

What's a stigmatized variant doing in the word list? Authenticity in reading styles and Hebrew pharyngeals¹

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The pharyngeal segments in Hebrew, [ʕ] and [ħ], are historically conservative and considered prescriptively correct, but are also socially stigmatized as a feature associated with Mizrahi (Middle Eastern) descent. I present data from sociolinguistic interviews in two Israel field sites and demonstrate a robust pattern in both communities: speakers who produce pharyngeals in the interview use more [ʕ] in reading a word list than in free-form conversation, but show no such effect for [ħ]. The results are difficult to reconcile with a single axis of standardness or formality and highlight the need for a more multidimensional approach to interpreting reading styles. Taking into account both the community's language ideologies that link reading styles to their ethnic identity and the fact that [ʕ] has been shown to be more useful as a stylistic resource for performing Mizrahi personae, I argue for an interpretation that considers word list reading as a site for performing a Mizrahi ethnic identity.

ההגאים הלועיים בעברית (ח' ו-ע') נאמנים להיסטוריה של השפה, ונחשבים נכונים מבחינה פרסקריפטיביסטית, אך מאידך גיסא, דבקה בהם סטיגמה, כמאפיינים לשוניים המזוהים עם מוצא מזרחי. אני מציג נתונים מתוך ראיונות סוציו-בלשניים בשני אתרים בישראל, שבהם אפשר לזהות דפוס עקבי בשתי הקהילות: דוברים אשר משתמשים בהגייה הלועית בריאיון מפיקים ע' לועית בתדירות גבוהה יותר בקריאת רשימת המילים, אך לא מראים פער כזה עבור ח'. את התוצאות הללו קשה ליישב עם ציר יהודי של תקניות או רשמיות, ועל כן הן ממחישות את הצורך בגישה רב-ממדית יותר להבנת שונות לשונית בסגנונות הקראה. בהינתן אידאולוגיות השפה של הדוברים, אשר קושרות בין סגנונות הקראה מסוימים לבין זהותם האתנית, והעובדה שכבר הודגם ש-ע' היא משאב סגנוני שימושי יותר בייצוגים של פרסונה מזרחית, אני טוען שניתן להבין את הדפוס אם נתייחס לרשימת המילים כאתר הולם לאקט פרפורמטיבי המייצג זהות מזרחית. [Hebrew]

KEYWORDS: Stylistic variation, read speech, Hebrew, pharyngeals, ethnicity, standard language

1. INTRODUCTION

The pharyngeal segments in Modern Hebrew, [ʕ] and [ħ], have a rather unusual combination of social meaning. They are widely considered the

linguistic features, most commonly associated with *Mizrahis*,² Jews of Middle Eastern and North African descent (Matras and Schiff 2005). Due to the inequality in the ethnic dynamic in Israel (Smootha 2003), the pharyngeals are often stigmatized and associated with low socio-economic status. However, unlike many stigmatized variants, they are not considered 'wrong' or 'broken Hebrew' – quite the contrary. As the historically conservative variant, they are considered correct by prescriptive norms (Yaeger-Dror 1988; Bentolila 2002). The Hebrew pharyngeals thus pose an interesting challenge to any theory of stylistic variation that deals with notions of formality and standardness.

One of the most common methods of investigating the interaction of stylistic variation with standard language ideologies is comparing the speech produced during the different tasks in the sociolinguistic interview. The sociolinguistic interview, as designed by Labov (1972a), is intended to elicit a spectrum of different speech styles by controlling the amount of attention that interviewees pay to their speech. The conversational component contains a range of casual and more careful speech, followed by more explicitly careful speech in reading styles: a reading passage, a word list and a set of minimal pairs. The pattern found in Labov's (1966) seminal work was that the more attentive reading tasks showed a reduction in the use of stigmatized and non-standard variants. This pattern has been reproduced many times for different variables and in different speech communities, establishing the link between reading out loud and more formal stylistic variants. In Labov's approach, henceforth referred to as the Attention to Speech model, differences between casual speech and reading are seen as part of a general mechanism, which explains stylistic shifts as a function of how much attention the speakers were paying to their speech itself. This approach privileges the notion of an unselfconscious 'vernacular', the most natural form of speech, which is predicted to be more casual and more non-standard. The vernacular contrasts with more self-conscious speech, which, due to self-monitoring, is predicted to have more standard variants.

While the Attention to Speech model is useful in explaining specific kinds of stylistic variation, the privileging of awareness as the central principle guiding stylistic variation has been the subject of much debate. Critics of the model have argued against the dichotomy between an unselfconscious vernacular and conscious styles, claiming speakers always adjust their language to some degree in order to match situation specific goals (e.g. Eckert 2000; Milroy and Gordon 2003). In the years that have followed since its formulation, newer models have suggested further dimensions that affect stylistic variation. Bell's (1984) influential Audience Design model demonstrates the importance of the role played by the audience. More recent approaches emphasize a fully multidimensional approach to stylistic variation that assigns a role not only to external factors but also to the agency of the speaker in projecting specific personae (Coupland 2001, 2007; Bucholtz and Hall 2004; Eckert 2008).

The prediction of the Attention to Speech model that reading would lead a to a more formal and standard style is, indeed, often borne out. However, it is by

no means the only possible pattern (Schilling-Estes 2008). Milroy (1987) describes a variety of non-standard variants in English that surfaced in reading tasks. More recently, Stuart-Smith et al. (2013) report that in their examination of TH-fronting among young Glaswegians, they found proportionately more of the non-standard [f] variant in read speech than in spontaneous speech. Indeed, exceptions to the generalization may be revealing the mechanisms underlying the stylistic shift.

In this article, I present data from sociolinguistic interviews that I conducted in two field sites in Israel, and focus on the difference between speech produced in the free-form conversation and the word list portions of my data. I show that the use of the Hebrew pharyngeals in these samples is a further exception to the pattern predicted by the Attention to Speech model. Both of my samples exhibit the same robust pattern – a style shift towards more pharyngeal production in the word list, but only in one of the two segments. I argue that these results can be understood by considering word-list reading as a speech event that is not only more formal, but also a site for the performance of a Mizrahi ethnic identity.

The results are hard to explain under an approach in which more awareness is predicted to push towards more standard features. However, a self-conscious performance does not necessarily lead to more standardness – speakers may have other goals in mind. In Schilling-Estes's (1998) work on Ocracoke, an isolated island community in North Carolina, she shows that some islanders use the community's distinctive features in a register that is interpreted as a performance for outsiders' and tourists' sake. Similarly, while reading is often associated with formality and standardness, there is no *a priori* reason why reading the word list cannot be used to display a wide range of social meanings. I demonstrate that in the overt language ideologies of the speakers in my sample, reading out loud is ideologically linked to specifically Mizrahi practices and reading traditions. Thus, when the speakers use more pharyngeals in the word list, they are not simply being more formal, they are being formal in a decidedly Mizrahi way.

Bucholtz and Hall's (2004) concept of *authentication* is useful in understanding the linguistic behavior observed in the data. In their framework, 'authenticity' is not a trait that a speaker may or may not have. Rather, authentication is a social practice, and authenticity, as evaluated by the speakers, is seen as the result of the authenticating practices that create it. Under a view that sees authenticity as the outcome of constantly negotiated social practices, the speakers' use of the pharyngeals in reading styles can be understood as a means to express their Mizrahi authenticity. I therefore propose that in my data the word list can be interpreted as a site for a practice of authentication.

The use of the Hebrew pharyngeals in readings demonstrates the need for a multidimensional interpretation of reading styles, as the usage patterns in these styles cannot be explained only on a scale of standardness or formality. In

an approach that takes into account what social goals speakers try to achieve when reading out loud, the word list has value not just when contrasted with the conversation data, but as a site to observe linguistic practices that shed important light on how speakers position themselves in the social landscape. In the spirit of Schilling-Estes's (2008) reconsideration of how to interpret stylistic variation in the sociolinguistic interview, this paper argues for a framework that embraces the self-conscious aspect of reading, opening the methodology to new uses and new interpretations.

2. THE HEBREW PHARYNGEALS IN CONTEXT

2.1 *Jewish ethnicity in Israel – on Ashkenazis and Mizrahis*

The production of the pharyngeal segments is considered by Israelis to be the linguistic feature most indicative of one's ethnic origin (Matras and Schiff 2005: 156). Therefore, in order to consider the pharyngeals as sociolinguistic variables, we must first review how ethnicity is constructed and understood in Israel.

Ever since its founding as a self-defined Jewish state, Israel has officially adhered to the Zionist ideology of 'fusion of the diasporas' (*mizug galuyot*) – de-emphasizing differences between Jews from different diasporas in order to create a unified Israeli Jewish identity (Ben-Rafael 2013). Nevertheless, ethnic distinctions between Jews who originated from different diasporas form an important part of the social dynamic (Smootha 2003).

Among Israelis, Jewish ethnicity is usually understood as a dichotomy between Jews of European descent, referred to as *Ashkenazi* Jews, and Jews of Middle Eastern and North African descent, referred to as *Mizrahi* Jews (Swirski 1981; Ram 2002; Shalom Chetrit 2009; among many others). This binary distinction has its roots in how Israeli society was formed. While the Zionist movement was predominantly Ashkenazi, as were most of the first immigrants to Israel, the 1950s saw massive waves of immigration of Jews from the neighboring Arab and Muslim countries. These Mizrahi immigrants were hired mostly for low-income jobs, and, during the first decade of Israel's independence, inequality in earnings and in education between Ashkenazis and Mizrahis quickly became a fact (Swirski 1990). While the demographics of Israel rapidly changed to become more Mizrahi, the political establishment and cultural and economic elite remained thoroughly Ashkenazi. Although recent years have seen a shift towards greater ethnic equality with a rise in inter-ethnic marriages and Mizrahi Jews occupying high profile jobs, the inequality in education and earnings still persists (Dahan et al. 2003; Smootha 2003; Cohen, Haberfeld and Kristal 2007; Swirski, Connor-Atias and Abu-Hala 2008).

The ethnicity-based social stratification in Israeli society is coupled with some persisting perceptions and stereotypes of Mizrahis and Ashkenazis.

Shohat's (1989) seminal survey of ethnic stereotypes in Israeli cinema shows that Ashkenazis are described as 'just Israelis', the unmarked category. Mizrahis, on the other hand, are portrayed in a stereotypically Orientalist (Said 1978) way: uneducated, vulgar, and violent, but also warm and hospitable. This situation has changed quite a bit in recent years, and the mass media now often features far less stereotypical portrayals of Mizrahis. Furthermore, Almog (2004) claims that many younger Israelis subscribe to a notion of Israeliness that incorporates both Ashkenazis and Mizrahis and no longer see this distinction as relevant. Nevertheless, the categories Mizrahi and Ashkenazi remain extremely socially salient in Israeli discourse (Shalom Chetrit 2009) and the stereotypes about Mizrahis do persist (Shohat 2010). Smoocha (2003) argues that, while in the 21st century the Mizrahi-Ashkenazi divide undoubtedly carries less clout than it had before, the notion of a 'melting pot' that created a single Israeli identity is exaggerated. He discusses separate Ashkenazi and Mizrahi 'melting pots', whose effect was the erasure of the differences between Jews from different Middle Eastern and European origins, and the reinforcing of the binary Israeli constructs of 'Ashkenazi' and 'Mizrahi'.

2.2 *The pharyngeals and their link to ethnicity*

Modern Hebrew has two pharyngeal phonemes: a voiceless pharyngeal fricative /ħ/ and a voiced pharyngeal approximant /ʕ/. Both of these, however, exhibit much variation and are often not produced as pharyngeals, resulting in phonemic merger with non-pharyngeal segments. For speakers who do not produce pharyngeals, the pronunciation of (ʕ) has merged with that of the historic glottal stop; although, in current usage, both are usually not pronounced at all. As for (ħ), it is often realized as [x],³ once again merging with a non-pharyngeal segment. The phonemic distinctions are always maintained in the Hebrew orthography, which has separate letters for the pharyngeal and non-pharyngeal phonemes, as is shown in Table 1.

In one of the earliest sociolinguistic studies of Modern Hebrew, Blanc (1968) describes the pharyngeal realization of (ħ) and (ʕ) as one of the main defining features of a 'Mizrahi Hebrew', as opposed to a 'General Israeli', in which these segments are merged with their non-pharyngeal counterparts.⁴ Subsequent

Table 1: The pharyngeal segments and their non-pharyngeal counterparts

Hebrew letter	Speakers who produce pharyngeals	Speakers who do not produce pharyngeals
aleph (א)	[ʔ] ~ ∅	[ʔ] ~ ∅
ʕayin (ע)	[ʕ]	[ʔ] ~ ∅
xaf (צ)	[x]	[x]
ħet (ח)	[ħ]	[x]

authors have further demonstrated the status of the pharyngeals as a distinctively Mizrahi feature (Bentolila 1983; Yaeger-Dror 1988). As stated before, this is also the common perception among non-linguists (Matras and Schiff 2005).

This ethnic stratification of the pharyngeals has its roots in the history of the language, which is somewhat unusual. Hebrew had not been used as a spoken vernacular for generations, until it was revitalized in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. However, even before the revitalization of Hebrew, it was still used by Jewish communities to varying degrees, especially in religious contexts, which led to the development of quite distinct pronunciation and reading traditions. Despite conscious attempts to reconstruct the language as it was historically spoken, the Hebrew that emerged from the revitalization was strongly influenced by the first languages of the early revitalizers and by these different traditions (Izre'el 2003; Zuckermann 2005). Although the early revitalizers were predominantly Ashkenazi, the Mizrahi pronunciation was seen as more faithful to the Semitic roots of the language, and was adopted as the model for the modern phonology. The Modern Hebrew that emerged is indeed closer to the Mizrahi tradition in terms of stress, the vowel system and other features (Morag 1990), but that was not the case for the pharyngeals. In the Mizrahi tradition, (ħ) and (ʕ) preserved a pharyngeal realization, whereas in the Ashkenazi pronunciations they had merged with their non-pharyngeal counterparts. Although, like other Mizrahi features, the pharyngeals were seen as historically correct, the early Ashkenazi revitalizers (who were native speakers of European languages with no pharyngeal segments) did not adopt them. The early Mizrahi adopters of Modern Hebrew, however, continued to use them, leading to the ethnic differentiation (Zuckermann 2005).

Although the social distribution of the pharyngeals is clearly correlated with ethnicity, the pharyngeal production does not neatly separate speakers into Ashkenazi and Mizrahi. Rather, Ashkenazis almost never produce them, but many Mizrahis do not produce them either. In fact, Blanc (1968), who presented the pharyngeals as features distinguishing a Mizrahi pronunciation, also states that many Mizrahis have adopted the 'General Israeli' pronunciation. Subsequent studies confirmed this observation: Davis (1984) interviewed Mizrahis in predominantly Mizrahi towns and noted that younger speakers use them far less than adults. With pharyngeal use around only five percent for his group of 12 year olds, he predicted that 'in a generation or two, the pharyngeals will have disappeared completely from Israeli Hebrew' (Davis 1984: 31). Lefkowitz (2004) conducted sociolinguistic interviews in Haifa, and found that only a minority of Mizrahis used pharyngeals to any noticeable extent, all of them over 40 years old. Bentolila (1983) is the only study with which I am familiar that has high rates of pharyngeals for younger speakers. His data come from sociolinguistic interviews in a rural settlement in southern Israel, which had a very homogenous population – all the residents were Mizrahis, descended from the same area in Morocco. However, even his study

shows complex patterns with many speakers not using the pharyngeals. To conclude, due to the relatively small number of community studies conducted in Israel, it is hard to assess the extent to which pharyngeals are currently used, but the extant research strongly suggests an advanced stage of a change-in-progress in which the pharyngeals are being lost.

2.3 *The social evaluation of the pharyngeals*

While the actual use of the pharyngeals may be in decline, the linguistic stereotype associating them with Mizrahis is still very much relevant to the Israelis. Producing the pharyngeals even has a name in the speech community – ‘speaking with *ħet* and *šayin*’ (*ledaber be-ħet ve-šayin*), named after the two Hebrew letters representing these segments.

The pharyngeals are often stigmatized and carry a negative social evaluation, which is not surprising given the asymmetric power dynamic between Ashkenazis and Mizrahis. Bentolila (2002) claims that producing the pharyngeals is usually seen as a liability in the Israeli sociolinguistic market, and he discusses how some young Mizrahi speakers avoid them as a means for upward mobility. In Gafter (forthcoming), I use current metalinguistic commentary on Israeli web forums to show that the term ‘speaking with *ħet* and *šayin*’ is used frequently, and is ideologically linked to the stereotypical aspects of a Mizrahi persona discussed before. Consider the following example, which refers to the addition of Margalit Tsan’ani, a Mizrahi singer, to the cast of the Israeli TV show *Koxav Nolad* (an Israeli version of ‘American Idol’).

- (1) True, sometimes she’s unpolished, talks with *ħet* and *šayin*, she’s not trying to be something she’s not, and sometimes that may sound vulgar or tactless, but it’s a million times better than the sucking up and showing off of her (show) biz colleagues.

In this passage, Tsan’ani’s style is both criticized and respected. The writer links the use of the pharyngeals to sounding vulgar and unpolished, but also describes her style as real and authentic, echoing both sides of the ethnic stereotypes about Mizrahis discussed earlier.

The social evaluation of the variable is further complicated, however, due to Israeli prescriptivist ideologies. As Yaeger-Dror (1988) argues, Israel has not one but two ‘prestige’ norms. The first is the vernacular norm of the elite, which she refers to as the Modern Koiné (following Blanc 1968), in which the pharyngeals are not produced. However, Israel also has an influential language academy, which defines a prescriptive norm. This prescriptive norm is not modeled after the language of current speakers, but, rather, focuses on faithfulness to earlier forms of the language. In the realm of phonology, the prescriptive norm values the reconstructed ‘Semitic’ pronunciation, and therefore retains the pharyngeals (Zuckermann 2005).

This friction between prescriptivist ideology and the natural development of Modern Hebrew has a large impact on the Israeli notion of a 'standard language' (Ravid 1995). Indeed, the prescriptive norm does not have the same kind of social capital as the Koiné, and is in many ways an ideal more than a practice. One's prospects in a job interview, for example, would not be diminished by not using the prescriptive norm, nor would it be expected in such settings. Nonetheless, the prescriptive norm is considered desirable in certain formalized contexts. For example, in the earlier decades of Israel's existence, newscasters would always strictly adhere to the prescriptive norm and use the 'correct' pharyngeal pronunciation. The trend has since shifted, and by the late twentieth century newscasters have adopted a non-pharyngeal pronunciation (Yaeger-Dror 1988), but, nevertheless, the pharyngeal pronunciation can still be heard in some highly formal settings on Israeli media.

The pharyngeal segments therefore occupy an unusual position – while they are part of the prescriptive norm, they do not occur in the prestige variety (i.e. the Koiné) but rather in the marginalized Mizrahi variety (Yaeger-Dror 1988). Of course, having complex and even contradicting social meanings is not unique to the Hebrew pharyngeals. For example, such a situation exists with respect to a well-known English variable, (ing). The alveolar realizations of (ing) have indexical links to notions of informality and working class in much of the English speaking world, but are also a feature of the what Wells (1982) calls 'upper crust RP' (or U-RP), a variety stereotypically associated with the British upper class (Wells 1982: 283). In each such case, it is important to see how the full range of social meanings plays out in the local language ideologies.

Interestingly, the social evaluation in Israel does not necessarily ascribe the pharyngeals in a disjunctive fashion either to Mizrahi heritage or to strict adherence to the prescriptive norm. Rather, the two can come into play simultaneously, as can be seen in this example from Gafter (2014). The example is from an online forum that compares Naomi Shemer, a well-known Ashkenazi singer and songwriter, with the late Zohar Argov, a tremendously popular Mizrahi singer, who used a very noticeable pharyngeal pronunciation.

- (2) Semitic language put an emphasis on *ḥet* and *ʕayin* . . . In spite of Naomi Shemer's vocabulary, she doesn't speak correct Hebrew like Zohar Argov does. Even though it's quite likely that her vocabulary is richer or that her IQ reaches 160.

The writer of this passage obviously accepts the prescriptive ideology – 'correct' Hebrew must make use of the pharyngeal segments, the hallmark of Semitic languages. However, he also implies that Shemer is smarter than Argov, echoing the stereotype of Ashkenazis being more intelligent and educated than Mizrahis.

As these examples show, the social meaning of the pharyngeals cannot be explained on a single axis of meaning, as it has both elements of an old fashioned kind of learnedness on the one hand, and elements of Mizrahi-ness, and the attributes stereotypically associated with it, on the other hand. Building upon Silverstein's (2003) framework of orders of indexicality, Eckert (2008) developed the notion of an *indexical field* of meaning for sociolinguistic variables. In this framework, variables need not have a fixed value; rather, a dynamic structure is created by the constant linking of form and meaning, without the previous reconstructions disappearing. Under such an approach, the social meaning conveyed by the pharyngeals, which is related to both Mizrahi identity and the prescriptive norm, is not necessarily only one or other in every specific interaction. Rather, the speaker can draw on a range of indexical meanings to express a multidimensional social positioning. As this paper shows, such an approach is necessary when we consider how the pharyngeals may be used in reading styles.

2.4 Predictions for reading styles

The pharyngeal segments' complex positioning with respect to axes of social prestige and linguistic correctness sets them apart from the variables in Labov's (1966) classic study of New York City English, in which socio-economic class, style, and prestige are all neatly aligned on the same axis. The social evaluation of stigmatized variants as 'wrong' is so common that we rarely encounter linguistic features that are both negatively evaluated and overtly lauded by prescriptive norms. Since that is precisely the status of the pharyngeals, it is particularly interesting to consider how they would pattern in the different styles of a sociolinguistic interview. Under the Attention to Speech model, there is no clear prediction – as stigmatized variants we may expect them to be used less often in reading styles, but as part of the prescriptive norm, we may expect the opposite.

The existing evidence suggests that the prediction may in fact be different for (ħ) and (ʕ). Davis (1984) interviewed Mizrahi speakers in predominantly Mizrahi towns, comparing adults with two groups of younger speakers – those raised in Arabic speaking homes, and those who were not heritage speakers of Arabic. His data clearly show that both groups of younger speakers used the pharyngeals far less than adults, and he takes this as apparent-time evidence for a change in progress. While documenting the change in progress was the main point of the paper, Davis also shows a comparison of three parts of his sociolinguistic interview: a conversation, a reading passage and a set of minimal pairs. His results are shown in Table 2.

In the case of (ʕ), the data show a clear pattern of more pharyngeal realizations in the reading tasks. The pattern for (ħ), however, is less clear. The children show no difference at all in their use of [ħ] between the tasks, and the adults show an increase, but only in the case of the minimal pairs. Davis

Table 2: Percentage of pharyngeal productions in Davis's (1984) data*

Speaker category	Free conversation		Reading passage		Minimal pairs	
	% (ħ)	% (ʕ)	% (ħ)	% (ʕ)	% (ħ)	% (ʕ)
Adults (n = 16)	32.08	29.59	31.25	39.06	59.43	73.43
Arabic-speaking children (n = 24)	2.08	17.9	0	25.13	0	49.00
Non Arabic-speaking children (n = 21)	0	5.20	0	6.52	0	15.30

*Davis (1984) does not report the actual token counts. However, he reports that he analyzed 20 potential occurrences for each of the two variables in the free conversation section. His reading passage included 12 potential occurrences of each variable, and the minimal pairs contained 8 of each.

acknowledges that the higher rates of a stigmatized variant in reading are surprising, but claims that the pattern does not represent a stylistic move. He suggests instead that this difference can be explained by Hebrew orthography – since in the written form the pharyngeals are always distinguished from their non-pharyngeal counterparts, the speakers were reacting to the spelling of the words. Although I agree that the spelling is likely to contribute to why the pharyngeals would appear more in the reading styles, an explanation based solely on the orthography makes the prediction that (ħ) and (ʕ) should both be affected in the same way, and we see that that is not the case.

The observed pattern raises two questions. The first is whether the increased use of the pharyngeals is a pattern that can be seen in other communities. This is especially important since in the 30 years that have passed, the adherence to the prescriptive norm with respect to the pharyngeals in the media has been steadily declining. The second question is whether the difference between (ħ) and (ʕ) is a recurring pattern. In the next section, I demonstrate that both of these patterns are robust. I show that in two different Israeli communities, Mizrahi speakers use more pharyngeal productions in reading styles, but do so only for (ʕ), not for (ħ). Since the difference between (ħ) and (ʕ) is consistently reproduced, it must be taken into account in the analysis, which I offer in section 4.

3. PHARYNGEAL PRODUCTION IN THE TWO FIELD SITES

The Tel Aviv metropolitan area, which sprawls along the Mediterranean coast, is by far the largest metropolitan area in Israel. With an estimated population of 3,464,100 residents, it is home to over 40 percent of Israel's population (population data here and in the rest of the paper is from the Israeli Central

Bureau of Statistics 2008 census). The data in the following sections comes from linguistic fieldwork that I carried out in 2012, in two specific locations within the Tel Aviv area: the city of Tel Aviv itself, and the town of Rosh Ha'ayin. All the interviewees were native speakers of Hebrew, who had spent their entire lives in either Tel Aviv or Rosh Ha'ayin (or most of their lives, in the case of speakers who went to college elsewhere or served away from home during Israel's obligatory three-year military service).

I conducted the interviews in the speakers' homes.⁵ The interviews were recorded using a Marantz PMD-661 solid-state recorder, and two lapel microphones (one for me and one for the interviewee). The main part of each interview was a free-form conversation, which began with talking about the interviewee's experiences growing up and proceeded to various other topics, generally following what the interviewee was most interested in talking about, while steering the conversation to how they see their ethnic identity, both in the context of their home town and in a broader Israeli context. On average, this component consisted of an hour of speech.

In order to examine reading styles, after the conversation component was over I asked each interviewee to read a word list, which contained the specific linguistic features in which I was interested (see the Appendix for the list). Although in many studies the sociolinguistic interview contains a reading passage component as well, I chose not to use one. In this I follow Schilling's (2013: 105) critique of the reading passage, which may be perceived as a face-threatening task, and can create a great degree of awkwardness for interviewees whose literacy level is not very high. Since the data analyzed here were collected as part of a larger project, for which I wanted comparability among all interviewees, I decided not to obtain this potential additional data, for fear of possible discomfort among some speakers. The word list, being a much less demanding task, is, in my opinion, a workable compromise that still allows for the obtaining of informative read speech data. However, it is clear that a reading passage could have shed important light on the issue of reading styles described here, and can be an important area for follow-up research.

Several decisions were made in order to facilitate the analysis, while, admittedly, making the sample less representative of Israeli society as a whole. I did not include speakers of mixed heritage in the analysis. Additionally, the sample did not include any ultra-orthodox speakers, since the construction of ethnicity and the language ideologies that relate to it are quite different in ultra-orthodox communities (Ben-Rafael and Sharot 1991).

3.1 The Tel Aviv sample

The city of Tel Aviv is the cultural and financial center of the greater Tel Aviv area (and in many ways, of all of Israel), and its population of 402,600 is only a fraction of the entire metropolitan area. Since the Israeli Central Bureau of Statistics does not publish data on Jewish ethnicities, there are no exact

Table 3: The Tel Aviv sample

Speaker ethnicity and age	Men	Women	Total
Ashkenazis:			
Under 45 years old	2	3	5
Over 45 years old	4	5	9
Total	6	8	14
Mizrahis:			
Under 45 years old	6	10	16
Over 45 years old	5	8	13
Total	11	18	29
Total	17	26	43

numbers for the ethnic breakdown. Nevertheless, the population is considered thoroughly mixed between Ashkenazis and Mizrahis.

In constructing the sample I had two goals in mind – the first was to capture the ethnic diversity of Tel Aviv, and the second was to have a large enough number of Mizrahi speakers. These goals are somewhat at odds, and as such, my sample does not attempt to represent a snapshot of Tel Aviv demographics on a smaller scale. Though it includes both Mizrahis and Ashkenazis, it oversamples Mizrahi speakers. A breakdown of the sample is given in Table 3.

Although Table 3 divides the speakers into Ashkenazis and Mizrahis, it is important to keep in mind that in my Tel Aviv sample, like in Israel in general, these categories represent very mixed bags. The Mizrahi speakers in my sample are of Iraqi, Persian, Libyan, Moroccan, Syrian, and Yemenite descent. The Ashkenazi speakers are of German, Hungarian, Lithuanian, Polish, Romanian, and Russian descent.

3.2 Results in Tel Aviv

In order to determine the percent of pharyngeal productions for each speaker in the conversation data, I manually coded the first 50 words (starting 10 minutes into the conversation) that had a potential pharyngeal environment for each of the two variables – that is, words that have the historically pharyngeal phoneme (determined by the orthography). For each of these words, I determined a binary value – pharyngeal or not. The results are shown in Table 4.

As Table 4 shows, pharyngealization in Tel Aviv was clearly affected by the speaker's ethnicity. As the extant research suggests, it was only Mizrahis, and not Ashkenazis, who pharyngealized. Furthermore, on average, Mizrahis pharyngealized at rather low rates as well. However, it was not the case that all Mizrahis pharyngealized at low rates. Rather, many Mizrahis did not pharyngealize at all; in fact, all of the younger speakers never produced [h],

Table 4: Pharyngeal productions at Tel Aviv in the conversation task

Speaker ethnicity	% (ʕ)	% (ħ)
Ashkenazi	0.14 (1/700)	0 (0/700)
Mizrahi	12.34 (179/1450)	17.72 (257/1450)

and only very occasionally produced [ʕ]. It was only a few speakers over the age of 45 who had robust pharyngealization, and only four speakers who consistently realized the majority of both (ħ) and (ʕ) tokens as pharyngeal.

It is interesting to note that the table suggests higher rates of [ʕ] than of [ħ]. In order to verify that this difference, as well as the effect of age, are statistically significant, I ran a mixed effect generalized logistic regression model, with the data consisting of all the coded productions of potential pharyngeals for all the Mizrahis in the Tel Aviv sample. The predicted variable is whether the phoneme is realized as pharyngeal or not. The predictors are age (a continuous variable), sex (male or female) and phoneme ((ħ) or (ʕ)). In addition, the model includes a random effect of speaker. The statistical model is shown in Table 5.

In this model, as in all the ones that will follow, a positive number in the estimate column shows that the predictor has the effect of more pharyngealization. Since age is a continuous variable, it means that bigger numbers (i.e. older speakers) have more pharyngealization ($p < 0.001$). With a factor like Phoneme, which only has two values ((ħ) and (ʕ)), the model shows the preference compared to a baseline. In this case, the baseline is (ʕ) and the positive number for the phoneme factor shows that (ħ) is pharyngealized significantly more often ($p < 0.001$).

The results so far are exactly what we would predict based on the extant research – in the Tel Aviv samples the pharyngeals are rare and in decline even among Mizrahis. The picture becomes more interesting, however, when we compare the results of the conversation with those of the word list. In my interviews, I included a word list that had three items with (ħ) and three items with (ʕ). Since Ashkenazis virtually never produce the pharyngeals, Table 6 shows the results only for the Mizrahi speakers.

Table 5: Statistical analysis of pharyngeal production by Mizrahis at Tel Aviv in the conversation task

	Estimate	Std. error	z value	Pr(> z)
(Intercept)	-8.10792	1.17843	-6.88	5.97E-12***
Age	0.0763	0.02228	3.425	0.000615***
Sex = male	0.13547	0.71462	0.19	8.50E-01
Phoneme (ħ)	1.28528	0.18581	6.917	4.61E-12***

* $p < 0.05$, ** $p < 0.01$, *** $p < 0.001$.

The results show a large difference in the case of (ʕ) – from about 12 percent pharyngeal productions in the conversation to 38 percent in the word list. However, (ħ) shows essentially no variation between the conversation and the word list. Table 7 shows a logistic regression model for the (ʕ) data among the Mizrahis in the Tel Aviv sample, and includes all the coded instances of (ʕ), in both the word list and the conversation. Like the previous model, it includes the speaker as a random effect, and age and gender as fixed effects, in addition to a new factor, Task, which has two values (Conversation or Word List). As the model shows, the preference for [ʕ] in the word list task as opposed to the conversation task is highly significant. A parallel model for (ħ) shows no significant effect for Task, as shown in Table 8.

Table 6: Pharyngeal productions by Mizrahis at Tel Aviv in the word list and conversation tasks

Interview task	% (ʕ)	% (ħ)
Conversation	12.34 (179/1450)	17.72 (257/1450)
Word list	37.98 (33/87)	17.24 (15/87)

Table 7: Statistical analysis of (ʕ) production by Mizrahis at Tel Aviv in the word list and conversation tasks

	Estimate	Std. Error	z value	Pr(> z)
(Intercept)	-6.20394	1.17694	-5.271	1.36E-07***
Task = word list	3.55327	0.41727	8.515	< 2e-16***
Age	0.05365	0.02301	2.332	0.0197*
Sex = male	-0.55348	0.76708	-0.722	0.4706

* p < 0.05, ** p < 0.01, *** p < 0.001.

Table 8: Statistical analysis of (ħ) production by Mizrahis at Tel Aviv in the word list and conversation tasks

	Estimate	Std. Error	z value	Pr(> z)
(Intercept)	-8.56896	2.29881	-3.728	0.000193***
Task = word list	0.48333	0.78148	0.618	0.536254
Age	0.10451	0.04425	2.362	0.018173*
Sex = male	-1.32552	1.49828	-0.885	0.376321

* p < 0.05, ** p < 0.01, *** p < 0.001.

It would appear that for at least some of the Mizrahi speakers in Tel Aviv, the ideology associating pharyngeals with correctness and formal speech is alive and well. This is consistent with the speakers' language ideologies expressed in comments, such as this one made by Yona, a 65-year-old Mizrahi woman who produced pharyngeals in the word list but virtually never in the conversation – the letter names *het* and *ʕayin* in the following excerpt were the only instances of a pharyngeal realization during free-form conversation with Yona:

- (3) By the way, my father knew the entire bible by heart. His Hebrew was wonderful, different. It was with *het* and *ʕayin*, and it sometimes had a bit of a biblical character.

While the shift to more [ʕ] is clearly related to its status as the prescriptive norm, that is not likely to be the whole story. If that were the case, we may expect Ashkenazis to have more [ʕ] in the word list as well. However, all but two of the Ashkenazis in the sample did not produce any pharyngeals in the word list.⁶ A possible explanation is that Mizrahis care more about adhering to the prescriptive norm in general, but that seems unlikely. The word list contained another Hebrew variable, (h), which is frequently deleted in casual speech, but is a fully realized [h] according to the prescriptive norm. Most speakers, both Ashkenazi and Mizrahi, showed a dramatic increase in the realization of (h) between the conversation task and the word list (for details on the analysis of (h), see Gafter 2014). Thus, the general degree of adherence to prescriptivism appears to be shared between both groups. When this is taken into consideration, the stylistic shift to more [ʕ] by only the Mizrahi speakers seems more likely to be linked to both sides of its dual meaning – both its correctness and its link to ethnic identity.

3.3 *The Rosh Ha'ayin sample*

Despite the prevalence of the terms 'Mizrahi' and 'Ashkenazi' in Israel, it is important to acknowledge that ethnicity is not a pre-determined monolithic category, but rather an ideological construct. 'Mizrahi' and 'Ashkenazi' are actually broad cover terms for many sub-groups that have had quite different cultures and settling patterns. While completely describing how the speech of the individual Mizrahi groups differs is well beyond the scope of this paper, in my second field site I attempt to start unpacking the cover term 'Mizrahi', by focusing on a particular Mizrahi group – Jews of Yemenite descent.

In his model of distinctions within the Israeli social landscape, Lefkowitz (2004) shows that Yemenites are often portrayed using a more favorable rhetoric compared to other Mizrahis. Nevertheless, they are not necessarily seen as the Mizrahi most conforming to the Ashkenazi mainstream, but rather, they are perceived as often retaining more Middle Eastern traditions and folklore than the other Mizrahis. This perception extends to linguistic

stereotypes – in addition to the general association between the pharyngeals and Mizrahi speakers, Yemenites are often considered the Mizrahis most likely to produce pharyngeals (Zuckermann 2005). This stereotype can be seen in metalinguistic references, most famously in the lyrics of a popular song from 1988, by Yemenite-Israeli singer Jacky Mekaiten, shown in example 4.

- | | | |
|-----|--|--|
| (4) | ani mi-roš ha-šayin
medaber be-ḥet ve-šayin
teymani muvhak
makor še-lo nišhak | I'm from Rosh Ha'ayin,
I speak with <i>ḥet</i> and <i>šayin</i>
clearly a Yemenite
the unchanged original |
|-----|--|--|

The town of Rosh Ha'ayin, mentioned in the song lyrics, is associated with Yemenites in popular culture, and has a long-standing Yemenite community. I chose it as my second field site, as it is the perfect place to explore how language interacts not just with Mizrahi-ness in general, but more specifically with Yemenite identity.

Rosh Ha'ayin is a town of 37,900 people, which is located at the eastern edge of the Tel Aviv sprawl. The town was founded in the early 1950s, and from its inception had a unique demography. It was intentionally built as a home for the Yemenites who had come to Israel in 'Operation Magic Carpet', the nickname for the 1949–1950 airlifting of the overwhelming majority of Yemenite Jews to Israel. The town remained almost completely Yemenite until about 20 years ago, when new neighborhoods started getting built on the neighboring hills, and attracted a more diverse population. While the population is now quite mixed, the town still retains a strong local Yemenite identity.

Although the current population of Rosh Ha'ayin is ethnically mixed, in constructing my sample I chose to interview only speakers of Yemenite descent. The sample is therefore quite different from the Tel Aviv sample, and much more homogenous. This decision was made in order to focus on the Yemenite community, and also had a methodological reason: except for the youngest cohort, there are almost no non-Yemenites who were born and raised in Rosh Ha'ayin. The oldest speakers therefore represent the first generation of native speakers born in Rosh Ha'ayin. I interviewed 23 speakers (eight men and 15 women), between the ages of 18 and 64. Table 9 shows the breakdown of the sample by age and gender.

Table 9: The Rosh Ha'ayin sample

Speaker age	Men	Women	Total
Under 45 years old	4	6	10
Over 45 years old	4	9	13
Total	8	15	23

The link between Rosh Ha'ayin and its Yemenite population came up many times in my interview conversations. Almost all the speakers in the sample expressed extreme fondness of the town and a sense of loyalty to it, and made a point of saying that it is specifically because of its Yemenite community, of which they feel an integral part. The speakers did not all identify as religious, but almost all claimed faithfulness to traditional Jewish values and customs. A specifically Yemenite tradition practiced by the male speakers is studying with a *mori*. The *mori* is a teacher, invariably an old Yemenite man, who prepares young boys for their bar-mitzvah by teaching them the particular Yemenite style of bible reading. Some of the younger speakers, who were born in Rosh Ha'ayin and decided to stay and raise their own children there, often cited the availability of institutions such as the *mori* as a major reason for staying. Finally, the speakers were eager to express overt language ideologies that linked their language use with their Yemenite identity, as the next section will show.

3.4 Results in Rosh Ha'ayin

In order to analyze the rate of pharyngeal productions in the conversation data in the Rosh Ha'ayin sample, I followed the same procedure as the one described for Tel Aviv. The results of the conversation data are compared with the Mizrahis in the Tel Aviv sample in Table 10.

The table clearly shows a difference between the two field sites – there is much more pharyngeal production in the Rosh Ha'ayin sample. However, that may be expected, since the samples were constructed very differently – the Rosh Ha'ayin sample is made up only of Yemenite speakers. These results may suggest that the stereotype linking pharyngeals with Yemenites is based on some truth. Conversely, the high rates of pharyngealization may be due to the fact that Rosh Ha'ayin was so homogenous until fairly recently, or both factors may be at play. In either case, the high rates of pharyngealization are quite striking when compared to Davis' (1984) claim that the pharyngeals are all but gone. At least in some communities, that is not at all the case.

While the overall rate of pharyngeal production is very different from that seen in the Tel Aviv sample, the two samples show some similarities as well. Once again, I ran a mixed effect generalized logistic model, in which the predicted variable is whether the phoneme is realized as pharyngeal, on the coded conversation tokens for all speakers in the Rosh Ha'ayin sample. The

Table 10: Pharyngeal productions in the conversation task by Mizrahis at both field sites

Field site	% (Ω)	% (\bar{h})
Tel Aviv	12.34 (179/1450)	17.72 (257/1450)
Rosh Ha'ayin	62.78 (722/1150)	70.87 (815/1150)

predictors are age (a continuous variable), sex (male or female) and phoneme – (ħ) or (ʕ). In addition, the model includes a random effect of speaker. The analysis is given in Table 11.

The Model shows that the effect of age is statistically significant ($p < 0.001$) – older people produce more pharyngeals. It appears that in Rosh Ha'ayin the pharyngeals are also in decline, but the change in progress is far less advanced than that seen in the Tel Aviv sample. Furthermore, there is a significant difference between (ħ) and (ʕ) – with (ħ) more often realized as pharyngeal ($p < 0.001$), as in the Tel Aviv sample.

When we compare the word list data to the conversation data in Rosh Ha'ayin, we once again see similar patterns to those found in the Tel Aviv sample, albeit with much greater overall rates of pharyngeal productions. As Table 12 shows, there is again much more use of [ʕ] in the word list than in the free conversation.

The statistical analysis given in Table 13 demonstrates that the increase of [ʕ] in the word list is highly statistically significant. Although Table 12 shows

Table 11: Statistical analysis of pharyngeal production at Rosh Ha'ayin in the conversation task

	Estimate	Std. Error	z value	Pr(> z)
(Intercept)	-5.7911	1.179	-4.912	9.02E-07***
Age	0.1419	0.0249	5.699	1.20E-08***
Sex = male	0.8661	0.7362	1.176	0.239
Phoneme (ħ)	0.9847	0.1458	6.755	1.42E-11***

* $p < 0.05$, ** $p < 0.01$, *** $p < 0.001$.

Table 12: Pharyngeal productions at Rosh Ha'ayin

Interview task	% (ʕ)	% (ħ)
Conversation	62.78 (722/1150)	70.87 (815/1150)
Word list	79.71 (55/69)	66.67 (46/69)

Table 13: Statistical analysis of (ʕ) production at Rosh Ha'ayin in the word list and conversation tasks

	Estimate	Std. Error	z value	Pr(> z)
(Intercept)	-4.73412	0.91219	-5.19	2.10E-07***
Task = word list	2.12054	0.40694	5.211	1.88E-07***
Age	0.1179	0.01981	5.952	2.65E-09***
Sex = male	0.86856	0.60568	1.434	0.152

* $p < 0.05$, ** $p < 0.01$, *** $p < 0.001$.

a small difference in (h) as well, with slightly more [h] in the conversation, a statistical model predicting the use of (h) reveals that this is not a statistically significant difference, as shown in Table 14. Therefore, the patterns closely parallel those in Tel Aviv (though, once again, with the overall rates being much higher).

Many speakers in Rosh Ha'ayin expressed overt metalinguistic commentary that made a clear link between using the pharyngeals and a style that is more correct – something important when reading out loud, especially in religious contexts. For example, Rinat, a 37-year-old kindergarten teacher from Rosh Ha'ayin, said the following:

- (5) We Yemenites are more traditional, and we take the bible seriously. And if you want to read from the bible you need to speak correct Hebrew.

Further examples of the importance of the pharyngeals in reading came up with respect to studying with a *mori*. Many of the male speakers that I interviewed had studied with a *mori* in preparation for their bar-mitzvah, and they said that he strongly insisted on distinguishing pharyngeals and non-pharyngeals. Consider this exchange with Udi, a 45-year-old man from Rosh Ha'ayin with robust pharyngealization, in which he uses the phrase 'I can read' to refer specifically to his ability to read out loud in the Yemenite style.

- (6) We're two brothers, my brother and I, we're 11 months apart. My brother, when he tried to go to the *mori*, he would not use pharyngeals. And my father understood that I have the accent, and I can read, and I can follow in his footsteps. The other one can't follow him in reading the Book.

Despite the positive value of the pharyngeals among these speakers, they are well aware that they are negatively stereotyped and sometimes even outlandish sounding once one leaves Rosh Ha'ayin. Consider this excerpt from my conversation with Hava, a 54-year-old woman who consistently produces pharyngeals.

Table 14: Statistical analysis of (h) production at Rosh Ha'ayin in the word list and conversation tasks

	Estimate	Std. Error	z value	Pr(> z)
(Intercept)	-13.71008	3.83696	-3.573	0.000353***
Task = word list	0.53649	0.58083	0.924	0.355662
Age	0.37823	0.08393	4.506	6.59E-06***
Sex = male	1.91441	2.22453	0.861	0.389464

* $p < 0.05$, ** $p < 0.01$, *** $p < 0.001$.

- (7) I used to work for this lawyer, and so he tells me, he writes me 'I'm going to the bank tomorrow (*maxar*)'. So he writes this down for me, and he's a lawyer, and he has a spelling mistake. Instead of writing tomorrow (*maħar*) with a *ħet*, he writes *maxar*. And people make fun of Yemenites all the time for speaking with *ħet* and *šayin*, but I think we have the most clear and eloquent language, don't you think?

Hava explains how people make fun of how she talks, but she has the last laugh: she says that her former employer – an Ashkenazi lawyer – wrote her a note with the word *maħar* ('tomorrow'), and spelled it with the non-pharyngeal *xaf*, even though the correct spelling is with a *ħet*. For her, who pronounces *ħet* and *xaf* differently, the correct spelling is obvious. Therefore, she not only makes a claim for the correctness of the pharyngeals, but also argues that they are better in an objective sense, despite the social stigma associated with them.

Against this backdrop, it appears likely that the retaining of the pharyngeals in Rosh Ha'ayin is intimately linked to the language attitudes of the speakers. They see the pharyngeals as correct, eloquent, and most importantly, an authentic part of their Yemenite identity – and they see their familiarity with certain reading styles as a way of expressing their identity.

4. DISCUSSION

4.1 *Interpreting the results*

The data in the previous sections show that the Mizrahi speakers produced more [ʕ] in the word list compared to the conversation. This result may be surprising given that the pharyngeal realization is stigmatized and ideologically linked with an ethnic identity that is in many ways marginalized. However, it can be understood in light of the history of [ʕ] and its complex positioning with respect to prescriptive norms – while stigmatized, it is also seen as historically correct. Nevertheless, the shift to more [ʕ] in the word list cannot be attributed solely to its being lauded by the prescriptive norm. We have seen that only Mizrahis shift to more [ʕ] in the word list, whereas both Mizrahis and Ashkenazis show adherence to the prescriptive norm by phonetically realizing (h) more often in the word list. Therefore, the stylistic move encompasses both sides of the dual social meaning of [ʕ] – it is at once addressing the formality of the situation, while at the same time highlighting the speakers' ethnic identity.

Although this pattern has been observed before (Davis 1984), I believe that it has not been adequately explained, and an important puzzle has remained unnoticed – why do the speakers who use more [ʕ] in the reading style show no rise in their use of [ħ]? The pattern is unlikely to be a coincidence – it appeared robustly in two separate and rather different field sites as well as in

Davis's (1984) data. Davis suggested that the difference between free conversation and reading styles had to do with the fact that the pharyngeals are always distinguished in writing. However, if that were the only reason, we would expect [ħ] and [ʕ] to pattern in the same way. The difference between [ħ] and [ʕ] therefore suggests that the style shift has everything to do with the social meaning of the variables.

Considering other ways in which the uses of [ħ] and [ʕ] differ can help us discern the kind of social meaning expressed by the shift to more [ʕ] in the word list. In fact, there is independent evidence that [ʕ] is more commonly used than [ħ] as resource for performing a Mizrahi identity. In Gafter (forthcoming), I examine stylistic uses of the pharyngeals by speakers who do not consistently produce them in reality TV data. The data come from two shows: *Ha-yafa ve-ha-xnun* (an Israeli version of the American TV show *Beauty and the Geek*) and *Koxav Nolad* (an Israeli song contest show similar to *American Idol*). The speakers that I analyzed all show a similar pattern – they have low rates of [ʕ] (2–5%), and no occurrences of [ħ]. I show that the occasional use of [ʕ] is used to perform stances and attributes associated with the stereotypes about Mizrahis discussed before, such as 'down-to-earth'. Thus, it appears that [ʕ] can be used to index an authentic Mizrahi persona, and is more valuable as a stylistic resource for such social meanings than [ħ] is.

Although this paper cannot offer a full explanation of why [ʕ] seems to have acquired stronger indexical links to Mizrahi-ness, we can use this attested stylistic difference in the use of [ħ] and [ʕ] in interpreting the word list data. The reality TV data may at first appear unrelated to the word list data, but I propose that they are part of a bigger pattern – the preference for [ʕ] as a stylistic resource that has to do with Mizrahi identity.

In the Attention to Speech model, differences between conversational styles and reading styles are interpreted on a single axis of meaning – the more attentive reading styles involve a monitoring of socially stigmatized forms and a stricter adherence to standard norms. This is difficult to reconcile with the multifaceted meaning of the pharyngeals, but the pattern can be understood if we think of the word list not simply as more formal or more attentive – but rather, consider what other social meanings reading could convey. Milroy's (1987: 172–174) critique of the interpretation of the conversation styles and reading styles on a single continuum of meaning highlights this issue – reading is a distinct social and cognitive activity, which may have its own specialized register and features. She presents data from Belfast, in which speakers did not change their pronunciation of (a) towards the prestige pronunciation as expected, and proposes that the patterns observed by Labov rely on speakers' familiarity with broader norms of prestige with respect to reading, which may not be the case in the tight-knit working-class community that she investigated. Furthermore, she points out, how speakers respond to the reading tasks is also contingent on what kind of value is placed on reading skills. This insight highlights the importance of considering how reading is

understood as a speech event in the local context. The ideologies about reading out loud expressed by the speakers in my sample are a key piece of the puzzle – reading skills are very much valued, but, crucially, reading is not associated simply with an increased degree of carefulness, but with authentically Mizrahi styles.

We can now reconsider the connection between the word list data and the reality TV data. Shifting to a reading style and performing a down-to-earth persona may appear to be two very different, even conflicting, stylistic goals, but the fact that both cases show the same linguistic pattern suggests that they may be two sides of the same coin. In fact, the stylistic goals are not at odds: it is only thinking of the word list style as being strictly more formal, that makes it appear to be the opposite of what the reality TV contestants were doing. However, the word list is not simply more formal – the language ideologies expressed by the speakers refer specifically to authentic styles of reading out loud, and linked these styles with their Mizrahi-ness. If [ʕ] can be used to express Mizrahi-ness more than [ħ], the pattern becomes clear. The speakers use more [ʕ] in the word list not just because they are being more formal – they are being more formal in an authentically Mizrahi way. The preference for [ʕ] over [ħ] in the word list is therefore further evidence that the pattern is not simply adherence to the prescriptive norm (since both are considered correct by the Hebrew language academy), but is also an expression of linguistic authenticity that has everything to do with ethnicity.

4.2 *The word list as a site for authentication*

In order to understand how authenticity is expressed in linguistic interaction, I adopt Bucholtz and Hall's (2004) concept of *authentication*. Unlike 'authenticity', which implies a given identity trait that a speaker may or may not have, authentication is a social practice, and identity itself is viewed as the outcome of constantly negotiated social practices. Bucholtz (2003) urges sociolinguists to speak not of authenticity but of the authenticating practices of those who use and evaluate language. She does not deny that speakers and hearers rely on the notion of authenticity in the construction of their identities, and as such it is a cultural force, but authenticity is ultimately the result of the authenticating practices that create it. This approach proves extremely useful in interpreting the data presented here. When thinking in terms of authentication as social interaction, the word list data becomes clear – it is not simply a more attentive or formal setting, it is a worthy site for authentication work.

Considering word list reading as an authenticating practice may seem contradictory from the perspective of the Attention to Speech model. As Eckert (2003) argues, the concept of the authentic speaker is a key interest in the field of sociolinguistics. In the Attention to Speech model, researchers have focused on finding this alleged spontaneous speaker of the purest vernacular, whose

speech gives the researcher access to the 'real' language in the speaker's mind – language in its most unadulterated form, untouched by speaker agency or prescriptive pressures; the moments in which the true vernacular surfaces are actively sought out, and treated as a direct glimpse into the most authentic of speech (Labov 1972b). This notion of 'authentic' is built into the methodology – the different components of the sociolinguistic interview are designed to elicit different linguistic styles, but these components are not treated equally. The free-form conversation is regarded as a much more informative source of data, and the word list, on the other hand, is seen as a valuable source of data, but mostly insofar as it contrasts with the conversation.

The speakers in my sample, however, have a rather different construct of linguistic authenticity in mind, as can be seen in some of the language ideologies that they expressed. One of the ways in which the speakers brought it up was in connecting the most authentic Yemenite man not only to speaking with *ħet* and *šayin*, but also with knowing how to recite the Jewish prayers in the Yemenite way. For the speakers in my sample, the pharyngeals' association with the bible extends to a link with ritualized styles in general, such as reading the prayers in one's own bar-mitzvah. It is an event for which one practices, and goes to a teacher – the *mori* – to prepare for it, but it is still one in which linguistic authenticity is important.

In these speakers' notion of themselves as authentic Mizrahi speakers, what is valued is not the least monitored form, but rather the form that is most faithful to history and tradition. As such it is more similar to Coupland's (2003) notion of 'establishment authenticity', in which the authentic is the older form. In these speakers' notions of authenticity, a link to the old is crucial, and yet there is no paradox in having to learn how to be authentic. As such, it becomes clear that the word list reading can indeed be understood as a worthy site for authenticating practices.

5. CONCLUSION

The combination of linguistic ideologies surrounding the Hebrew pharyngeals places them in an ambiguous position with respect to the different components of the sociolinguistic interview. As stigmatized variants, one may predict that they should appear less frequently in the reading styles, but as prescriptively correct variants, one may predict the opposite. In my data, neither prediction is fully borne out. The two pharyngeal segments exhibit different patterns – (ʕ) is pharyngeal more often in the read-out-loud word list than in free-form conversation, but (ħ) shows no such effect.

These results highlight the fact that the difference between the word-list task and the conversation task cannot always be understood along a single dimension of meaning. While the results are hard to explain under the Attention to Speech approach, they can be readily understood with an approach to stylistic variation that allows for multidimensional social

meanings and a role for speaker agency. The speakers' ideologies about language are revealing – they make an explicit link between an authentic Mizrahi identity and competence in specific styles of reading out loud and, thus, the word list is not simply monitored read speech, but a site for an authenticating practice. [ʕ] has been shown to have other stylistic uses that [ħ] does not: as a resource for indexing a Mizrahi persona among speakers who do not generally use the pharyngeals. I propose that [ʕ] in the word list is serving a similar purpose, and that is why it is preferred over [ħ] in this case as well. In reading the word list, speakers are not simply being more formal, but are being formal in a decidedly Mizrahi way. The increase in use of [ʕ] is therefore linked to both its status as a Mizrahi feature and its prestige as part of the prescriptive norm.

Schilling-Estes (2008) challenges the privileging of the sub-conscious vernacular in the Attention to Speech model, and argues that styles involving performance are no less worthy of our attention. Furthermore, she argues, there is some degree of conscious self-presentation in all linguistics styles, even the most natural seeming. However, her critique leads her not to reject the sociolinguistic interview as a methodology for obtaining data, but rather to offer a new way of interpreting it – not as a contrast between 'natural' and self-conscious, but rather as a collection of a wide range of styles that need to be understood in context. Although she refers specifically to the conversation component, I believe that this insight is relevant to the interpretation of the reading styles as well.

There is little doubt that reading is different from conversation styles – it needs to be explicitly learned and is clearly self-conscious. However, just like conversation styles, reading styles can be used to achieve a variety of social goals. In order to understand the speakers' greater use of [ʕ], we need to take into account both the social meaning of [ʕ], and what speakers are doing in the performance of reading. The word list can then serve not as a secondary source of data, but as a prime site for observing a linguistic style that is at the heart of how the speakers see the intersection of their ethnicity and language use. Therefore, I am not arguing that the patterns shown in this paper should be taken as evidence that the word list is not useful as a methodological tool. Quite the contrary, I believe that if we interpret it while embracing the variety of meanings that can be associated with reading, it can become a rich source of data for important types of stylistic variation.

NOTES

1. I thank the Israel Institute for a fellowship that made this paper possible. I also thank my colleagues at Stanford University and Tel Aviv University, and the editors and anonymous reviewers at the *Journal of Sociolinguistics* who provided much insightful feedback on this paper.

2. The Hebrew word glossed here as Mizrahi (מזרחי) literally means 'Eastern', and features one of the variables discussed in this paper – the pharyngeal fricative (ħ). The Hebrew pronunciation varies between *Mizrahi* and *Mizraxi*. Since I did not want to use a spelling that implies a particular phonetic realization of the variable, I follow the practice of many Israeli sociologists as well as the English edition of *Ha'aretz*, a leading Israeli newspaper, of rendering the term in English with an *h*.
 3. Blanc (1968) states that the merged non-pharyngeal realization is a *velar* fricative (as does Yaeger-Dror 1988 and other writers), whereas Zuckermann (2005) states that it is a *uvular* fricative. To my knowledge, these claims are all based on auditory perception. I will refer to the merged phoneme here as /x/, while remaining agnostic of the actual phonetic realization. See Gafter (2014) for a more in-depth discussion of this issue.
 4. An additional feature discussed by Blanc is a difference in the realization of the Hebrew rhotic segment. See Yaeger-Dror (1988, 1991, 1993) for a detailed analysis.
 5. As an Ashkenazi Israeli, my presence is likely to have affected the linguistic patterns of the speakers (Bell 1984; Rickford and McNair-Knox 1994). Specifically, since I never produce the pharyngeals myself, some of the interviewers may have used lower rates of [h] and [ʕ] than they might have had with an interviewer who does. Therefore, I make no claim that I captured any specific style that is particularly representative of the speakers' overall language use, but rather, I analyze the shifts within the interaction with me.
 6. The two Ashkenazi speakers who did produce pharyngeals in the word list were two of the older speakers in the sample, which may reflect the fact that they were educated when the influence of the prescriptive norm was stronger.
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APPENDIX

The list of words used in the word list is given below. The relevant items with (ħ) and (ʕ) are in bold.

tamim ('innocent')	eforah ('chickling')
mehir ('price')	malhiv ('exciting')
ʕadin ('gentle')	maʕagal ('circle')
harbe ('a lot')	yeladim ('children')
nadiv ('generous')	maher ('quickly')
adama ('land')	taʕim ('delicious')
ħašavti ('I thought')	malxuti ('royal')
amin ('reliable')	

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