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# Dialect and Cultural Contact, Shift and Maintenance among the Jordanians Living in Irbid City: A Sociolinguistic Study

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# Abstract

The paper investigates the issue of dialect and cultural contact among Jordanians living in Irbid city in the north of Jordan. The objective of the paper is to find the extent of dialect and cultural shift and maintenance among them. The data are collected by means of interviews and observations. A sample of 100 participants has been selected on the grounds of availability. The sample includes different ages, gender and educational background. The results show that the Jordanians living in Irbid city in the north of Jordan are experiencing a continuous shift in their dialects and culture because of the direct contact among them. This is a result of a mixture of dialects and cultural elements used in Irbid city.

Keywords: Language shift, Language maintenance, Language attitudes, Dialects and Jordanian culture

# 1. Introduction

Recently, language and cultural shift and maintenance have been the core of interest by many sociolinguists such as Clyne (1982), Ferguson et al (1981) and Fishman (1989) .They reveal that languages and cultures are experiencing a kind of shift as a result of language contact and some sociolinguistic factors. Languages and dialects are not stable. They are in state of change and development. Most societies are experiencing a gradual shift in their languages, dialects and culture. Fishman (1964) stresses the importance of analyzing language shift and language maintenance for the understanding of the consequences of multilingual language contact. Fishman (1966) points out that language maintenance and language shift are important issues in analyzing the change and stability in habitual language use or cultural processes.

Arabic language includes two major versions: Modern standard Arabic and colloquial dialects used in different parts of the Arab world. Khalil (2010) states that modern standard Arabic is the language of publications, the media and academic institutions. Al-Saidat and Al-Momani (2010) point out that modern standard Arabic is taken from classical Arabic which is the language of literature and the noble Quran. Al-Saidat and Al-Momani (ibid) add colloquial Arabic is a collection term for the spoken varieties of Arabic; it includes a number of regional varieties and the everyday spoken language. Dialects vary from one place to another because of the geographical factors and sociolinguistic variables. In Jordan, there are four major dialects: Urban, Rural, Bedouin and Palestinian. The objective of the current paper is to study and investigate these dialects and the cultural situation in Irbid city.

# 2. Literature Review

Language is a means of communication and it is an effective tool for communication among human beings and for sharing ideas and expressing feelings and emotions. Language may be preserved as native language from generation to generation where a variety of elements may lead to the loss of the language or dialect. Many sociolinguists such as Fishman (1964, 1989), Ferguson (1981), Dweik (2000),Yeldiz (2000) and Nofal (2011) are interested in these phenomena.

Holmes et al (1993) list different factors that foster language maintenance.

Some of which are: 1) using the mother tongue at home; 2) positive attitude towards the language; and 3) resistance to mixed marriage.

Garcia (2003) asserts that if we study language maintenance and language shift, we ought to take into consideration the domains of the language: the family, the school, subject of instruction, language of entertainment, the church, literature, the press, the military, the courts and the governmental language. Fishman (1966) emphasizes the psychological, social and cultural processes and their links to stability or change in habitual language use. He focuses on positive attitude toward the language to be maintained. Fillmore (2000) states internal and external reasons which lead to language loss. The major internal reason is the necessity to communicate with specific group in a language other than the native language of the speakers. The external reason comes from the sociopolitical factor. The society opposes differences and divergence. Most immigrants try to use the target language instead of their own native language. Nawaz et al (2012: 73)

remark that "language death occurs in unstable bilingual or multilingual speech community as a result of language shift from regressive minority language to dominant majority language."

Male and female speakers mostly have different attitudes towards dialects. Females tend to use the dialect which has a prestigious status. Habib (2005) states that the glottal stop sound /?/ in Madani dialect has more social prestige and high status than the voiced velar stop sound /g/ in rural dialect.

Most females in Jordan replace /g/ with /?/ for prestigious reasons. Gal (1979) goes side by side with this trend. He asserts that language shift is progressing faster among females as a result of social prestigious reasons. Accordingly, females do not accept the rural dialect.

Kloss (1966) states six factors for fostering language maintenance. Some of which are religio-societal, time of immigration and Pre-immigration experience with language maintenance efforts. Landweer (2000) states many factors which affect language loss. Some of which are: a) domains in which the language is used; b) frequency and type of code-switching; c) population and group dynamics; and d) language prestige.

The relationship between the young and the old who do not speak the host language well is decisive and essential in keeping the ethnic language and dialect because the young are obliged to communicate with the old by using their ethnic language. Clyne (1982) emphasizes the role of home and family in maintaining the ethnic language. Fillmore (2000) is consistent with Clyne. He urges parents to find time or create time to talk with their children about their ethnic language. Dorain (1981) states many factors which maintain the language. One of which is using the ethnic language in different domains. This helps in maintaining the language and in transmitting it to the next generation. Othman (2006) states that using Arabic among Arabic-English bilinguals in the recent Arabic community in Manchester helps in maintaining it in the second generation because of some factors such as the use of Arabic at home, using Arabic at schools and mosques and following up Arabic satellite channels.

Cho and Krashen (2000) point out that Korean language is maintained in the United States. It is widely used in different domains such as home and neighborhood. Al-Obaidi (2013) emphasizes that there is a strong relation between language maintenance and other non-linguistic factors such as home, religion and positive attitudes towards the ethnic language.

# 3. Methodology

# 3.1 Sample

The sample of the current study consists of 100 participants who are residents of Irbid city. The sample consists of 56 males and 44 females. Some of them are originally from Irbid city; others are Palestinian refugees coming from different areas of Palestine following the Israeli-Arab wars in 1948 and 1968. They were forced to find safe shelter in Jordan. Some of them were born in Irbid city. The sample also includes some participants who are originally from villages and towns of Jordan and live in Irbid city for work or for some other social factors such as social status, marriage, etc. The choice of the sample is based on availability. The sample covers different ages, gender, educational background, place of birth, occupation, etc. It is divided into four age groups, following the works done by Dweik (2000), Al-Khatib (2001) and Al-Khatib and Al -Ali (2010) as the following table shows:

Age	No.	Sex		Marital State	
		Male	Female	Married	Single
14 - 29	30	20	10	14	16
30 - 45	20	11	9	18	2
46 - 59	25	15	10	25	-
60 -	25	10	15	25	-
Total	100	56	44	82	18

Table 1. Distribution of the sample by age, gender and marital state

Other demographic characteristics are shown in table 2.

Place of Birth	No.	Level of Education	No.
Irbid City	35	Basic Stage	25
Palestine	35	High School	30
elsewhere	30	B.A	30
		M.A	10
		PhD	5
Total	100		100

#### 3.2 The Instrument of the Study

To achieve the objectives of the study, the researcher designed an interview questions, following the methods used in Dweik (2000), Al-Khatib and Alzoubi(2009) and Al-Khatib and Al-Ali (2010).

To the researcher, interviews and personal observations are effective methods to achieve the objective of the study. It is also not possible to study the dialect situation in Irbid city without interviewing the participants and recording their spoken dialects .Data are gathered, recorded and transcribed to study the dialect and cultural situation in Irbid city. The researcher of the study belongs to the people who are living in Irbid city. This will facilitate carrying out the interviews and gathering data via interviews and personal observations. The questions of the interviews consist of different elements such as demographic data, communications, and cultural aspects as shown in Appendix A. The researcher starts each interview by giving a summary about the objectives of the study. Extra questions could be asked when necessary.

## 4. Findings and Analysis

The age of the participants plays an essential role in the realization of the dialects used among the participants. Younger generation especially females whose age ranges from 14-29 years old tend to use Urban (Madani) dialect. This may be due to its higher status. The participants over 60 years old use their ethnic dialects and they are proud of them. This result goes with Al-Wer (2007) who assures that Ammani female speakers tend to use /?/ in Madani dialect which has prestigious status over other dialects. The following table shows the distribution of the sample by dialects and age.

Age	No.	Horani	Tirawi	Bedouin	Urban (Madani)	Gorani	Percentages
14 - 29	30	10	-	-	17	3	30%
30 - 45	20	7	3	-	10	-	20%
46 - 59	25	12	5	4	2	2	25%
60 -	25	11	4	5	-	5	25%
Total	100	40	12	9	29	10	100%

Table 3. Distribution of the sample by dialect and age

Table 4 below shows the percentages of the dialects used in Irbid city and the distribution of the sample to dialect and sex .The results show that the majority of the participants use Horani dialect at the percentage of 40% while 29% of them use Urban (Madani) dialect. 12% of the participants use Tirawi (Palestinian) dialect. Similarly, 10% of them use Gorani dialect.The results also show that the least percentage of the participants is 9% which goes to Bedouin dialect.

Table 4. Distribution of the sample to Dialects and Sex

Dialects	Sex		Total	Percentages	
	Male	Female			
Horani dialect	30	10	40	40%	
Urban (Madani)	8	21	29	29%	
dialect					
Tirawi(Palestinian) dialect	7	5	12	12%	
Gorani dialect	6	4	10	10%	
Bedouin dialect	5	4	9	9%	
Total	56	44	100	100%	

The results reveal that the highest percentage of the distribution of the sample to dialect is the Horani dialect with 40% of the total. This is because the Horani dialect is originally the ethnic dialect to the people of Irbid city. The most important feature of Horani dialect is that the voiceless uvular stop /q/ is articulated as voiced velar stop /g/ as in /qamaa/ stand up which is pronounced as /gaama/. The participants who speak the Horani dialect use special words and expressions as follows:/Jiditti/ my grandmother; /gdeesh/ mule; /Jobadak/ what do you want, etc.

The lowest percentage goes to Bedouin dialect. This is due to the places where they live. Bedouins live in the desert in the south and east of Jordan. Their dialect is rarely used in the urban areas. When the Bedouin participants are asked why they are living in Irbid city, they assure that they have come to Irbid city for work. The prominent feature of the

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Bedouin dialect is the use of the voiced velar stop sound /g/ in place of the uvular stop sound /q/. This result goes side by side with Abdel-Jawad (1981) who remarks that the uvular stop sound /q/ has merged with different variants as voiceless velar stop sound /k/; voiced velar stop sound /g/; glottal stop /?/. He adds that /q/ becomes voiced velar stop sound /g/ when rendered by Bedouins as the following example shows:/qalb/ heart in standard Arabic is pronounced as /galb/ in Bedoin dialect.. The voiceless velar stop sound /k/ is also pronounced as the voiceless affricate post-alveolar sound /tʃ/ as the following example shows: /Kalam Jamil/ good speech is articulated in the Bedouin dialect as "tʃalamin zain". The word /zain/ which has the meaning of good, beautiful, nice, yes, O.K, etc is frequently used in the Bedouin dialect.

In standard Arabic, the glottal stop /?/ is followed by the back vowel /ɔ/ in some verbs of order as follows:

/?oqSod/ sit down

/?odrus/ study

Bedouins of Jordan replace the back vowel /5/ to front vowel /1/ as following examples:

/?igSid/ sit down

/?idris/ study

Bedouins of Jordan also use special words and expressions which are not mostly used in standard Arabic and other Jordanian dialects as follows: /?thrij/ speak; /yalaxu/ brother; /bnayah/ daughter; /ħina/ we, etc.29% of the participants use Urban dialect (Madani). Most of the participants who speak the Urban dialect are under the age of thirty five. They tend to use the Urban dialect for prestigious status even though they belong to parents who use other dialects. This result goes side by side with Habib (2005) who assures that the glottal stop sound /?/ has more social prestigious status than using the voiced velar stop sound /g/ among women. The participants who use the Urban (Madani) dialect use special words and expressions as follows: /la?tlik/ for you (for female); /la?tlak/ for you (for male); /hala?/ now; /ktfak/ how are you? (for male) ;/Kifik/how are you? (for female), etc. The glottal stop sound /?/ is the distinctive feature of those who are speaking Urban (Madani) dialect.12% of the participants use the Tirawi dialect. It is spoken by the people who migrated from the Palestinian coastal town "Tirat Haifa" as a result of the Arab-Israeli war. The uvular stop sound /q/ is considered as the identity feature of Tirawis living in Irbid city. The uvular stop sound /q/ in standard Arabic replaces the glottal stop /?/ in the Urban dialect; the voiced velar stop sound /g/ in the Horani and Bedouin dialects and /q/ in the Tirawi dialect as the following example

/qaal/ say (Standard Arabic); /gaal/ (Horani and Bedouin dialects); /?aal/ (Urban dialect) and / qaal/ (Tirawi dialect)

Tirawis use expressions and words that are used neither in standard Arabic nor in the other Jordanian dialects in Irbid city as follows:

/qifnya/ dish, bowl; /fistyan/ female dress; /qarut/ orphan or child, etc.

Table 3 shows that most participants who use Tirawi dialects are above the age of 46 years old. This result goes parallel with El-Salman (2008) who asserts that all Tirawis who keep their ethnic dialect belong to the old age. This is because they want to keep their ethnic dialect for self-assertion.

10% of the participants use the Gorani dialect. It is spoken by the black farmers who are living in the Jordan valley. Some of them came to Irbid city for the purpose of work or marriage. The distinctive feature of the Gorani dialect is the use of the voiceless affricate post-alveolar sound /tʃ/ in place of voiceless velar stop sound /k/ as in the following examples: /tfalb/ dog; /tfabir/ /big/; /tfalam/ speech. etc.

Goranis use the front central back vowel /ə/ in place of the /-t/ of feminine gender as follows: /ɣanama/ goat in place /ɣanamatun/ in standard Arabic. Goranis also use special words and expressions as follows: /widi/ I want; /Kubaya/ cup; /wat<sup>s</sup>a/ earth, etc.

To conclude, each dialect spoken in Irbid city has special lexical items which are mostly different from others as table 5 shows:

Lexical	Lexical Items	Lexical Items	Lexical	Lexical	Lexical	Lexical
Items in	in Standard	in Horani	Items in	Items in	Items in	Items in
English	Arabic	Dialect	Tirawi	Bedouin	Urban	Gorani
-			Dialect	Dialect	Dialect	Dialect
Oranges	burtuqal	burdgan	burdqan	burdgan	burt?an	burtugan
Lamp	mis <sup>ç</sup> baħ	lamba	lamba	Lamð <sup>s</sup> a	Lamda	Lamð <sup>s</sup> a
Spoon	malSaqa	Maʕlaga	zalfa	xa∫oga	maʕlaʔa	Maʕlaga
Children	?awlad	wlad	qawari:t	Sidzjan	?awlad	Sadzab

#### Table 5. The Lexical Items of the Irbid City Dialects

The interviews show that all the interviewees despite their ages like the Jordanian national food. 'Mansaf' which is considered as an important aspect of the Jordanian culture in general and the Irbidean culture in particular is presented as an expression of hospitality and generosity. Lamb meat is cooked with dry sour milk called "Jameed" in Arabic which is eaten by mixing it with cooked rice. Mansaf is served in special occasions like graduation celebration,

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wedding, condolences, etc. Five female participants of the age 14- 29 do not like Mansaf. To them, Mansaf is not delicious. They like fast food instead. Magluba (upside down) is the second dish that is frequently cooked. It is cooked in a large pot then turned onto a platter. Maqluba consists of layers of rice, vegetables and meat. It can be covered with almonds and served with yogurt. All the participants like and enjoy it. Muskhan and Maftool are the Palestinians' national dishes, and all the participants show positive attitude towards them. They like and enjoy them. These dishes are cooked frequently in Irbidean homes. Muskhan consists of roasted chicken over special bread baked for this purpose with fried onions, olive oil and sumac. Maftool is mostly cooked in winter. It consists of a mixture of cooked, parched and crushed wheat called (Bulgur) in Arabic, tomato paste, flour and roasted chickens. Some interviewees of Palestinian origin consider "ðan al-ſajeb" food as a national Palestinian dish that they like and enjoy. "ðan al-ſajeb" is literally translated "the ears of the old with white beard". It is wheat dough parcels with a mixture of beef meat and spices inside which are cooked with yogurt or dry sour milk called in Arabic Jameed.

The most common and popular breakfast dishes are Humus, foul muddamas and falafel. All the interviewees state that these dishes are delicious and they like and enjoy. Humus is boiled peas blended with tahini paste, garlic and lemon juice. It is served with olive oil. Foul muddamas is crushed broad beans with olive oil, lemon juice, pepper and sumac. Foul muddamas is considered the workers meal because it is cheap for the working class in Jordan. Falafel is also popular, delicious and favorite for most of the Jordanians. Falafel is balls of crushed fried chickpeas with spice. Falafel sandwiches are also favorite in Jordan. The sandwiches are made of a mixture of falafel and Humus. Hummus is spread inside fresh bread filled with falafel and salad. Falafel is a cheap and quick meal. The interviewees state that food is kept and preserved among generations. This is due to the fact that these types of food are cooked and prepared at home regularly. The way of cooking and preparing such meals and dishes was passed from generation to another. The results go in line with Chiu (2003) who states Indian Hakkas in Toronto preserved their ethnic identity through food. The results also agree with Glasgow (2012) who studies the Croatian language and cultural preservation in Kansas. He concludes that the Croatians preserve some of the Croatian culture such as food, greetings and music.

Lee et al (2014) state that each ethnic group throughout Malaysia has its own distinctive cuisine and they keep their food .Hainanese, for example, are well-known for the Hainanese chicken, rice, coffee and toast. Omar (2014) goes towards this trend. She states that the Circassians of New Jersey keep some of their cultural elements that play a decisive role in their circassion ethnic identity. One of them is food. There are different sweet foods that are familiar to all participants. They all state during the interviews that they like and enjoy them. The best of the sweets the participants talk about is Kunafeh. It is a traditional Palestinian sweet transferred to Jordan. Nowadays, it becomes the most popular sweet in Jordan. It is served mostly in all occasions. It is prepared from buttery shredded filose pastry layered over goats' cheese with sweets over it.

Harrisa is focused on by the participants of the study. It is a traditional sweet of Jordan that has developed through decades. Harissa consists of a mixture of semolina, flour, butter and yogurt that are mixed together with water and olive. Almonds are put at the top. The mixture is put in a pan to be baked until it becomes almost golden. One of the most important national sweet foods in Irbid city is cake of pressed dates. The interviewees assure that it is the symbol of the two Muslim feasts: Ramadan feast and the feast of immolation. All the Irbidean families prepare cake of pressed dates a few days before the feasts to be offered for the guests of the feasts. It consists of a mixture of flour, butter, olive oil, sugar and special spices that are mixed together with water. The mixture takes the forms of dough circles with pressed dates inside and they are put in pans to be baked.

Irbidian folklore is the essential issue for the participants who are above 60 years old. They are proud of their folklore whereas the young who are below 30 years old are not interested in the traditional Irbidian folklore.

The Debkeh dance is performed by Jumping down and up with quick movements in different directions. It is used in different happy occasions like marriage, graduation, etc. Debkeh dance is performed in a harmony of traditional Jordanian songs like /sala dalSona/, /yazarif alt<sup>s</sup>oul/, /dʒafra jaharabiS/. These titles are hardly translated into English because some words are used neither in standard Arabic nor in colloquial Arabic like /dalSona/ and /dʒafra/, but they refer to happiness and motivate Debkeh dancers to do their dances well. Unfortunately, Debkeh and traditional songs are rarely performed nowadays because the young and coming generations are interested in western style songs and Arabic short songs with noise music followed by western dances. The study disagrees with Glasgo (2012) who states that Croatians of Kansas-USA have maintained some of their cultural aspects such as music.

The current study among others show that Jordanians living in the Irbid city with different dialects preserve some parts of their culture such as food. The dialects of Jordanians living in Irbid city are experiencing a shift towards the Urban (Madani) dialect because the young tend to use it for prestige. The death of the old people who used the Horani dialect would have given the priority to the Urban (Madani) dialect to be superior over other dialects. This result goes side by side with Hijjo and Fannouna (2014: 35) who state that "younger generation shift from /g/ to the prestigious form /?/ to show prestige in the society." The results also go in parallel with El-Salman and Roche (2010) who emphasize that the Tirawi dialect goes to the point of extinction as a result of the death of old Tirawi people who used their ethnic dialect. The results also agree with Abdel-Jawad (1981) who remarks that the dialect variants used in Jordan, namely: /?/ Madani; /k/ Fallahi and /g/ Bedouin reflect different social communities in Jordan.

Jordanian food and sweet are ones of the cultural aspects that all participants enjoy and like regardless whether they are of Jordanian origin or of Palestinian one. This result goes hand in hand with Octu (2010); Alzoubi (2008); Al-Khatib and Al-Ali (2005) who assert that traditions and some cultural values are preserved and maintained in some communities. It is noted from the interviews that families of Irbid city mostly do not live in neighborhoods, so the

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members of the same family may use different dialects because of their direct contact with other people who speak different dialects in schools, universities, works and in public, etc. and because of their shift towards the more prestigious dialect like the Urban (Madani) dialect. This result goes with Al-Rahal (2014) who states that living in a neighborhood is a decisive factor in maintaining the ethnic language.

Concerning cultural associations, each family mostly belong to a social association that is used for special occasions. The interviewees assure that family associations do not help in keeping the cultural heritage and they do not also strengthen the social ties among the members of the family because they gather in these associations only in certain occasions. The interviewees add that they do not hold cultural events in these associations. These results go side by side with Omar (2014) who remarks that Circassion associations in New Jersey-USA do not play an essential role in keeping circassion cultural heritage. They do not address the linguistic, social and cultural struggles.

#### 5. Conclusion

The analysis of the results of the interviews and the personal observation of the researcher show that there are five major dialects used in the Irbid city:

Horani; 40%, Urban (Madani) ;29%, Tirawi (Palestinian) ;12%, Gorani ;10%, and Bedouin ; 9%. The voiceless uvular stop sound /q/ has different variants as voiced velar stop sound /g/ (Horani ;Gorani ; Bedouin ); glottal stop /?/ Urban (Madani) dialect ); and uvular stop sound /q/ (Tirawi dialect).

The study also shows that the dialects used in Irbid city are experiencing a gradual shift towards the Urban (Madani) dialect. Most young participants tend to use it because it has higher prestigious status and more respect. It is shown that some dialects used in Irbid city may go to the point of extinction after the death of the old people who used these dialects.

Most young participants in the interviews assure that the Urban (Madani) dialect gives them the confidence and it has more social prestigious status. They add the girls who use other dialects are considered old-fashioned and uncivilized girls. This is why it is expected that the Urban (Madani) dialect is considered prominent over other dialects in Irbid city. These results are in harmony with Holmes (1992) who states that there are three reasons for a language to go towards extinction: 1) migrants are monolingual and their ethnic language is shifting to the host language; 2) their children are bilingual. They use their ethnic language to communicate with their families and host language to communicate with people in community; 3) their grandchildren are often monolingual because they abandon their ethnic language. It is noted that the shift towards the Urban (Madani) dialect in Irbid city is not as a result of ideology or religion because all the dialects used in Irbid city belong to the standard Arabic which all participants respect and are proud of it. The results coincide with the results of Fishman (1989) who states that cultural and linguistic change is inevitable. The results show that the most important traditional aspect that is preserved in Irbid city is food. It is appreciated and praised by all participants. Folklore in Irbid city is not preserved by the young, but it is appreciated by the old participants. All in all, Jordanians living in Irbid city abandon some cultural aspects and preserve others.

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## Appendix A

I'd like to express my deep gratitude for taking your time and efforts in answering the following questions which serve a study about dialect and cultural situation in Irbid city.

## A. Demographic background

- 1- How old are you?
- 2- Where were you born?
- 3- Where were your parents born?
- 4- What is your job?
- 5- Are you married?
- 6- Are you originally from Irbid city?
- 7- What is your original city/ town/ village?
- 8- What is your educational level?

# **B.** Community profile Questions

- 1- What dialect do you use?
- 2- What are the dialects used in Irbid city?
- 3- If you are not originally from Irbid city, what reasons made you come to live in Irbid city?
- 4- Are your relatives living in Irbid city?
- 5- Do you live in neighborhoods with your relatives in Irbid city?
- 6- Do you send your children to private or government schools? why?
- 7- Are there any cultural associations in Irbid city? Are they effective in keeping cultural heritage?
- 8- How do you celebrate the feasts and other occasions like wedding, marriage, etc?
- 9- How is the funeral condolence taken place in Irbid city?
- 10- Are there special food/ dishes in Irbid city? Name them? How are they prepared?
- 11-Are there special sweet food in Irbid city? Name them? How are they prepared?
- 12- How strong are the social ties among the people of Irbid city?
- 13- What is the dialect which is dominant over others in Irbid city? Why?
- 14- What are the cultural parts which people of Irbid have lost and what parts are kept?
- 15- What are the cultural songs or dances used in Irbid city? Are they kept or lost? Why?
- 16- Talk about the history/ culture of Irbid
- 17- Are you interested in Irbid cultural heritage? Why?
- 18- Do you think that it is important to keep Irbid cultural heritage? Why?
- 19- Are you proud of using your own dialect? Why?
- 20- What is your attitude towards the dialects other than your own ethnic dialect?