

Social Variables and Dialectal Shifts: A Study of Linguistic Changes in Karbala and Baghdad

Mustafa Talib Mutashar Jabri, Ph.D. Candidate, Department of English, Faculty of Foreign Languages, Isfahan (Khorasgan) Branch, Islamic Azad University, Isfahan, Iran

mt90iraq@gmail.com

Bahram Hadian*, Assistant Professor, Department of English, Faculty of Foreign Languages, Isfahan (Khorasgan) Branch, Islamic Azad University, Isfahan, Iran

bah.hadian@khuif.ac.ir

Raad Shakir AbdulHasan AlNawas, Assistant Professor, Department of English, College of Education for Humanities, University of Thi Qar, Iraq

raad.alnawas@gmail.com

Atefeh Sadat Mirsaeedi, Assistant Professor, Department of English, Faculty of Foreign Languages, Isfahan (Khorasgan) Branch, Islamic Azad University, Isfahan, Iran

Atefemirsaeedi@gmail.com

Abstract

This study investigates the impact of education, age, and gender on linguistic changes within the dialects of Karbala and Baghdad, Iraq. Utilizing a sociolinguistic approach, the research analyzes how these social variables influence phonological, syntactic, and semantic features. A mixed-methods design was employed, gathering data from 192 participants in both cities, encompassing urban and rural environments. The findings highlight education and age as critical factors driving dialectal variations, with urban populations showing a stronger tendency to adopt standardized linguistic forms. Younger generations, particularly in urban settings, lead the shift toward prestigious urban language norms. Gender also plays a significant role, with female speakers more likely to adopt prestigious language forms. These results contribute to the understanding of dialectal evolution in Iraq and align with broader trends in Arabic sociolinguistics, highlighting the interplay between social factors and language change.

Keywords: Social variables, dialectal shifts, Karbala dialect, Baghdad dialect, phonological, syntactic, and semantic features

INTRODUCTION

Linguistic change is an inevitable consequence of the dynamic interaction between language and society. In many communities, language evolves in response to various social forces, such as education, age, gender, and geographic location. In the case of Iraq, the cities of Karbala and Baghdad offer an ideal context to

study how these social variables influence dialectal features. Baghdad, as the capital and a cosmopolitan center, represents urban linguistic prestige and is a hub of linguistic innovation. Karbala, with its more traditional and religious atmosphere, exhibits a different set of linguistic characteristics, especially in its rural regions.

The interaction between social factors and linguistic change has been well-documented in sociolinguistics, with early studies by Labov (1966) and Trudgill (1974) demonstrating how class, gender, and regional identity shape language use. In the context of Arabic-speaking countries, particularly Iraq, research on how social variables contribute to linguistic change is still developing, with much of the existing literature focused on historical linguistic features rather than contemporary sociolinguistic processes.

This study aims to bridge this gap by exploring how education, age, and gender contribute to linguistic change in the dialects of Karbala and Baghdad. By comparing the phonological, syntactic, and semantic features of speakers from urban and rural areas, this research seeks to uncover the specific linguistic changes occurring as a result of these social variables. Understanding how these factors drive linguistic change is critical for preserving Iraq's linguistic diversity and for gaining understanding of broader trends in Arabic dialectology.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Sociolinguistic Theories of Language Variation

Sociolinguistics as a field explores the dynamic relationship between language and society, often focusing on how social factors such as age, gender, education, and regional identity influence linguistic variation and change (Labov, 1966). William Labov, widely regarded as a pioneer in this field, developed the variationist approach, which demonstrates that linguistic features vary systematically across social classes, gender, and age groups. His foundational studies on New York City English showed that lower-class speakers tend to use non-standard forms, while upper-class speakers lean toward prestigious linguistic variants (Labov, 1966). This concept is critical for understanding how social factors drive language change in urban and rural populations in places like Iraq.

Trudgill (1974) expanded upon Labov's work by focusing on how gender and social class intersect with language variation in Norwich, England. His research revealed that women tend to use more prestigious forms than men, a pattern attributed to their greater social mobility and desire to conform to societal norms. Trudgill's concept of dialect leveling, where dialectal differences are reduced due to increased interaction between speakers of different dialects, is particularly relevant for urban-rural linguistic dynamics. This theory helps explain the dialect convergence observed between Karbala and Baghdad, as younger generations in rural areas adopt more urban linguistic features through increased exposure to media and migration.

Arabic Sociolinguistics

In the context of Arabic-speaking countries, Ferguson's (1959) concept of diglossia is critical for understanding the relationship between Modern Standard Arabic (MSA) and regional dialects. Ferguson highlighted how Arabic speakers navigate between two varieties of Arabic: a "high" form used in formal settings (MSA) and a "low" colloquial form used in everyday communication. In Iraq, where regional dialects play an essential role in social identity, the interaction between formal and informal varieties is compounded by sociolinguistic factors like education and gender.

Abu-Haidar (1991) made significant contributions to Arabic sociolinguistics with her study of Christian Arabic of Baghdad, which explored how gender and social class influenced linguistic behavior. She found that women often lead linguistic change by adopting prestigious forms, a trend consistent with Labov's (1990) observation of gendered linguistic patterns in Western contexts. Abu-Haidar's work is essential for understanding gender-based language variation in Baghdad, offering a comparative framework for this study's exploration of Karbala.

More recent research, such as Al-Rojaie (2013), examined social stratification and language variation in Saudi Arabia, providing valuable perceptions of how education and social mobility influence linguistic choices. His findings suggest that younger and more educated speakers favor prestigious linguistic forms, a trend observed in both Saudi Arabic and Iraqi Arabic. These studies underscore the role of education as a significant driver of linguistic change, as educated individuals are more likely to adopt standardized forms due to their exposure to formal schooling and media.

Linguistic Change in Arabic Dialects

The study of linguistic change in Arabic dialects is increasingly gaining scholarly attention, particularly with the rise of digital media, which exposes speakers to a wider range of linguistic influences. Ingham (1997) explored dialectal change in the Gulf region, noting how younger speakers tend to adopt features from urban dialects, signaling a broader trend of urbanization in language. In Iraq, urban centers like Baghdad are hubs of linguistic innovation, while rural areas, such as those surrounding Karbala, tend to preserve more traditional linguistic forms. This urban-rural divide mirrors global patterns of linguistic change, where urban prestige and access to education accelerate the adoption of new forms (Tagliamonte, 2021).

Albirini (2016) extended the conversation on linguistic change by examining how social media and digital communication influence language use among younger Arabic speakers. His research shows that digital platforms often promote the spread of urban linguistic features to rural areas, leading to the leveling of dialectal differences. This finding is relevant for understanding how social factors like age and media exposure are accelerating linguistic change in both Karbala and Baghdad.

Purposes of the Study

The primary purpose of this study is to investigate how social variables—specifically education, age, and gender—contribute to linguistic change within the dialects of Karbala and Baghdad. By focusing on these social factors, the study aims to provide a complete understanding of the mechanisms behind dialectal variation in Iraq. The purposes of the study can be outlined as follows:

1. The study seeks to examine how education, age, and gender influence phonological, syntactic, and semantic features in the dialects of Karbala and Baghdad. By analyzing the impact of these social factors, the research aims to identify the linguistic patterns that distinguish different social groups and explain how social identities are expressed through language in these cities.
2. The study aims to explore the linguistic differences between urban and rural populations in Karbala and Baghdad, focusing on how urbanization, migration, and media exposure contribute to dialect leveling and linguistic convergence. By comparing urban and rural speakers, the research seeks to understand how geographic location and social mobility influence the adoption of standardized forms versus the retention of traditional dialectal features.
3. One of the core purposes of the study is to assess how formal education promotes the adoption of prestigious and standardized linguistic forms in Iraq. The research aims to determine whether educated speakers are more likely to use urbanized forms of Arabic and how education influences linguistic preferences in both formal and informal settings.
4. The study seeks to investigate how gender shapes linguistic behavior, particularly focusing on the role of female speakers in adopting prestigious forms and driving linguistic change. By examining gender differences in language use, the study aims to understand how social expectations and gender roles influence the use of prestigious versus traditional forms in both urban and rural contexts.
5. The study aims to provide understanding of how language use reflects social identity in Iraq, particularly in terms of how speakers navigate between traditional dialects and urban, prestigious forms. By analyzing how linguistic choices signal social mobility, identity, and group affiliation, the study seeks to contribute to a broader understanding of sociolinguistic identity and language change in the Arab world.
6. The study aims to provide practical awareness for language policymakers and educators in Iraq by exploring how social factors influence linguistic variation and change. By understanding the dynamics of linguistic standardization and dialect preservation, the research aims to inform language teaching and curriculum development in schools and to contribute to language preservation initiatives aimed at protecting regional dialects.

In brief, the study seeks to examine the complex interplay between social variables and linguistic change in Karbala and Baghdad, offering understanding of the processes driving dialectal variation in Iraq and contributing to the broader field of Arabic sociolinguistics.

Research Questions and Hypotheses

This study explores how social variables—such as education, gender, and age—contribute to linguistic change in the dialects of Karbala and Baghdad. The research questions and corresponding hypotheses are formulated as follows:

- RQ1. How do education, age, and gender influence dialectal changes in Karbala and Baghdad?*
RQ 2. Which linguistic features are most influenced by these social variables?

RQ 3. How do dialectal variations between Karbala and Baghdad differ, particularly across urban and rural areas?

METHODOLOGY

Research Design

A mixed-methods research design was used to provide a complete analysis of the linguistic data. The study combined quantitative analysis, such as statistical comparisons of linguistic features, with qualitative methods, such as interviews and observations of natural speech patterns. This approach allowed the study to capture both the measurable effects of social variables on language and the more nuanced, qualitative aspects of dialect variation.

Participants

The study consisted of 192 participants from Karbala and Baghdad, evenly divided between urban and rural populations. The participants were stratified based on three key social variables: gender (male and female), age (younger and older speakers), and education (educated and uneducated). The study intentionally selected participants from a range of educational backgrounds to capture the full spectrum of linguistic behavior across different social strata.

Data Collection Procedures

Data were collected through sociolinguistic interviews, which were conducted in both formal and informal settings to ensure natural language use. The interviews were structured around common conversational topics such as family, work, and daily life, which allowed participants to express themselves in their native dialect. All interviews were recorded and transcribed for analysis.

Data Analysis

Phonological, syntactic, and semantic features were analyzed using both quantitative and qualitative methods. Statistical tests, such as Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) and Chi-Square tests, were used to examine correlations between social variables and linguistic features. The qualitative data were analyzed thematically to identify patterns in language use and to explore how participants' linguistic choices reflect broader social trends.

RESULTS

The analysis of linguistic data from Karbala and Baghdad reveals significant influences of education, age, and gender on dialectal features, specifically in phonological and syntactic choices. The following tables summarize the key findings:

Table 1*Education and Phonological Features*

| Phonological Feature | Educated Speakers (%) | Uneducated Speakers (%) |
|------------------------------|------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| /dʒ/ (urban) vs. /ʒ/ (rural) | 85% | 60% |
| /k/ (urban) vs. /tʃ/ (rural) | 80% | 55% |

The results show that education significantly influences phonological variation. Educated speakers in both Karbala and Baghdad predominantly prefer urbanized and prestigious forms, such as /dʒ/ over /ʒ/ and /k/ over /tʃ/. This suggests that formal education promotes the adoption of standardized linguistic forms. Urban speakers, in particular, tend to align their speech with the prestigious linguistic norms of Baghdad, indicating the role of education in accelerating dialectal shifts.

Table 2*Age and Linguistic Change*

| Syntactic Feature | Younger Speakers (%) | Older Speakers (%) |
|--|-----------------------------|---------------------------|
| /mei/ (modern) vs. /ma:/ (traditional) | 75% | 40% |
| /g/ (urban) vs. /dʒ/ (rural) | 65% | 55% |

Age is another crucial factor affecting linguistic behavior. Younger speakers demonstrate a strong tendency to use modern syntactic forms like /mei/ instead of traditional /ma:/. This shift is especially evident in urban areas, where younger speakers are more exposed to media and modern social environments, driving them to adopt urban linguistic features. In contrast, older speakers, particularly in rural areas, retain more traditional forms.

Table 3*Gender Differences in Phonological Features*

| Phonological Feature | Male Speakers (%) | Female Speakers (%) |
|------------------------------|--------------------------|----------------------------|
| /dʒ/ (urban) vs. /ʒ/ (rural) | 55% | 80% |
| /k/ (urban) vs. /tʃ/ (rural) | 60% | 85% |

Gender has a marked impact on linguistic choices, with female speakers showing a higher propensity to adopt prestigious, urban phonological features such as /dʒ/ and /k/. This supports the global sociolinguistic trend where women tend to lead in adopting linguistic innovations, particularly those associated with prestige and urban identities. The findings indicate that female speakers, especially in urban settings, are actively driving the shift towards modern language forms, likely as a means of signaling social mobility.

The results across education, age, and gender demonstrate clear patterns in linguistic variation. Educated speakers across both cities prefer urban forms, with younger individuals being the most progressive in adopting new linguistic trends. Gender also plays a pivotal role, with women leading the linguistic shift towards standardized and prestigious language forms. These findings suggest that dialectal changes in Karbala and Baghdad are being driven largely by social factors, with education, age, and gender interacting to accelerate the adoption of modern, urbanized dialectal features.

DISCUSSION

The results of this study align with and expand on current sociolinguistic research, particularly within the Arabic-speaking world. The influence of education, age, and gender on linguistic variation in Karbala and Baghdad follows established global patterns of sociolinguistic change, but also highlights unique trends in Iraq.

Education was found to be one of the most significant drivers of linguistic change, with educated speakers consistently favoring urban, standardized forms over traditional ones. This result aligns with Al-Rojaie (2013), who observed that educated individuals in Saudi Arabia adopt prestigious linguistic forms as a marker of social mobility. The preference for modern features like /dʒ/ over /ʒ/ and /k/ over /tʃ/ among educated Iraqis reflects a similar trend, where formal education acts as a channel for promoting linguistic prestige and urban identity.

Age emerged as another important factor. Younger speakers in both cities were more likely to use modern syntactic and phonological features, consistent with global sociolinguistic trends. Research by Tagliamonte (2021) suggests that younger generations, particularly in urban areas, are at the forefront of linguistic innovation, often influenced by media and urbanization. The adoption of modern forms like /mei/ over /ma:/ by younger speakers in Iraq is a clear example of this phenomenon. Furthermore, Albirini (2016) discusses how digital media is influencing language use among younger Arabic speakers, which is consistent with our findings that younger generations in Baghdad and Karbala are leading linguistic shifts.

Gender differences in linguistic behavior, with women showing a stronger preference for prestigious forms, are in line with both Western and Arabic sociolinguistic research. The work of Abu-Haidar (1991) on gender and language in Baghdad similarly found that female speakers are more likely to adopt prestigious forms, a pattern attributed to women's role in signaling social mobility. This study reinforces Abu-Haidar's findings, showing that women, particularly in urban areas, are key drivers of linguistic change, adopting prestigious forms at higher rates than men. Globally, Labov (1990) notes that women tend to lead linguistic shifts, a trend that is confirmed by our data in the Iraqi context.

While urban-rural divides in linguistic preferences are well-documented, this study highlights the slow but steady adoption of urbanized forms by younger rural speakers, likely due to media exposure and migration. This process, termed dialect leveling, mirrors similar findings by Trudgill (1974), who observed dialect convergence in Norwich due to increased urban-rural interaction. In Iraq, this convergence appears to be driven by the growing influence of Baghdad's urban prestige on surrounding areas like Karbala, especially among younger rural speakers.

These findings are consistent with broader trends in Arabic sociolinguistics, where education and gender are often linked to linguistic innovation. However, this study also sheds light on the urban-rural divide in Iraq, showing that while rural populations still retain traditional dialectal features, younger rural speakers are gradually adopting urbanized forms due to increased exposure to media and migration.

In comparing the results with the most recent sociolinguistic research, this study reinforces and extends existing theories on linguistic change, particularly in the context of urbanization, education, and gender roles in language use. While younger, educated, and female speakers are pushing linguistic boundaries, there is still a notable retention of traditional forms among older and less-educated individuals, particularly in rural areas. This suggests that Iraq is at a linguistic crossroads, where the forces of modernization are steadily eroding traditional dialectal features, yet pockets of linguistic conservatism persist.

CONCLUSION

This study provides a complete analysis of how social variables—education, age, and gender—shape linguistic change in Karbala and Baghdad, Iraq. The findings highlight the role of education as a key driver of language standardization, with educated speakers favoring urbanized forms that reflect social prestige. Younger speakers are leading this linguistic shift, particularly in urban settings, where exposure to modern media and educational systems promotes the adoption of prestigious dialectal features. Women, more so than men, are actively adopting these prestigious forms, signaling their alignment with modern, urban identities.

Moving forward, the study emphasizes the need for further research on how media and migration contribute to dialectal convergence in Iraq. Moreover, there is a pressing need for language preservation efforts to document and maintain Iraq's linguistic diversity, particularly in rural and traditional communities. As Iraq continues to modernize, the balance between preserving dialectal heritage and embracing linguistic innovation will shape the future of its linguistic landscape.

Theoretical Implications

The study's findings support Labov's (1972) theory of language variation and change, which posits that social factors such as class, age, and gender systematically influence linguistic behavior. In the context of Iraq, education, age, and gender interact to shape the trajectory of linguistic change, with urbanization and formal education playing critical roles in promoting the adoption of standardized forms. The research also corroborates Trudgill's (1974) concept of dialect leveling, as younger rural speakers adopt urban forms due to increased interaction with urban linguistic norms through media and migration.

Practical Implications

For policymakers and educators, the study's findings offer practical understanding of the role of education in shaping language use. Educational institutions in Iraq should consider the diverse linguistic backgrounds of students when designing language curricula, balancing the teaching of Modern Standard

Arabic (MSA) with the preservation of regional dialects. Additionally, language preservation efforts should focus on documenting and promoting the use of rural dialects in Karbala and other regions to prevent their erosion due to the spread of standardized forms.

Cultural and Sociolinguistic Implications

This research contributes to the understanding of language and identity in Iraq, showing how linguistic choices reflect broader social trends related to modernization, urbanization, and gender roles. The preference for standardized forms among urban and educated speakers underscores the growing influence of urban linguistic norms on social identity, while the retention of traditional features in rural areas highlights the cultural importance of local dialects. This tension between tradition and modernity is a central theme in the sociolinguistic landscape of Iraq and will likely shape the future trajectory of linguistic change in the country.

As Iraq continues to urbanize and modernize, the linguistic divide between urban and rural areas is likely to narrow. Younger generations, particularly those with access to education and media, will continue to adopt urban linguistic forms, contributing to the leveling of dialectal differences. However, the retention of traditional dialectal features among older and rural speakers suggests that local dialects will persist, particularly in regions where cultural and religious identities are deeply tied to language.

In short, this study provides a complete analysis of how social variables contribute to linguistic change in Karbala and Baghdad, offering new intuitions to the sociolinguistic dynamics of Iraq. By exploring the interaction between education, age, gender, and geography, the research sheds light on the complex processes driving dialect variation and language evolution in the region.

Limitations of the Study

While this study provides valued perception of the role of social variables in linguistic change, several limitations should be acknowledged:

Geographical Focus: The study focuses on two major cities—Karbala and Baghdad—and their surrounding rural areas. While this provides a comparative analysis between urban and rural populations, the findings may not fully generalize to other regions of Iraq, where different social, religious, and linguistic dynamics may be at play. Future studies could expand the geographical scope to include more cities or regions to better understand the national linguistic landscape.

Limited Longitudinal Scope: This study offers a snapshot of linguistic change at a single point in time, limiting its ability to capture the long-term evolution of dialects in Iraq. Linguistic change is often a gradual process that requires long-term observation to identify enduring trends. A longitudinal study would provide a more complete view of how dialects evolve over time and how social variables continuously shape these processes.

Sample Size and Representativeness: Although the sample size of 192 participants provides a solid foundation for analysis, the study could benefit from a larger and more diverse sample to ensure representativeness across different social groups. Additionally, participants from rural areas may be

underrepresented in comparison to their urban counterparts, potentially skewing the results toward urban linguistic norms.

Influence of Media and Technology: While the study discusses the potential impact of digital media on linguistic change, it does not specifically analyze how media consumption and technology use contribute to dialect leveling in Iraq. Future research could incorporate media exposure as a variable to better understand its role in promoting urban linguistic features among younger speakers.

Suggestions for Further Research

While this research give significant perception of how social variables contribute to linguistic change in Karbala and Baghdad, several areas remain unexplored or require further investigation. Here are key suggestions for future research:

Expansion to Other Regions of Iraq: This study focuses primarily on the dialects of Karbala and Baghdad. However, Iraq is home to a diverse array of dialects, each influenced by unique cultural, social, and geographical factors. Future studies could expand the scope to include other cities and regions in Iraq, such as Basra, Mosul, or the Kurdish-speaking areas in the north. This would provide a more complete view of Iraqi Arabic dialectology and allow for comparisons between different regions, particularly between urban and rural dialects in various sociopolitical contexts.

Longitudinal Studies on Linguistic Change: Language change is a gradual process that often unfolds over several decades. While this study offers a snapshot of current linguistic trends, future research could adopt a longitudinal approach, tracking changes over time to provide a more nuanced understanding of how dialects evolve in response to shifting social variables. Such research could identify whether the linguistic shifts observed in younger generations become entrenched in the community or if new trends emerge over time.

Impact of Media and Technology: With the rapid rise of digital media and social networking platforms, future studies should investigate how exposure to digital communication influences dialect variation, particularly among younger speakers. Social media platforms such as Twitter, Facebook, and TikTok often promote standardized linguistic forms or urban dialect features due to their widespread reach. A comparative study of media consumption patterns in rural versus urban areas and their impact on language use could provide new ideas of how media globalization is accelerating dialect leveling in Iraq.

Analysis of Dialect Contact in Migration: Iraq has experienced significant internal displacement and migration in recent decades due to conflict, economic factors, and political changes. Future research could explore how dialect contact in migrant communities affects linguistic change, particularly when speakers of different dialects interact in urban centers like Baghdad. Such studies could focus on code-switching, language convergence, or the emergence of new hybrid dialects as speakers adapt to new social environments.

Role of Identity in Language Use: This study touches on how social factors like gender and education influence language use, but future research could delve deeper into the role of identity in shaping linguistic choices. Specifically, studies could investigate how speakers consciously or unconsciously use language to assert their social, religious, or regional identity. For example, in Karbala, where religious identity is central to the community, speakers may use specific linguistic forms to signal their alignment with certain social or religious groups. Exploring this relationship between language and identity could yield a richer understanding of how dialectal features are maintained or modified in different social contexts.

Phonological Variation Across Age Groups: Although this study examines the influence of age on linguistic change, a more focused study on phonological variation across age groups could provide greater detail on how specific phonemes shift over time. A fine-grained acoustic analysis of vowel and consonant shifts among different generations could reveal subtle phonetic changes that are indicative of larger sociolinguistic trends. Such research would complement the current study's findings by offering a more technical perspective on how social factors influence phonetic variation.

Gender and Language: A Closer Examination: The current study highlights gender differences in linguistic behavior, with women showing a greater tendency to adopt prestigious linguistic forms. Future research could take a more detailed look at gender and language, specifically focusing on how gender roles and expectations influence language use in different contexts. A comparative study examining gendered linguistic patterns across various Iraqi cities or rural communities could shed light on how cultural norms regarding gender shape language use.

Sociolinguistic Variation in Iraqi Multilingual Communities: Iraq is home to several linguistic communities, including speakers of Kurdish, Turkoman, and Assyrian. Future studies could investigate how speakers of these languages interact with Arabic and how multilingualism influences language change in Iraq. Examining code-switching practices, language choice in multilingual settings, and the influence of Arabic on minority languages could offer new perspectives on the sociolinguistic landscape of Iraq.

Educational Impact on Dialectal Preservation: As this study found education to be a major driver of linguistic change, future research could explore the educational system's role in dialectal preservation. Studies could investigate how schools in Iraq address the teaching of Modern Standard Arabic (MSA) while preserving regional dialects. Additionally, research could assess the impact of bilingual education or language planning policies on the maintenance of local dialects.

Perceptions of Dialect Prestige and Language Attitudes: While this study identified certain dialectal features as prestigious, further research could explore language attitudes among different social groups, examining how speakers perceive various dialects and linguistic features. For instance, how do younger versus older generations view the prestige associated with urban dialect features? A survey-based study exploring language attitudes in Karbala and Baghdad could shed light on how social groups assign prestige to specific linguistic forms and how these perceptions influence language change.

References

- Abu-Haidar, F. (1991). Christian Arabic of Baghdad: A sociolinguistic study. In *Language and Society in the Middle East* (pp. 123-145).
- Albirini, A. (2016). Language and digital communication in the Arab world: The impact of social media on language use. *Journal of Arabic Linguistics*, 8(2), 45-67.
- Al-Rojaie, A. (2013). Social stratification and language variation in Saudi Arabia. *Arab World English Journal*, 4(3), 34-56.
- Ferguson, C. A. (1959). *Diglossia*. *Word*, 15(2), 325-340.
- Ingham, B. (1997). Dialectal change in the Gulf region: A sociolinguistic perspective. *Gulf Arabic Studies*, 12(1), 78-92.
- Labov, W. (1966). *The social stratification of English in New York City*. Washington, DC: Center for Applied Linguistics.
- Labov, W. (1990). The intersection of social and linguistic factors in language change. In *Language Variation and Change* (pp. 1-20).
- Labov, W. (1972). *Sociolinguistic Patterns*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press.
- Tagliamonte, S. A. (2021). *Variationist sociolinguistics: Change, observation, interpretation*. Cambridge University Press.
- Trudgill, P. (1974). Linguistic change and social networks in Norwich. In *Sociolinguistics: A reader* (pp. 23-38).

Biodata