, Nablus, Amman, and Damascus.

Al-Khatib (1995, p.144) offers a distinct perspective on linguistic prestige. He suggests, based on his observations and prior research (e.g., Abdel-Jawad 1981, 1987; Al-Khatib 1988), that the urban variety might be perceived as more feminine, while the Jordanian-rural-Bedouin dialects appear more masculine. He argues that neither the quest for prestige nor the intention to signal sex fully explains the preference of men for the Horani dialect and women for the urban variant. Echoing Ann Royal (1985), he advocates for an explanation that considers both prestige and sex signaling. He notes that Jordanians are keenly aware of the linguistic choices more fitting for men (the Hourani variety) and those more appropriate for women (the Urban dialect).

1.3.3 Jordan University of Science and Technology (JUST)

JUST, similar to Yarmouk University in its state-supported status, stands as Jordan's most prominent university and ranks among the top 50 universities in the Islamic world. Situated approximately 20 km east of Irbid near Ramtha city, and 70 km north of Amman (refer to Figure 1.3), the university was founded in 1986 under the auspices of Yarmouk University. It boasts a student body of around 20,000 undergraduates and 1,800 graduates. International students comprise approximately 22% of the total enrollment, representing nearly 5,000 students from 60 different nationalities, thereby establishing JUST as the most culturally diverse university in Jordan (Al-Rifaei 2012).

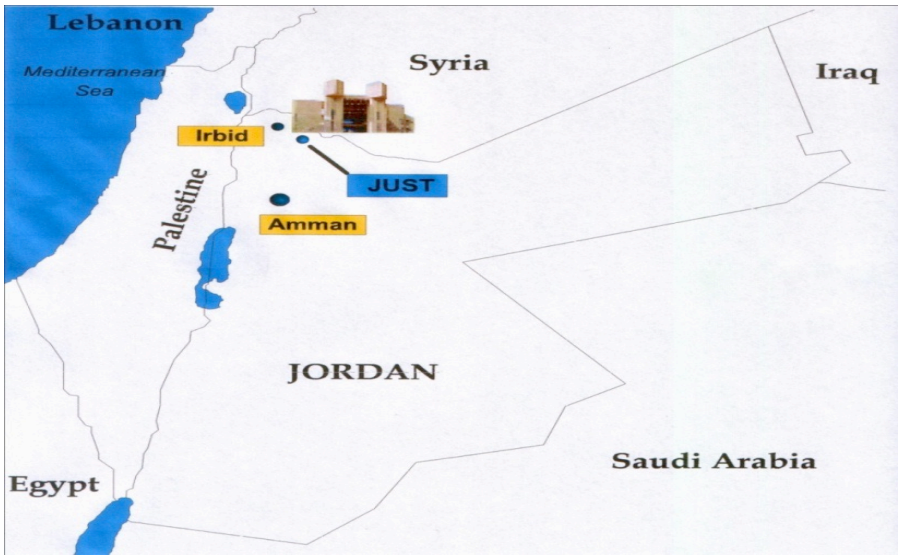

Figure 1.4 The locale of JUST (university website)

1.4 Problem Statement

Recognizing the importance of context and culture in language studies is paramount. Thus, understanding phonological accommodation necessitates considering the speakers' attitudes towards each other. This consideration stems from the recognition that each speech community possesses its unique values, linguistic expressions, and communication strategies, which in turn influence language usage.

Previous research (e.g., Giles, 1973; Giles et al., 1977; Al-Khatib, 1995, 1988; Anderson et al., 2005) has shown that individuals often engage in linguistic convergence to reduce their social distance from others. This study delves into the mechanisms of phonological accommodation, guided by the relevant theoretical frameworks.

Accordingly, this study comes to bridge the gap numerous studies such as (Al-Tamimi, 2001; Abu Ain, 2016; Miller, 2005; Alajmi & Alghannam, 2022) these studies have explored phonological accommodation among individuals, yet they often overlook the influence of the speaker's origin on this form of communication. For