

	/q/	/?/	/g/	/k/
	first speaker	second speaker	third speaker	fourth speaker
The most correct speaker is	215 96.4 %	7 3.1 %	12 5.4 %	8 3.6 %
The most beautiful speech is That uttered by	140 62.8 %	62 27.8 %	35 15.7 %	22 9.9 %
The speech that reveals the most masculine characteristics is that uttered by	156 70.0 %	6 2.7 %	82 36.8 %	18 8.1 %
It is preferable always to speak in the style of	196 87.9 %	14 6.3 %	21 9.4 %	6 2.7 %
The utterance that shows the highest level of education is the one uttered by	210 94.2 %	19 8.5 %	4 1.8 %	5 2.2 %
The speech that shows a high social status is that uttered by	124 55.6 %	99 44.4 %	12 5.4 %	7 3.1 %
The most eloquent speech is that uttered by	208 93.3 %	2 .9 %	7 3.1 %	2 .9 %

Table 4 : Direct Test

These speakers are judged to have a low educational level.

It is of interest though that [ʔ] is viewed positively as a sign of high social class. This situation was explained above in terms of the traditional perception of the city as superior culturally; consequently the city linguistic variants acquire prestige. Secondly, and this is relevant to the first explanation, there seems to be a dichotomy between country varieties represented by [g] and [k] and a city variety as in [ʔ]. /q/ is a separate entity that stands alone as a special category.

These findings correlate with similar results obtained by El-Dash and Tucker (1975), who report that Classical Arabic was viewed by the subjects of their experiment to correlate with a high level of education. They also found that Classical Arabic is viewed to be more suitable for use at school, at work, on radio and on television than dialectal Arabic. However, Classical Arabic was viewed less suitable for use at home.

2. Localization of variant speech sounds :

Do Arabic speakers view particular sounds like /q/ and its variants as peculiar to one domicile or region ?

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Missing Information
/q/	19 8.5 %	42 18.8 %	93 41.7 %	50 22.4 %	12 5.4 %	7 3.1 %
/r/	42 18.8 %	93 41.7 %	55 24.7 %	19 8.5 %	12 5.4 %	2 .9 %
/g/	2 .9 %	7 3.1 %	68 30.5 %	85 38.1 %	56 25.1 %	5 2.2 %
/k/	3 1.3 %	13 5.8 %	96 43.0 %	67 30.0 %	39 17.5 %	5 2.2 %

Table 3
Speaker belongs to a high social class

where /q/ is not clearly marked for high social class? Is not a high level of education bound up with high social class? A possible answer to this concerns the role of education in traditional societies. While in developing societies education tends to help in transforming university graduates financially as well as socially, in traditional societies one is likely to find deep-rooted attitudes toward certain elements of the population. It is the belief of this author that city speakers who generally tend to be [ʔ] speakers in the Jordan-Palestine regions are traditionally viewed culturally superior to country, town or village residents. Since [ʔ] is associated with urban centers, and since urban centers are viewed as culturally superior, this may explain why [ʔ], in this case, receives the highest ratings as a marker of high social class.

We turn now to examine the results obtained in the Direct Test to see if we can find there corroborations of the findings above. We must bear in mind that the DT included basically similar statements to those in the IT, but the subjects were asked to choose the speaker to whom the statement applies. Additionally, the DT was an immediate follow-up of the IT, and new instructions were provided before the speakers were rated. The results for the two statements about which speaker exhibits high education level and high social class are in Table 4 below. 210 (94.2%) rated /q/ as the utterance that

shows the highest level of education. The rates for [ʔ], [g] and [k] are almost negligible, as speakers of these varieties are not viewed as highly educated. On the other hand, 124 (55.6%) said that /q/ suggests high social status. This seems to contradict the figures obtained in Table 3. Evidently, further research is needed to explain this contradiction. However, [ʔ] rates relatively high in the DT with respect to high social status. While 99 (44.4%) in the DT is lower than 135 (60.5%) as in Table 3, it shows that there is some tendency toward viewing [ʔ] as a high social class marker.

The discussion thus far seems to support the claim that speakers of a language tend to view certain linguistic elements, in this case phonological elements, as carriers of some sociological characteristics. The subjects in this experiment are aware, through their ratings of these speakers, that /q/, for example, tends to be restricted in its use to certain domains such as educational settings. This is clear from Table 1 where a high frequency of the /q/ use is designated to university professors and school teachers. Similarly, the use of /q/ is also viewed as a sign of a higher level of education from the other variants of /q/.

In contrast with this, two regional variants of /q/, i.e. [g] and [k] are assigned, through the ratings of the experiment subjects, to speakers representing the lower rung of the social ladder, such as farmers: