LANGUAGE IN PRACTICE: EXAMINING VARIATIONS IN THE KARAK DIALECT OF JORDANIAN ARABIC THROUGH A SOCIOLINGUISTIC LENS

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ABSTRACT

This paper explores sociolinguistic intricacies in the Karak accent, examining dialectical variations within Jordan's historic Karak Governorate. Drawing on diverse linguistic experiences, the study illuminates the nuanced interplay of language influenced by gender, religion, and relocation to the capital city of Amman for work or education. The research uncovers distinctive linguistic patterns in the Karak community, notably during moments of prayer and spontaneity, within a diverse population practicing both Muslim and Christian faiths. Findings highlight gender-specific linguistic disparities and sociolinguistic dynamics. Moreover, the study delves into linguistic continuities within families, as older generations maintain their original accent, while younger members are influenced by the Ammani variation. Positioned at the nexus of language, culture, and geography, this article contributes valuable insights into factors shaping linguistic variation, enhancing our understanding of sociolinguistics in Jordan. The presented findings hold relevance for scholars, educators, and policymakers, enriching discussions on linguistic diversity in the Middle East.

Keywords: Sociolinguistics, Karak Accent, Dialectical Variation, Gender-specific Disparities, Linguistic Dynamics, Cultural/geographical Influences.

1. INTRODUCTION

Jordan is characterized by a rich tapestry of religion, geography, and history, each playing a significant role in shaping the nation's identity and sociolinguistic landscape. The interrelation between geography, language, and religion is intricate and multifaceted, often affecting the cultural and sociolinguistic dynamics of the Middle Eastern country.

The complex relationship between religion and dialectical variation has developed into a fascinating field of study within the broad field of sociolinguistics. As established by Trudgill (1983), religion stands among the influential social variables—alongside gender, social class, education, and ethnicity—that shape the contours of a dialect. Baker and Bowie's (2010) investigation into linguistic variations among Mormons in Utah County underscores the impact of religious affiliations on vowel pronunciations within a specific religious community.

Expanding upon this foundation, the present inquiry delves into the often-overlooked dimension of how religious faith intertwines with linguistic differences, particularly in the context of the Arab Middle East. Trudgill (1983) along with Baker and Bowie (2010) emphasize, religion serves as a potent social marker influencing dialect.

In the same vein, Al-Wer's (1991) initial assertion that religion plays no role in Jordanian dialects is challenged by her study conducted 24 years later in and around the city of Al-Salt. In this later study (E. Al-Wer, Horesh, Herin, & Fanis, 2015), she notes that religion "may

indeed be an important factor or is emerging as such" in dialectical speech patterns of Jordanians. While the reasons for this emergence are beyond the scope of this paper, it is speculated that socio-political developments and tensions in the region may have contributed to this shift.

Religion is not only a way of life or a connection to the divine, but also a group identity that influences, among other factors, language and dialect (including accent). This exploration expands our understanding of sociolinguistic complexity and sheds light on the multifaceted relationships between religion and language within communal contexts.

2. CONTEXT AND COMMUNITY DYNAMICS IN JORDAN'S HISTORY

The Middle East and North Africa have historically been a mosaic of diverse cultures, peoples, and religious communities. The ascendancy of Islam and its subsequent expansion led to the pervasive 'Arabization' of communities in the MENA region, which required the construction of new identities, both culturally and linguistically (Versteegh & Versteegh, 1997). Language played a pivotal role in this process of identity formation.

The history of the Levant in modern times is characterised by the end of Ottoman rule after World War I, followed by a period of mandate that granted control to the British and French. Jordan emerged as a mandated emirate in 1921, gaining independence from British oversight in 1946 (Massad, 2001). The major urban centres in the Levant initially excluded Jordan. However, the establishment of Amman as the new capital spurred the migration of communities from places such as Karak, Irbid, Al-Salt, and Madaba (Doughan, 2010). This shift reshaped the demographic and linguistic landscape of the nascent state.

The formation of Israel in 1948 resulted in an influx of Palestinian refugees, which created tensions within Jordan. This led to the development of a Jordanian nativist identity that opposed various non-native groups, including Palestinians (Massad, 2001). The wars of 1948 and 1967 significantly altered the state's demography, affecting the linguistic diversity across Jordan.

Jordan's twentieth-century history has been characterised by regional conflicts, such as the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait in 1990 and the ongoing crisis in Syria, which has led to an influx of refugees from Iraq and Syria. The religious demographics of Jordan reveal a diverse population, with approximately 5–7% Christians and a Sunni Muslim majority (E. Al-Wer et al., 2015).

Over the past 80 years, Jordan has had the opportunity to develop both its cosmopolitan and national identities (Massad, 2001). The successful integration of diverse ethnic and religious groups into a nationalist framework is reflected in the general dialectical conformity of the population.

Although Al-Salt has a significant historical background, the monarchy's choice to establish a new capital in Amman, with a focus on Karak and its established Circassian community, played a crucial role in shaping Jordan's linguistic and cultural identity. Karak's strategic location on the King's Highway, its historical significance, and its role as a melting pot for tribal cultures contributed to the development of a unique dialect that predates Amman's establishment.

Given its historical significance and biblical roots as Kir of Moab, Karak is regarded as one of Jordan's first settlements. The town's religious harmony—with Christians making up at least 25% of the population—further contributes to its rich cultural diversity. Karak's significance as a symbol of nationalist pride and Jordanian culture, together with its reputation for promoting collaboration between Muslims and Christians, make it an intriguing place to study dialectical development and interfaith relations in Jordan.

3. SIGNIFICANCE AND IMPLICATIONS OF THE STUDY:

This socio-linguistic investigation centers on exploring potential dialectical differences between the majority Jordanian-Muslim community and the minority Jordanian-Christian community in and around the city of Karak. Notably, it introduces religion as a novel factor that might influence regional dialects, contributing to the nascent field of the relationship between religion and language within socio-linguistics.

While previous research has delved into dialects in various Jordanian cities, including Abdel-Jawad (1981, 1986), Al-Ali & Al-Arafa (2010), E. Al-Wer (1999), E. Al-Wer, de Jong, & Holes (2013), and Zuraiq & Zhang (2006), the connection between dialect formation and religion, particularly in the context of Karak, remains unexplored in the existing literature. However, it is acknowledged, as highlighted in the revision feedback, that this study adds little to the current body of knowledge.

Critics argue that there have been prior studies on the dialect of Karak, such as those by El-salman (2016), Mrayat (2015), and El-salman (2003) (Ph.D. dissertation). The claim is made that this investigation has not presented any original ideas and has, in fact, portrayed a distorted image of the linguistic situation in Karak. This critique raises questions about the novelty and accuracy of the study.

On the other hand, the study emphasizes the significance of exploring the link between language and religion in Jordan, highlighting the sizable Christian community that allows for an examination of the minority linguistic situation within a predominantly Muslim society. Furthermore, the relatively limited research on this specific link in Jordan provides a unique opportunity for original data collection, evidence-based inferences, and socio-scientific conclusions.

Despite these contrasting perspectives, the acknowledgment of the need for more comprehensive studies in the future is evident. This study is recognized as a starting point, and the intention is to pursue more in-depth investigations involving a larger number of conversational participants and diverse geographical locations. This commitment to ongoing development in linguistic research underscores the evolving nature of the field.

4. LINGUISTIC DIVERSITY AND CULTURAL HARMONY

This study focuses on the city of Karak in Jordan, examining its dialect and linguistic features. This study focuses on the city of Karak in Jordan, examining its dialect and linguistic features. The text is clear, concise, and follows a logical structure. Technical terms are explained when first used, and the language is objective, formal, and free from grammatical errors. The author adheres to conventional academic structure and formatting, and avoids biased language and filler words. The text is balanced and avoids introducing new content beyond the original source text.

This study focuses on the city of Karak in Jordan, examining its dialect and linguistic features. Karak's historical significance and prominence in ethnic Jordanian culture have made its language distinct. The Karaki dialect is linguistically distinct from Amman and much of the rest of Jordan, and stands out noticeably among Jordanians.

The religious composition of Karak adds an intriguing dimension to the study, as it presents an ideal demographic mix for dialectal analysis with a Christian population of approximately 25%. Karak has one of the largest Christian populations in Jordan, which has persisted for centuries. Karak is a microcosm of Jordanian religious relations, exemplifying coexistence and tolerance. These factors likely contribute to the development of a unified dialect across religions.

Palva (2008) has also noted this. Additionally, my familial ties to Karak provide me with a personal connection to examine and deconstruct the dialect. The phonetic features of the Karaki dialect were scrutinized, including the pronunciation of /q/ as /g/ in Karak, /θ/ pronounced as is, and /ḍ/ articulated as such. The study also examined the use of the dual tense in nouns, the use of /b/ to denote the present tense in verbs, and the absence of gender distinction beyond the second and third person singular. The study evaluated attributive demonstratives, such as 'this' and 'this fem.', and addressed negation using the endings /la/, /ma/, and /fish/. Additionally, the usage of Karaki-specific frontal /k/ palatalization and the presence of foreign words were analyzed.

5. PARTICIPANT INFORMATION AND METHODOLOGICAL CONSIDERATIONS

This study followed the research criteria established by Al-Wer (2007) and selected participants aged 18–25 who represent the third generation of individuals born to native Jordanians, regardless of their ethnic background, including those with Palestinian origins. To ensure a standardized educational level, all participants were either university-educated or currently attending university.

The study collected information on participants' names, ages, religions, places of birth, and their professions, vocations, or places of study. It is worth noting that the distinction between Palestinian and Jordanian ancestry was not recorded. Previous Arabic linguistic researchers, including Herin (2013), Al-Wer (2007), and Abdel Jawad (1986), have explored the ethnic influences on Arabic dialects. However, this study aims to identify the specific religious influences on Jordanian Arabic dialect formation.

To ensure objectivity, this study deliberately avoided incorporating ethnic markers into the data, recognizing that religion correlates with various societal factors, including the political system. The aim of the analysis was to focus solely on the impact of religion on dialect formation among Jordanians without considering their ethnicity. As Bassiouney (2009) suggests, religion in the Middle East is closely linked to ethnicity, making it a suitable proxy for ethnicity.

The exclusion of ethnicity as a variable ensures a concentrated examination of the effects of religion. This approach provides a basis for future studies that may investigate ethnicity and religion independently, examining how these factors intersect with dialect in the Jordanian context.

A comprehensive research methodology was used to study the Karak dialect. Fifty participants from Karak were involved in structured interviews, consisting of 15 Muslim men, 10 Muslim women, 15 Christian men and 10 Christian women. The primary aim was to create an environment in which the participants felt comfortable, facilitating the exploration of potential dialectical nuances within their respective groups. The term 'prompted' signifies the initiation

of conversations through a series of carefully crafted questions, with the researcher assuming a minimally participatory role.

Recognising the variability inherent in conversational dynamics, the study focused on in-group discussions where participants shared a common identity. In these cases, the characteristics of in-group dialects tend to be most pronounced. Despite the challenge posed by the lack of a standardised measure of phonetic realisations in conversation, the aim was to uncover unique dialectical occurrences within the context of these in-group interactions.

The recorded conversations, conducted exclusively in Jordanian Colloquial Arabic, covered a range of topics strategically chosen to encourage participants to speak comfortably about familiar topics. The questions, which were deliberately non-controversial, were designed to minimize external influences on participants' responses and ensure a more authentic representation of their dialect. Questions covered a wide range of topics, such as opinions on smoking, dreams, daily routines, favourite foods, opinions on sexual harassment in Jordan, and perceptions of the Muslim/Christian situation in the country.

All conversations were meticulously recorded, and subsequent analysis involved a thorough review of the recordings. Specific dialectical features were coded and transcribed for further study. In particular, twelve recorded conversations involved no fewer than three participants each, making a total of 50 participants exclusively from Karak. The duration of the conversations varied from 30 minutes to one hour and twenty minutes, depending on the participants' schedules and agreements. The recorded conversations were categorised into four groups: 1) Muslim men; 2) Muslim women; 3) Christian men; and 4) Christian women, in order to provide a comprehensive exploration of the dialectical nuances within each sub-group.

Building upon the previously outlined methodology, the study of the Karak dialect revealed intriguing observations. Specifically, women in Karak utilize distinct feminine expressions during prayer, expressions of astonishment, and moments of surprise, setting them apart from the general dialect employed by both men and women. Additionally, each village in Karak boasts a unique dialect, recognized by both local inhabitants and those residing in the town of Karak itself, underscoring the individuality of each community. The discerning locals readily identify individuals attempting to speak their dialect but who are not originally from Karak.

Furthermore, the Karak dialect displays a notable absence of significant religious influence, with only minor impacts observed in expressions used during prayer, encompassing both Muslim and Christian communities. It is essential to note that individuals who relocate to another province during their children's formative years may witness a shift in dialect, influencing the language spoken by the younger generation as they assimilate into new communities, including schools and neighborhoods. These insightful observations were derived from oral interviews conducted with Dr. Qeftan, a specialist in Karaki dialects and a native of Karak, providing valuable context to the linguistic landscape of the region.

6. PHONETIC AND LINGUISTIC ANALYSIS OF THE KARAKI DIALECT: DATA AND RESULTS

The analytical approach used to interpret the data involved an implicit quantitative auditory analysis with two raters. I personally listened to the recorded conversations and meticulously documented instances of specific phonetic pronunciations, morphological subtleties, and other

linguistically significant features. The phonetic analysis focused on the pronunciation of the phonemes] ق q], ث[ṭ], and ض [ḍ]. The occurrences of ق [q] were examined for realisations as [q], [g], or glottalized aspirants. Similarly, the pronunciation of ث [ṭ] was categorised as ت [t] or س [s], while the pronunciation of ض [ḍ] was differentiated as ز [z] or] د d].

Complementing the phonetic data, I observed the use of the letter ب [b] as a prefix to denote present-tense verbs, a feature of the Jordanian Arabic dialect that indicates participation in the dialectical community. The use of demonstrative signs such as heyk, had, hay, hada, and hadol in Amman and hath, hay, hathak, and hathik in Karak was meticulously detailed. In addition, attention was paid to the presence of dual conjugation of nouns, gender distinctions in pronouns, and grammatical conjugations beyond the second and third person singular. The analysis delved into the aspect of negation, examining the use of the '-ish' [ɪʃ] ending, particularly in Amman, and contrasting it with the more common negation particles in Karak, including la, ma, and fish. The study also examined the palatalization of [k] at the beginning of words with this phoneme in the Karak dialect. Finally, any foreign vocabulary, especially English, that emerged during the conversations was compiled.

The study included a sample size of 50 participants, consisting of undergraduate and postgraduate students from Karak, all in the age group of 18–25 years. This diverse sample included 15 men from each of the Muslim and Christian communities and 10 women from each community. The resulting results from the analysis of the conversations are presented in Table 1, comparing urban and rural dialects in Karak.

Table 1. Comparison of Urban and Rural Accents in Karak

Population / Unit of Analysis	City of Karak		Villages around Karak	
Phoneme ق [q]	**Muslims M&F**	**Christians M&F**	**Muslims M&F**	**Christians M&F**
Pronounced as [q] ق	None	None	None	None
Pronounced as [g]	100%	100%	100%	100%
Pronounced as glottalized aspiration (hamzah) ء	None	None	None	None
Phoneme ث [ṭ]				
Pronounced as [ṭ] ث	55%	55%	100%	100%
Pronounced as [t] ت	73%	73%	None	None
Pronounced as [s] س	25%	25%	None	None
Phoneme ض [ḍ]				
Pronounced as [ḍ] ض	None	None	None	None
Pronounced as [ḍ] ظ	30%	30%	70%	70%
Pronounced as [d] د	84%	84%	None	None

ذ Pronounced as [th]	20%	20%	100%	100%
Dual declension	None	None	None	None
keys Question	Existed (lawyah, laih,lawaish ,A"dko.mu hwon)	Existed (lawyah, laih,lawaish ,A"dko.mu hwon)	Existed (lawyah, laih,lawaish ,A"dko .mu hwon)	Existed (lawyah, laih,lawaish ,A"dko.mu hwon)
Demonstrative Signs	Existed (had, hadey, hadak, hadeek,had ool,hadoola k)	Existed (had, hadey, hadak, hadeek,had ool,hadoola k)	Existed (hath, hathy, hathak, hathik,hath ool, hathoolak)	Existed (hath, hathy, hathak, hathik, hathool, hathoolak))
Present tense [b]	Existed: "bokl" I eat "Baktub" I write …	Existed "bokl" I eat "Baktub" I write	Existed: "bokl" I eat "Baktub" I write	Existed: "bokl" I eat "Baktub" I write
Foreign Words	Existed: " of course, really, nice and more others	Existed: " of course, really, nice and more others	None	None
[k] Palatalization as: تشch	Limited	Limited	Limited	Limited

7. DIALECTICAL VARIETIES IN KARAK: A DETAILED ANALYSIS OF URBAN AND RURAL LINGUISTIC PARTICULARITIES

The table presented provides a comprehensive overview of accentual variation between individuals from Karak town and those from surrounding villages. Based on four essential language features—phonetic, morphological, grammatical, and semantic—this study examines the dominant accentual features within each aspect, specifically within the Karak accent. It is crucial to acknowledge that the population sample of the study was deliberately selected from two different areas within Karak Governorate: the city of Karak (the governorate capital) and three neighbouring villages (Alsmachya, Adir, and Hmood). The choice of these villages stems from their geographical separation from the city, which contributes to a unique cultural identity shared by both Christians and Muslims. The primary research question centres on the interrelated influences of geography and culture.

While gender did not emerge as a determining factor in accent variation, except in relation to religion or geographical origin, it is important to note that the study does not specifically focus on gender effects on accent. A more comprehensive study would be required to explore the potential impact of gender on accent, as it was not the central theme of this research.

Looking at the table detailing the distinctions between urban and rural accents within and outside the city of Karak, there was an intriguing uniformity among the participants. In particular, the unanimous pronunciation of the letter ق (q) as (g) was noted. As a result, words such as qaryah (village) become garyah, and qahwah (coffee) becomes gahwah. This consistent pronunciation distinguishes the Karak accent, whether urban or rural, from neighbouring Jordanian accents, where the same letter is typically pronounced as hamza (ء). For example, qalb (heart) is pronounced 'alb, and qahwah (coffee) is pronounced 'ahweh in these neighbouring accents. This linguistic variation may be due to differences in lifestyle associated with urban and rural living.

In contrast to the consistent pronunciation of the letter ق observed among both urban and rural participants, the letter ث showed considerable variation. Residents of the villages surrounding Karak consistently pronounced ث as it is written in Arabic, i.e., th (as in thin), accurately articulating words such as مثلا, كثير, and الثلاثاء as written in Arabic. Conversely, participants in the city of Karak showed a mixed pronunciation of the same letter, with some pronouncing ث as ث (th), ت (t), or س (s), or a combination of these. Specifically, 55% of city participants pronounced ث as ث, 75% as ت, and 25% as س. Notably, an individual participant might pronounce ث differently in words such as (الثلاثاء) التلاتا, كثير, and سم.

Renowned for its complexity, the Arabic letter ض posed a pronunciation challenge for both native and non-native speakers. Often mispronounced, ض shares phonetic characteristics and morphological similarities with ذ, ظ, and د. Similar to ث, ض showed different pronunciations among participants within the same population. A significant finding was the pronunciation of ض as either ظ or ذ. Among urban and rural participants, 30% and 70%, respectively, pronounced the sound as ظ (e.g., ضروري as ظروري). Among urban Karaki participants, a substantial 84% pronounced ض as د (e.g., ضرب as درب). The most notable difference between urban and rural Karakis was the pronunciation of ض as ذ, a distinctive feature of the Karaki dialect (e.g., ضيق as ذيق and متضايق as متذايق).

Unsurprisingly, the Karaki accent, whether urban or rural, deviates from standard Arabic usage by omitting the dual morpheme (ان- and ين-) and opting instead for plural pronouns. This linguistic choice is in line with several other Jordanian accents, where the majority tend to omit plural pronouns, especially for verbs. In the Karaki accent, the dual pronoun is replaced by the demonstrative pronoun "هظول", which is used to indicate both dual and plural forms for both masculine and feminine contexts. Notably, both urban and rural participants in the sample demonstrate a consistent pronunciation of these demonstrative pronouns, articulating هذا as هاظا, هذه as هاظي, and هؤلاء as هظول.

The use of interrogatives in the Karaki accent follows a consistent pattern across the participant sample. A variety of words, including لويش, وش, أدكم, ليه, لويه, etc., are used to express questions. The gender and number agreement determines the choice of interrogative words; for example, أدك for a singular male and أدكي for a singular female are commonly used by Karakis.

A distinctive feature of the Karakhi accent is its treatment of the present tense. When a present-tense verb is required, participants uniformly add the letter باء to the beginning of the word. This feature, although present in other Jordanian dialects, shows remarkable consistency among those from the Karak region.

Two other noteworthy phenomena were observed during the analysis of the recordings. Firstly, the incorporation of foreign (mainly English) words into everyday speech was widespread among participants from the town of Karak, in contrast to the absence of this feature in the sample from the surrounding villages. This phenomenon is attributed to cultural, social, and economic factors. Secondly, the conversion of the sound (k) into a compound sound, تش (ch), occurred in limited instances and words among both urban and rural participants. This conversion, used to indicate the second person feminine, is not unique to the Karaki accent, as other Jordanian dialects, as well as regions across the Arab world, exhibit similar phonetic variations from ك to تش.

8. COMPARATIVE CONVERSATIONS: RELIGIOUS AND LINGUISTIC HARMONY

An insightful exploration of linguistic dynamics, the study delves into the intricate fabric of dialectical variation among Christians and Muslims in the vibrant community of Karak. The focus is on whether religious affiliation leaves an indelible mark on the local dialect that transcends geographical nuances. The analysis of the linguistic tapestry through Table 1 reveals a harmonious coexistence in which the Karak dialect seems impervious to the religious differences between these two communities. From consonantal conversions to the intricacies of verb usage and the infusion of foreign words, the study dissects the linguistic landscape in intricate detail. Beyond the linguistic nuances, a fascinating revelation emerges that sheds light on the shared use of religious terminology between Muslims and Christians, underscoring the long-standing religious and social harmony that characterises this unique Jordanian community.

Table 2: Analyzing Dialogues among Karaki Muslims and Christians

Unit of Analysis \ Population	Karaki Muslims		Karaki Christians	
	Men	**Women**	**Men**	**Women**
Phoneme ق [q]				
Pronounced as [q]	None	None	None	None
Pronounced as [g]	100%	100%	100%	100%
Pronounced as glottalized aspiration	None	None	None	None
Phoneme ث [ṯ]				
Pronounced as [ṯ]	100%	100%	100%	100%
Pronounced as [t]	None	None	None	None
Pronounced as [s]	None	None	None	None
Phoneme ض [ḍ]				

Pronounced as [d]	None	None	None	None
Pronounced as [d]	None	None	None	None
Pronounced as [thذ]	88%	66%	73%	40%
Dual declension **Keys question**	None Existed (lawyah, laih,lawaish, A"dko.mu hwon)	None Existed (lawyah, laih,lawais h,A"dko.m u hwon)	None Existed (lawyah, laih,lawaish ,A"dko.mu hwon)	None Existed (lawyah, laih,lawaish ,A"dko.mu hwon)
Demonstrative Signs	Existed (hath, hay, hathak, hathik)	Existed (hath, hay, hathak, hathik)	Existed (hath, hay, hathak, hathik)	Existed (hath, hay, hathak, hathik)
Present tense [b]-	Existed Ex: "bokl" I eat "Baktub" I write	Existed Ex: "bokl" I eat "Baktub" I write	Existed Ex: "bokl" I eat "Baktub" I write	Existed Ex: "bokl" I eat "Baktub" I write
Foreign Words	Existed: " of course, really, nice and more others	Existed: " of course, really, nice and more others	Existed: " of course, really, nice and more others	Existed: " of course, really, nice and more others
Religion Words	Existed: " inshallah, mashallah, Alhamdolla h and wallah as I swear.	Existed: " inshallah, mashallah, Alhamdoll ah and wallah as I swear.	Existed: Same words used by Muslims speakers.	Existed: Same words used by Muslims speakers.
[k] Palatalizationتشch	Limited	Limited	Limited	Limited

This paper examines the dialectical differences between Christians and Muslims in Karak. No distinction is made between urban and rural areas. This central question aims to identify the potential impact of religion on the Karaki dialect. Table 1 shows that religion does not have a clear influence on the dialect in Karak. Both Christians and Muslims, analysed using the same units of measurement as in the previous table, showed a 100% conversion of the letter ق to the sound 'g' and the letter ث to 'ت' at identical rates. This is in contrast to the majority of Jordanian dialects, especially the Ammani dialect, where ق is often converted to ء and ث to ت or س. The absence of such variations in the Karaki dialect suggests uniformity, irrespective of religious affiliation.

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There was a subtle difference in the pronunciation of the letter ض between Christians and Muslims, but this difference does not constitute a clear dialectical marker between the two religious communities in Karak. Neither community pronounced ض exactly according to standard Arabic pronunciation, which is to be expected given its phonetic difficulty and similarity to ظ, د, and ذ. While many Jordanian dialects pronounce ض as ظ or د, the Karaki dialect distinguishes itself by pronouncing it as ذ. This difference serves as a distinctive marker for the Karaki dialect, distinguishing it from other dialects in Jordan.

The sample showed no differences in the use of dual pronouns in verbs; instead, both communities only used the dual in nouns. There were also no differences between Christians and Muslims in the use of interrogatives or demonstrative pronouns. Both communities agreed on the insertion of the letter ب before present tense verbs, a pattern observed in the urban sample. Notably, both religious communities showed a high degree of agreement on the incorporation of foreign words into everyday speech, including terms such as 'already', 'nice','midterm', and 'ok'. In addition, there was agreement on the conversion of the letter ك to the compound sound تش in certain cases.

The religious and social harmony that has persisted between Muslims and Christians in Jordan is an interesting finding related to the religious variable. Both groups used religious terminology specific to Islam more often than words related to Christianity. Expressions such as صلّ عالنبي and والله, إن شاء الله, الحمد لله, السلام عليكم were used by Christians with the same ease as their Muslim counterparts. The author attributes this to the fact that, as a minority living among a Muslim majority, Christians are influenced by the dominant majority. Moreover, the use of religious phraseology does not necessarily indicate religious commitment or faith, as even non-religious Muslims use these phrases without religious connotations, exemplified by the ubiquitous use of إن شاء الله (God willing) among many Muslims.

9. EXPANDING HORIZONS: TOWARDS A HOLISTIC EXPLORATION OF JORDANIAN DIALECTS/ ACCENTS INTEGRATING GEOGRAPHY, RELIGION, AND CULTURAL TRAITS

Acknowledging the valuable contributions of previous research, we seek to add to the existing body of knowledge by adopting a more comprehensive and inclusive approach. Our aim is to incorporate a wider range of elements, particularly geography, religious belief, and political-cultural characteristics, in order to provide a nuanced and holistic perspective on the linguistic dynamics of the Karaki dialect.

In short, our exploration of the linguistic landscape of Karak has unravelled a rich tapestry of dialectical variation, shedding light on the intricate interplay between geography, religious belief and cultural characteristics. As we navigated the diverse accents within Karak, we embarked on a journey to understand language within its contextual framework. The detailed methodology, involving conversations with diverse participants, both urban and rural, Christian and Muslim, aimed to capture the nuanced variations that define Karak dialect. Contrary to expectations, our findings suggest that religious affiliation has minimal impact on the Arabic spoken in Karak, highlighting the harmonious linguistic coexistence between Christians and Muslims.

Building on previous efforts and incorporating a wider range of elements, the statistical analysis contributes to a more comprehensive understanding of Jordanian dialects. As we

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delved into phonetic features, morphological nuances, and linguistic characteristics, the data presented in Table 1 elucidated the dialectical differences between urban and rural communities, demonstrating the importance of geographical location. In addition, the study of the letters ث ,ق, and ض revealed distinct pronunciations, providing insights into the unique phonetic landscape of Karak.

This study serves as an important pilot for future research, highlighting the need to delve deeper into dimensions such as gender, age, lineage, and national identity, which may further shape the linguistic fabric of the region. By adopting a holistic approach, we have taken a step towards unravelling the complex tapestry of Karaki accents, providing a basis for nuanced investigations into the multifaceted nature of Jordanian dialects. Ultimately, this endeavour aims to foster a deeper appreciation of the cultural and linguistic diversity embedded within the vibrant communities of Karak, Jordan.

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