A Phonological and Sociolinguistic Analysis of Different Utterances Produced by Some Professional People in Ramadi

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Abstract

A present study is an attempt to analyze the speech of eight persons working in different professions in Ramadi city and the surrounding rural areas. They are an Imam of the mosque, a teacher, a physician, a taxi- driver, a grocer, a farmer, a worker, and a butcher. The speech of those people is analyzed phonologically in terms of voice quality and the level of pitch, while sociolinguistically in terms of style of speech being formal, or informal; or polite or impolite. The voice quality helps in deciding the speaker's identity of being rural or urban; snooty or nice because the voice quality may be harsh, cheery, creaky, coarse, etc. Thus, the fact that the voice quality of the speaker reveals his identity has been proved. Studying the characteristics of voice quality and the pitch of the voice leads to knowing the speaker's speech as formal or informal, polite or impolite. This gives us a clear evidence that there is a symmetric relation between phonetics-phonology and sociolinguistics as far as the speech is concerned.

1. Introduction

A relatively large number of socioliguistic studies of pronunciation variation in a large variety of urban areas has revealed that voice quality is an important factor along with such other factors as the pitch of the voice, rising intonation or falling intonation and the formality or informality of the speech (Gramley and Kurt, 1992:271). The problem that this study seeks to tackle is that the learners of English ignore that the voice quality plays an important role in determining the personal identity of the speaker like his class, ethnic group, behavior, age, living place, and his style of speech as being formal or informal. As they ignore that through the voice quality and the pitch of the voice , it is possible to decide whether the speaker's style is formal or informal; or polite or impolite. Thus this study aims at proving that both phonology and