Affectation in Celebrity Interviews: A Sociophonetic Approach

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Abstract— **This study conducts a sociophonetic study of affectation in celebrity interviews. The aims of this study are described as follows: (1) Finding out the sociophonetic strategies that celebrity interviews use to employ affectation and showing which strategy(s) is/are more frequently used and (2) Discovering the social variables in the sociolinguistic dimension that interact with the phonological dimension to convey affectation. In accordance with the aims mentioned above, the following hypotheses are formulated: (1) Creaky voice, the frequent use of the filler words and uptalk are the sociophonetic strategies that celebrity interviews use to convey affectation and the creaky voice and the frequent use of the filler words are more frequently used. (2) Gender, occupation, social status and social power are the social variables that interact with phonological dimension to convey affectation. The main conclusions of the study are (1) Creaky voice, the frequent use of the filler words and uptalk are the strategies that celebrity interviews use to convey affectation. The first two ones are used by both gender while the third one, uptalk, is used only by female characters. (2) Occupation and social status, and social power in interaction with the phonological dimension are important variables that make a celebrity tends to use affectation in interviews. It has been observed that by virtue of these variables these celebrities see themselves as influential people in the society and their followers imitate their actions so, this leads them to be affected personalities.**

Index Terms—**Affectation, Social variables, Sociophonetics, Valleyspeak**

I. Introduction

This study tackles affectation which is "behavior or an action that is not natural or sincere and that is often intended to impress other people" (cambridge dictionary). A phony accent someone uses to sound more sophisticated, for example, can be con-sidered an affectation. Affectation can happen in speech, dress, or behavior (Merri-am-Webster dictionary). The present study will tackle the affection in speech in se-lected celebrity interviews. It asks the following questions. (a) what are the qualifiers of the valleyspeak that celebrity interviews employ to convey affectation? (b) which variables of, gender, social power, occupation and social status influence on these qualifiers of the valleyspeak in using affectation in celebrity interviews.

It aims at, (a) finding out the qualifiers of the valleyspeak that celebrity interviews employ to convey affectation, (b) uncovering how the variables of, gender, social pow-er, occupation and social status influence on these qualifiers of the valleyspeak in us-ing affectation in celebrity interviews. It is hypothesised that: the there are three quali-fiers of the valleyspeak: creaky voice, uptalk and the frequent use of the filler words and the most commonly used are: creaky voice and the frequent use of the filler words. It is also hypothesised that both gender use affectation in celebrity interviews.

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II. Literature Review

A. Sociophonetics: A General Overview

The Within the field of linguistics, sociophonetics is a branch that integrates pho-netic and sociolinguistic approaches. It tackles the issues of how socially constructed variation in the sound system is used and learned (Foulkes *et al.*, 2010). Between the two fundamental branches of phonetics and sociolinguistics, sociophonetics addresses a wide range of subjects. Research has been conducted on a variety of subjects, including variations in speech production, the social meaning of specific pronunciations, the perception and perceivability of sociophonetic patterns, and the influence of sociocultural influences on phonetic models of production (Hay & Drager, 2007).

Many studies have looked into the significance of altering the audience's design. Expanding upon the speech accommodation theory of (Giles, Taylor, & Bourhis, 1973), (Bell, 1984) defines "audience de-sign," pointing out that "style is essentially speakers' response to their audience". The interrelationships of audience design, styling, and performance were underlined in (Bell, 1984), initial formulation of "audience design" and "referee design," together with the roles of topic, setting, and third parties In line with this concept, speakers typically modify their speech to align with the audience in order to convey closeness or solidarity with them, or to move away from the audience in order to convey distance.

B. The Social Variables

The definition of the social variables, according to (Fasold, 1990), is a collection of different ways to communicate the same thing, even though the variations have social im-portance. In other words, a variable is a linguistic element that covaries with other ex-tralinguistic independent factors, such as social power, age, sex, ethnic group, or con-textual style, in addition to other linguistic aspects. Labovian methodology seeks to correlate social factors with variables that are isolated at the levels of fundamental features and from which distributional rules can be derived.

C. Gender

Gender is one of the social variables that influences how people use language differently. Wardhaugh (2006) states that the connection, if any, between the social roles of men and women who speak a given language and its structures, vocabularies, and usage patterns is a central subject in the field of sociolinguistics. Individuals pick up on characteristics that are associated with masculine and feminine identities. Talbot is echoed by Wardhaugh (2006), who claims that both sexes are social creatures with acquired behaviour. Whereas women learn to be women, men learn to be men. They have been treated differently since childhood. Girls typically play drama as a mother and a daughter with her dolls and play with her friends with cooking tools which teach them

about sensitivity and friendship, while boys typically play football and competition which teach them about competition.

Lakoff (1990) presented the results of her investigation on the similarities and differences between the speech patterns of men and women. Those that are relevant to the current study include the following:

1. The intonational contours of women exhibit greater diversity than those of men.
2. Women tend to utilize forms (like thus,) that convey impreciseness.
3. To show uncertainty or the need for approval, women frequently adopt question-like intonation patterns.
4. Compared to men, women's vocals usually seem breathier.

a) Occupation

Generally speaking, occupations are groups of work within the division of labour that involve related tasks. A hierarchy of status is created throughout the occupational structure by conceptualizing occupations as status groupings (Avent-Holt et al., 2020).

Our occupation and socioeconomic standing as adults typically serve as indicators of how well we did throughout our time in education. Language evidence for the importance of these social variables is typically seen in the conversations between bank executives, as contrasted to window cleaners. By examining the pronunciation variations of salespeople in three department shops in New York City, sociolinguist William Labov integrated factors from socioeconomic level and place of occupation in the 1960s.They were Klein's (with less expensive things, working-class status), Macy's (medium priced, middle-class status), and Saks Fifth Avenue (expensive items, upper-middle-class status). Labov entered each of these places and asked salespeople targeted inquiries, including "Where are the women's shoes?" to get responses that included the phrase "fourth floor." Two opportunities exist in this sentence for the pronunciation of postvocalic Irl, or the /r/ sound following a vowel, to be made or not. The replies followed a consistent trend in the department stores. The greater the store's socioeconomic class, the more /r/ sounds the employees made, and the lower the status, the fewer /r/ sounds the employees, made. Thus, upper middle class, middle class, or working class were indicated by the frequency of this linguistic variable (r) in the speech (Yule, 2020).

b) Social status

Social Status can be defined as a person's standing or importance in relation to other people within a society) Oxford's English dictionaries .Sauder, *et al.* (2012) define social status as the relative level of social value that an individual is thought to possess.

C. Anderson, *et al.* (2015) assure that this is one explanation for its seeming cross-cultural universality. Conversely, while those with higher status have a long list of advantages, including better health, respect, resources, influence, and independence, those with lower status fare worse on all of those metrics.

Crucially, status stems from broadly held opinions about who in a community is seen as more morally or capable. These beliefs can be the result of a noteworthy achievement or performance, but they can simply result from having traits that society values, such as a person's race or occupation. Thus, status represents how a society evaluates an individual's relative social worth and quality, regardless of how accurate or imprecise that evaluation may be. Status can sustain social

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stratification systems by making unequal distributions of power and resources seem normal and fair. This is because cultures utilize status to distribute resources, leadership positions, and other forms of authority (Ridgeway & Correll, 2006).

c) *Social Power*

A dominant social variable that influences social interaction, according to some experts, is power.At every stage of a human social encounter.According to (Brown & Levinson, 1978), social power is the symmetric social dimension that denotes the degree to which the hearer can assert his own plans and self-assessment (face) at the detriment of the speaker's plan and self-assessment. In the same mentality, Enochs & Yoshitake-Strain, (1999) clarify that the ability of the speaker to impose their desire on the hearer, for whatever cause, is the basis for social power. They contend that control is the proper way to understand power, stressing that one has power if they are able to influence the behaviours and thoughts of others. They see "control" as the product of power, prestige, wealth, status, knowledge, and another factor.

Three types of relations exist between the interlocutors, according to (Olshtain & Cohen, 1983), the addresser is in a high rank, indicating that the addressee is in a low rank; (2) the addressee is in a high rank, indicating that the addresser is in a low rank; and (3) both the addresser and the addressee are in the same rank, indicating that both are equal.

d) **Affectation**

 "Is a speech or conduct not natural to oneself: an unnatural form of behavior meant especially to impress others". Examples:

- His French accent is just an affectation
  (Merriam-Webster.com dictionary).

- Kay has no affectation at all.
- He speaks clearly and without affectation. (Oxford Advanced Learner's Diction-ary).
  The most prominent characteristic of affectation in the phonological dimension is the use of valleyspeak.

A similar definition is found in the cambridge dictionary which states that affectation is" a speech or behavior that is not natural or sincere and is used to produce a certain effect" (Cambridge Dictionary).Other dictionaries states that affectation can occur with speech, dress, or behaviour "It is

an assumed manner of speech, dress, or behaviour, esp one that is intended to impress others". Affectations include things like using a fake accent to sound more sophisticated. (Dictionary.com).

The most prominent characteristic of the affectation in the phonological dimension is the valleyspeak.

e) *Valley girl or Valleyspeak*

Hogenboom, (2013) defines Valleyspeak, or Valspeak, as a California English social dialect and accompanying vocal traits, best identified with Valley girls, however components of it have extended to other groups, including boys termed "Val dudes".

D. *Features and Qualifiers of the Valleyspeak*

a) *Creaky Voice (Vocal Fry)*

The majority of the professors reported that they had discovered evidence of a recently discovered phenomenon among female college students: a guttural flapping of the vocal cords known as "vocal fry." Best defined as a raspy or croaking sound injected (typically) at the conclusion of a sentence, this vocal fry example is a standard example. Vocal fry is a low-pitched, cracking vocal distortion caused by vocal cords vibrating extremely slowly. As with other varieties of laryngealization, vocal fry is generated by restricting the larynx (Merriam-Webster).

Wolk, *et al.* (2012) state that here are many social and cultural contexts in which vocal fry is a common occurrence. The majority of female college students who speak Standard American English exhibit the use of vocal fry, as shown by. Divergent opinions exist on the impact of vocal fry on the standard of living of American women. Vocal fry as a "fashion trend" has generated more negative opinions, especially among older generations, despite others arguing that it may make these ladies appear more educated and therefore favourable. The latter, however, was supported by an experiment carried out by (R. C. Anderson, Klofstad, Mayew, & Venkatachalam, 2014), which found that people's perception of young women who used vocal fry was that they were "less competent, less educated, less trustworthy, less attractive and less employable. This study also revealed that people viewed female vocal fry use more adversely than male vocal fry.

The feminist author Naomi Wolf also criticized young women in 2015, saying, "Young women, give up the vocal fry and reclaim your strong female voice." She claimed that this behavior, along with run-on sentences, uptalk, and soft speech, were "destructive speech patterns" that "gatekeepers" used to ignore them and their voice (Cornelius, 2020).

The belief that women who use it as an affectation or a sign of insecurity is one of the more common accusations leveled at them. A few years back, another study under the title "Vocal Fry: Annoying Affectation or Totally Normal?" claims that Kim Kardashian, Katy Perry, Emma Stone, Zooey Deschanel, and Scarlett Johansson are carrying it out. Whether on purpose or not, all of these superstars employ a language effect that can be irritating to some listeners but inconspicuous to others. Young women were causing them to "disown their own power" according to this article (Phillips, 2020).

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b) Uptalk

The most notable characteristic of valley girl, according to Eckert and Mendoza-Denton (2006) and numerous other writers, is a phenomenon known as uptalk, which characterizes a rising intonation for phrases that ordinarily don't have this kind of intonation, including declarative sentences. Therefore, many phrases that a typical valley girl speaker says unintentionally sound like questions, at least to speakers of other varieties.

According to (Gorman, 1993), there are a few causes for this characteristic. According to him, for instance, a rising intonation can be used as a sign that more is coming and indicates that the speaker does not want to be stopped. Additionally, he notes that uptalk may be a kind of accent, a tag, to drew attention to new information for listeners and quotes speakers who explain their use of it as a means to connect phrases, and to connect the speaker to the listener.

Graduate student Amanda Ritchart of the University of California, San Diego, recorded twenty-six college-age southern Californians, approximately half male and half female, from various ethnic and socioeconomic backgrounds. She then analyzed their speech while the participants completed two tasks: following directions on a map and recounting an event seen in a video clip. She discovered that although the women used uptalk more frequently than the men, they all did it (Goldberg, 2013).

It was pointed out by Cynthia McLemore that uptalk is used to highlight fresh information or to be "inclusive" (Gorman, 1993). Penny Eckert goes on to say that because "language changes very fast," what older peer groups perceive as "excessively 'girly'" may appear to younger peer groups as "smart, " authoritative, and strong. The truth is that college-age women employ these "linguistic features and use them as powerful tools for building relationships," according to Carmen Fought, who was also quoted before and acknowledged that uptalk may come across as "stupid" to some (Quenqua, 2012). Thus, rather than being an impolite linguistic quirk propagated by popular culture, these mannerisms serve as an important means of communication. Therefore, it comes down to evaluating the alterations in light of aging.

c) The Frequent Use of the Filler Words

In addition to phonological characteristics, Eckert and Mendoza-Denton (2006) list some additional characteristics that identify valley girls: Discourse markers such as "to introduce quoted speech" are

a distinctive feature. They are employed in phrases "like". For example, "So, I'm like, "Where did he go?' and she's like 'I don't know, I haven't seen him."' rather than, say, "he/she said".

There are additional phrases that are closely related to "valley girl," but their usage is currently inadequately documented. However, they should be addressed since they are a highly crucial attribute of valley girl speech. For example, the usage of like as a "ubiquitous placeholder"

to bridge gaps in fluent speech is a different use for the word from the one previously described. For example," "I was, like, looking for the place." (Donald et al., 2004).

Those who frequently use "like" also frequently use other superfluous words, such as "literally," "basically," "totally," and "you know," as in the sentence "And I was, like, totally surprised when he said that." But compared to the term "like," these are not as frequently employed. "Like" seems to outperform them all (RoGeorge, 2018).

II.Methodology

A. *Data Description and Model of Analysis*

The data of the study is limited to celebrity interviews. These interviews are found on John's YouTube podcast under the title celebrities. The researcher has chosen four of these videos two of these videos are represented by female characters and the other two are represented by male characters.
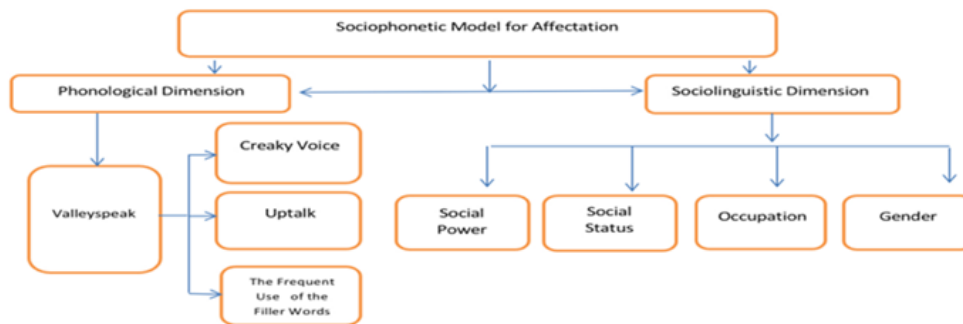

Figure 1 The Model of Analysis.

B. *The Qualitative Analyses*

a) **Extract No. 1**

- Jay Shetty: what did it feel like going back to like your school and going back to like your school and all these old places….
- Selena Gomez: Well going home is like to me it's untainted territory right it is safe it is simple and kind where I'm from it is all about you know being together loving each other I go home and people are like welcome home miss Gomez they're not you know treating me any differently and I enjoy and I enjoy visiting you know what made me who l am and it always gives me a good sense of of like oh I hope I can inspire.

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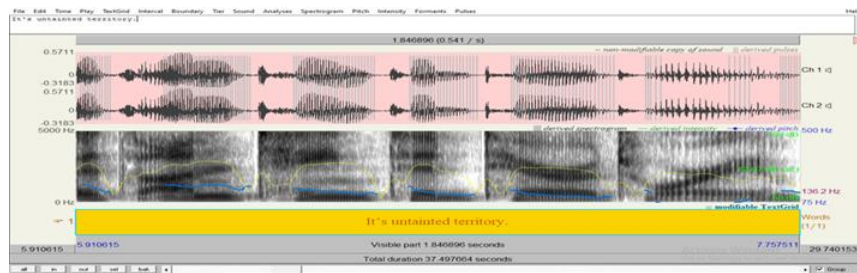
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Figure 2 Selena Gomez's creaky voice as a sample for this extract.

1. Phonological Dimension

This dimension includes valleyspeak which can be classified into three qualifiers:

- Creaky voice: Selena Gomez uses her creaky voice in this extract as it is shown in Figure 2 and almost in most of her words throughout this conversation which is an affectation.
- Uptalk: Selena Gomez does not use uptalk as an affectation because she doesn't use it in the sentences that are not interrogative sentences.

2. Sociolinguistic Dimension

- Gender: Selena Gomez is a female character. Jay Shetty is a male character
- Occupation: Selena Gomez is an American singer, songwriter, actress, business-woman, and producer. Jay Shetty is a storyteller, podcaster & former monk.
- Social status: Selena Gomez has 429M on Instagram. Jay Shetty has 15.1M followers.
- Social Power: According to the number of followers on Instagram, Selena Gomez is higher in rank than Jay Shetty.
- The frequent use of the filler words: She uses the filler words "like" three times and "you know" three times within (36) seconds.
-

b) **Extract No. 2**
- Jay Shetty: you're resisting avoiding running away from not accepting.
- Kunal Nayyar: you know I just made a lot of money I'm feeling incredibly happy what's wrong with that sometimes you achieve what you want to achieve and there's still a but attached to it why you know that's the simplicity of intention that you're talking about you don't have to go to a cave and sit for 10 years to meditate you know you probably.
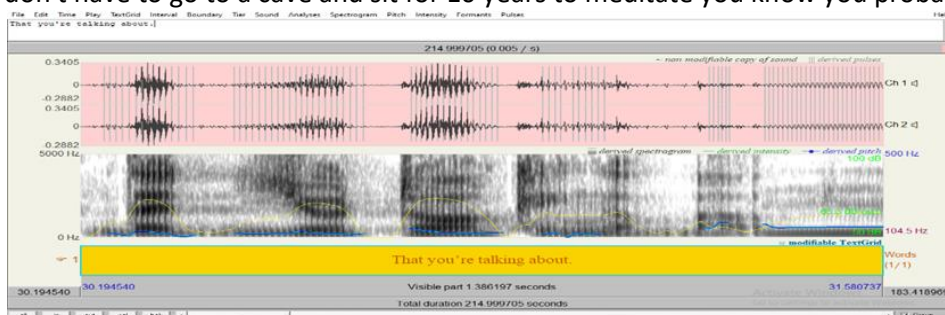
Figure 3 Kunal Nayyar's creaky voice as a sample for this extract.
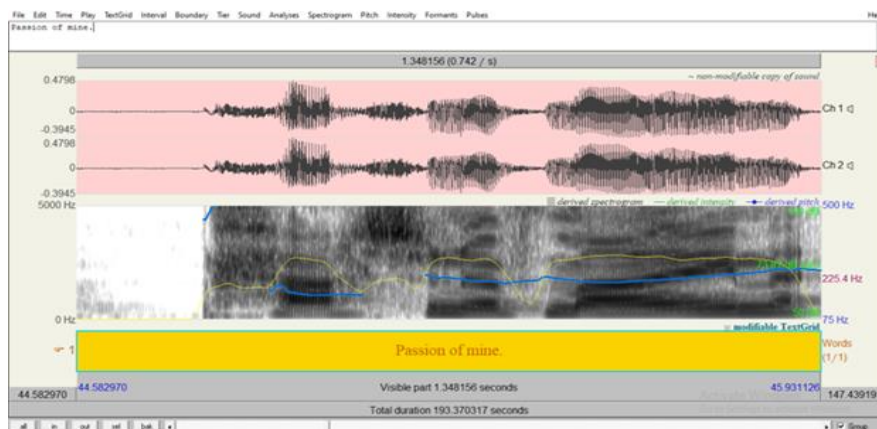
1. *Phonological Dimension*

- Creaky voice: Kunal Nayyar uses his creaky voice in this extract and almost in all his speech with Jay shetty as it is shown in Figure 3 which is considered as a sign of affectation.
- Uptalk: It is not seen that Kunal Nayyar uses upspeak with the declarative sen-tences that do not function as a question.

2. *Sociolinguistic Dimension*

- Gender: Kunal Nayyar and Jay Shetty are both male characters.
- Occupation: Kunal Nayyar is a British actor Jay Shetty is a storyteller, podcaster & former monk.
- Social Status: Kunal Nayyar has 2.9M followers on Instagram. Jay Shetty has 15.1M followers.
- Social power: According to the number of followers on Instagram, Jay Shetty is higher in rank than Kunal Nayyar.
- The frequent use of the filler words: Kunal Nayyar uses the filler words "you know" three times within (22) seconds.

c) **Extract No. 3**

- Jay Shetty: yeah, I mean I can see you doing the work its fun watching you do the work and figuring it out plunger.
- Kendall Jenner: I love working on myself like it is actually like a passion of mine and like I just I find so much comfort and joy and like actually finding where I think I could better myself and being like even if it's physical like physical as in like my physical health or working out or I just started doing speaking I started doing like cold plunges and ice baths and like even if I don't have the time to go outside I just got a cold plunger I did it right before I got here it's the best thing ever again it takes so much mental the whole thing of it is all mental so I don't know just stuff like that I really love so.
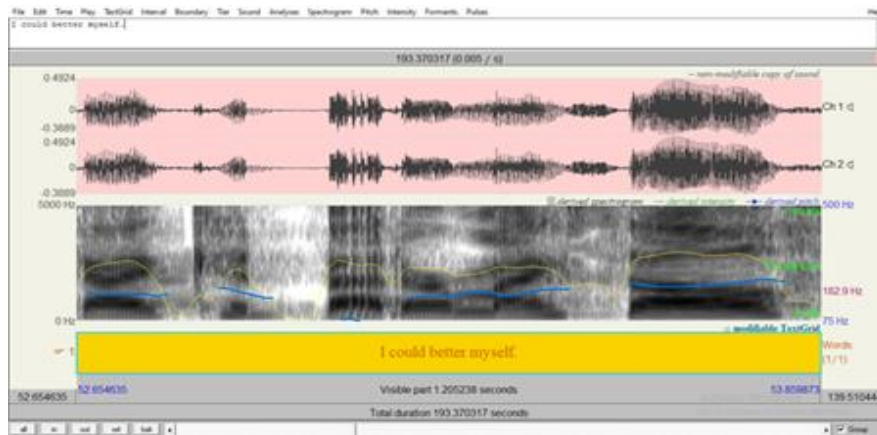

(a)

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(b)

Figure 4 Kendall Jenner's uptalk

1. *Phonological Dimension*

- Creaky voice: Kendall Jenner uses her creaky voice in some of her words but she doesn't use it constantly, so it doesn't consider as affectation.
- Uptalk: Kendall Jenner uses rise intonation at the end of many declarative sen-tences as it is shown in Figure

2. *Sociolinguistic Dimension*

- Gender: Kendall Jenneris a female character. Jay Shetty is a male character.
- Occupation: Kendall Jenner is an American model, media personality, socialite and businesswoman. Jay Shetty is a storyteller, podcaster & former monk.
- Social Status: Kendall Jenner has 294M followers on Instagram. Jay Shetty has 15.1M followers.
- Social power: According to the number of followers on Instagram, Kendall Jenner is higher in position than Jay Shetty.
- The frequent use of the filler words: She uses the filler word "like" 9 times within (40) second.

d) **Extract No. 4**

- Jay Shetty: could you give us an example of some people that you've sat.
- John Legend: there to be like you're kind of what my sense is I don't know him yeah and I don't know his friends but what I'm my sense is that he's saying like he might want to be too cool around them yes and if he's too cool around them he may not come up with the best art yeah and um I think it's important to have I don't have random people in the studio when we write like I have only.
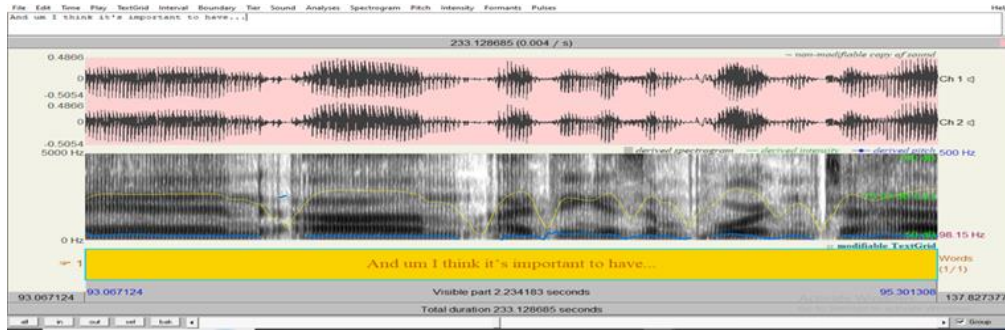
Figure 5 John Legend creaky voice as a sample for this extract.

1. *Phonological Dimension*

- Creaky voice: John Legend uses his vocal fry register as as it is shown in Figure 5 in this extract and approximately throughout all his interview with Jay Shetty which is something not natural but an affectation.
- Uptalk: John Legend does not use up speak in his declaratives sentences.

2. *Sociolinguistic Dimension*

- Gender: John Legend and Jay Shetty are both male characters.
- Occupation: John Legend is a songwriter, pianist, record producer, and an actor. Jay Shetty is a storyteller, podcaster & former monk.
- Social Status: John Legend has 16M followers on Instagram. Jay Shetty has 15.1M followers.
- Social power: According to the number of followers on Instagram, John Legend and Jay Shetty are of the same rank.
- The frequent use of the filler words: John Legend uses" like" three times within (21) seconds.

C. *The Quantitative Analyses*

TABLE 1
SELENA GOMEZ.

Phonological Dimension

The Usage	Creaky Voice	Uptalk
Used	√	
Unused		√

Sociolinguistic Dimension

Gender	Occupation	Social Status	Social Power	The filler words
Female	An American singer, songwriter, actress, businesswoman, and producer	Has 429M followers	Superior to inferior	She uses the filler words "like" three times and "you know" three times within (36) seconds.

TABLE 2
KUNAL NAYYAR

Phonological Dimension

The Usage	Creaky Voice	Uptalk
Used	√	

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Unused			√	
Sociolinguistic Dimension				
Gender	Occupation	Social Status	Social Power	The filler words
Male	A British actor	Has 2.9M followers	Inferior to Superior	He uses the filler words "you know" three times within (22) seconds.

TABLE 3
KENDALL JENNER

Phonological Dimension				
The Usage	Creaky Voice		Uptalk	
Used	√			
Unused			√	
Sociolinguistic Dimension				
Gender	Occupation	Social Status	Social Power	The filler words
Female	An American model, media personality, socialite and businesswoman	Has 294M followers	Superior to inferior	She uses the filler word "like" 9 times within (40) second

TABLE 4
JOHN LEGEND

Phonological Dimension				
The Usage	Creaky Voice		Uptalk	
Used	√			
Unused			√	
Sociolinguistic Dimension				
Gender	Occupation	Social Status	Social Power	The filler words
Male	An American singer, songwriter, pianist, record producer, and actor	Has 16M followers	Equal rank	He uses" like" three times within (21) seconds

III. Results

TABLE 5
THE FINAL RESULTS

		Frequent	Percentages
Creaky voice	Male characters	2	50%
	Female characters	2	50%
	Total	4	100%
Uptalk	Male characters	0	0%
	Female characters	1	25%
	Total	1	25%
The filler words	Male characters	2	50%
	Female characters	2	50%
	Total	4	100%

TABLE 6

THE FINAL RESULT OF THE SOCIAL POWER

Social power	Frequent	Percentages
Superior to inferior	2	50%
Inferior to superior	1	25%
Equal rank	1	25%
Total	4	100%

IV. **Discussion**

In Table (5) the first criteria of the study, creaky voice, appears that male characters represent 50% of its users and female characters represent 50 % of its users. This denotes that both males and females used creaky voice with the same percentages. The second cri-teria, uptalk, appears that male characters represent 0% of its users while female characters represent 25% of its users. This denotes that females according to the cur-rent study are used uptalk more than males. The third criteria, the frequent use of the filler words, appears that males represent 50% of its users and females represent 50 % of its users. This denotes that both males and females are used the filler word with the same percentages. It is also an important part of this study to know which criteria is used more to achieve affectation weather by males or females.The first criteria, creaky voice, represents 100% ,the second criteria, uptalk, represents 25%, while the third criteria, the frequent use of the filler words, represents 100% which denotes that creaky voice and the frequent use of the filler words are more often use than uptalk.

The Table (6) gives the frequent ant the percentages of the three types of the social power. The first type, superior to inferior, represents 50%. The second type, inferior to superior, represents 25%. The third type, equal rank, represents 25%. It is found that weather a celebrity is higher, lower or equal to the other participant, he or she will use the affectation. This due to the fact that these celebrities uses affectation not only because they are in front of the present listener but also because that they are keeping in their minds that their audience will watch their interviews so, they give more attention for example to their speech and other factors which are not part of our study like their dress and body movements.

V. **Conclusions**

After analyzing the chosen data sociophonetically, it is concluded that:

1. Creaky voice, the frequent use of the filler words and uptalk are the strate-gies that celebrity interviews use to convey affectation and the creaky voice and the frequent use of the filler words are more frequently used.
2. It is also found that both males and females in celebrity interviews are used affec-tation.
3. Occupation and social status in interaction with the phonological dimension are important variables that make a celebrity tends to use affectation in interviews. Occcupation plays an important role in using affectation. It has been observed that by virtue of the occupation of these celebrities, they see themselves as influ-ential people in the society and their followers imitate their actions so, this leads them to use affectation.
4. According to this study, by virtue of social status these celebrities see that many people follow them on social media and wait for their actions which leads them to be affected personalities.
5. Social power has three types: superior to inferior, inferior to superior and equal in rank lead to use of affectation. All these types are conveyed affectation. This due to the fact that these celebrities uses affectation not only because they are in front of the present

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listener but also because that they are keeping in their minds that their audience will watch their interviews so, they give more attention for exam-ple to their speech and other factors which are not part of our study like their dress and body movements.

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