A Sociolinguistic Study of Choosing Names for Newborn Children in Jordan

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Abstract

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This study aims at the study of newborn names in Jordan of a sociolinguistic perspective. This study tries to detect the difference in naming newborns in Jordan over the decades - from the seventies to 2015 due to the result of some factors that may have affected the Jordanian society, whether historical, religious and/or social. The data necessary to complete the study was obtained from the Civil Status Department and the Department of Statistics. The data obtained consisted of names of both sexes during the time period from the seventies until the early year of 2015, a random sample of personal names within the same family were also provided. The data was analyzed quantitatively. The study revealed that there is a clear change in the choice of newborn names - male and female - in Jordan, whether a change in sounds or in morphemes. In specific, names during the seventies were strongly linked to the culture and the values, religious or
social, in which the people believed in. During the eighties and nineties, names were associated with certain social values, however, some names were shown to be affected by urbanization or modernization. And with the beginning of 2000 up to 2015, peoples directions towards naming newborns changed due to the advent of globalization, associating with development and urbanization, and moreover, the influence of different cultures on the community.

**Key Words:** Naming practice, Newborns, Culture, Sociolinguistic.