

**Phonological Variants of /x/ and /r/ as Markers of Group Identity in the  
Speech Community of Walled Area of Lahore**



**Hamza Yaseen**

**ID # 14016084036**

**M. Phil / MS**

**A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of M. Phil/MS  
in Applied Linguistics**

**in**

**DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH LANGUAGE AND LITERATURE**

**SCHOOL OF SOCIAL SCIENCES AND HUMANITIES (SSSH)**

**UNIVERSITY OF MANAGEMENT AND TECHNOLOGY (UMT)**

**2018**

## Abstract

This present study examines phonological variations and replacement in the variety of Punjabi language spoken in the walled area and non-walled area of Lahore. To reveal phonological variation and changes, 2 variants / r / and / x / in the variety of Punjabi language were analyzed. Qualitative research methodology was used in this study to answer the research questions as there was not the use of any numerical data in this research. Walled speech community had been analyzed and particularly, only those inhabitants who had been living in the walled area of Lahore since minimum last 30 years were the part of research population. Striking features have been noted at diverse linguistic levels, such as phonetics and phonology, lexicon and syntax. Labov (1966) argued that social class and group identity play a key role in linguistic variation. Labovian paradigm was considered appropriate to study variations and changes in Punjabi language of walled speakers. The data was collected through a representative sample of 20 respondents belonging to various age groups including male and female both groups. The respondents were living in both walled and non-walled areas of Lahore. Males and females of different age groups belong to walled and non-walled area of Lahore were selected equally. Pictures and recordings were used as tools of the research. Paraat Computer Software was used to analyze the sounds variations. The results showed a significant phonological variation and replacement as far as / r / was concerned as walled speakers clearly replaced the / r / phoneme with / ɾ / at the initial, middle and ending position of the words. But on the other hand, in the speech patterns of walled area, second variant / x / is only replaced with / h / only at the initial position of the word. They did not make any change at the middle and ending position of the word and spoke the phoneme / x / at the middle and the ending position of the words respectively. Considering the changes in the speech community of the walled area, there is significant result to rely on that the Punjabi language of walled area holds a tendency to be changed considerably in future.

## **Acknowledgement**

I praise God, the Almighty Allah for providing me this opportunity and permitting me the ability to proceed successfully.

## **Declaration**

I do solemnly declare that this research work has been written by

Hamza Yaseen

In partial fulfilment for the degree of

Masters of Philosophy in Applied Linguistics

DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH LANGUAGE AND LITERATURE

SCHOOL OF SOCIAL SCIENCES AND HUMANITIES (SSSH)

UNIVERSITY OF MANAGEMENT AND TECHNOLOGY (UMT)

LAHORE

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# **Chapter One**

## **Introduction**

### **1.1 Chapter overview**

This very first chapter presents a clear view of the present research. In this chapter, the introduction, purposes of the study have been discussed in the first section. The next section carries the significance of the research. The research questions and objectives of the study have been discussed in the third part of this chapter. The summary of the whole chapter has been discussed in the last.