

Abstract

This study investigates the linguistic outcomes of war-induced dialect contact between speakers of two dialects of Iraqi Arabic (IA): the *qiltu* dialect spoken in Hīt (HIA) and the *gilit* dialect spoken by migrants from the *gilit* areas to Hīt. It differs from previous contact-based studies on Arabic dialects in that it investigates dialect change in the speech of the local residents rather than in the speech of the migrants. The HIA dialect has been noted for the loss of certain local linguistic features at the expense of *gilit* features with a wider areal distribution (Al-Ani, 1978; Khan, 1997). The thesis provides a quantitative sociophonetic description of the speech of 36 male and female HIA speakers and of their accommodation to the *gilit* dialect by examining the impact of four independent variables (age, gender, Social Network Integration (SNI), and speakers' attitudes) on the use of four phonological variables (two consonantal and two vocalic). At the consonantal level, variation in the use of the uvular stop (q) and the velar stop (k) are examined. At the vocalic level, the variation in the insertion of the epenthetic vowel [i] within onset consonant clusters in word initial positions and the lowering of the short high vowel /i/ into [a] in the context of pharyngeal consonants is examined. This is the first quantitative sociophonetic study of its kind to be conducted on HIA to examine whether dialect levelling is taking place and to compare the findings to those of other sociolinguistic studies on IA *qiltu* dialects (e.g. Mosuli Iraqi Arabic) spoken in communities that have undergone similar sociodemographic changes as Hīt.

Over the course of the last three decades, Hīt has seen high levels of internal migration of people from *gilit*-speaking cities, namely the capital Baghdad. Previous research has suggested that as a consequence of spatial mobility and dialect contact, language features with a wider socio-spatial currency become more widely used at the expense of more locally specific features (Britain, 2009). This mobility disrupts large-scale close-knit

localised networks, which have over time retained highly systematic and intricate sets of socially built linguistic standards (Milroy, 2002).

This study shows that speakers' age, gender and SNI have an important impact on the acquisition of *gilit* features, with SNI being the most important independent variable. HIA speakers with more open friendship networks i.e. high scorers on the SNI scale were the leaders in adopting *gilit* features. There is sound change in progress and *gilit* features spread faster among the younger generation. In all age groups, male speakers produced more *gilit* features than female speakers did. The results suggest that the spread of the *gilit* features at the expense of the HIA local features is determined by social, linguistic and social-psychological factors. It was shown that speakers' attitudes play an important role in their linguistic behaviour. Socially salient phonological variables such as (k) are levelled only minimally and the vocalic features are levelled more and adopted more frequently than the consonantal features. Epenthesis of the vowel [i] is restricted to monosyllabic words. Vowel lowering is not limited to the context of velar and pharyngeal consonants. The outcome of dialect contact is levelling, which involves the replacement of local linguistic forms with other linguistic features with a wider geographical spread (Cheshire et al., 1999:1) and motivated by individuals having open networks to people outside their community.

Table of Contents

Dedication	III
Acknowledgement	IV
Abstract.....	VI
Table of Contents	VIII
List of Tables	XIII
List of Figures.....	XVI
List of Abbreviations	XIX
Phonetic Symbols.....	XXI
Consonants	XXI
Vowels.....	XXII
Chapter One: Introduction	1
1.1 Arabic Language	1
1.2 The Linguistic Situation in Iraq.....	4
1.3 Previous Studies on Iraqi Arabic.....	6
1.4 The research site	14
1.5 The historical background and socioeconomic development in Hīt.....	15
1.6 Causes of dialect levelling (DL) in HIA	18
1.7 Importance of the study	21
1.8 Aims and scope of the study.....	22
1.9 Research questions	24
1.10 The phonology of HIA	24
1.10.1 Consonants	26
1.10.2 Vowels.....	29
1.10.2.1 Long vowels	29
1.10.2.2 Short vowels.....	31
1.10.2.3 Diphthongs	31
1.10.3 General phonological processes	31
1.10.3.1 Vowel rising	32
1.10.3.2 Elision	33
1.10.3.3 Metathesis	33

1.11 Outline of the Thesis	33
Chapter Two: Dialect Levelling	37
2.1 Introduction	37
2.2 Supralocalisation and spatial mobility.....	38
2.3 Convergence and divergence.....	42
2.4 Arabic variationist studies	45
2.5 Approaches to studying language variation and change	53
2.5.1 Social Class studies	54
2.5.2 Social Network studies.....	56
2.5.3 The Community of Practice studies	61
2.6 Summary of Chapter Two	62
Chapter Three: Communication Accommodation Theory and Dialect Contact	64
3.1 Introduction	64
3.2 Research in the dialect contact framework.....	67
3.3 Research in the Accommodation framework	75
3.4 Summary of Chapter Three	78
Chapter Four: Research Methodology and Data Collection	79
4.1 Introduction	79
4.2 Ethical issues	79
4.3 The Sample.....	80
4.3.1 Sampling Methods.....	80
4.3.2 The sample design and size	83
4.4 The researcher	86
4.5 Observer's paradox.....	90
4.6 Data collection Procedure.....	93
4.6.1 Interview One (I).....	96
4.6.2 Interview Two (II).....	97
4.6.2.1 Life-style questions	98
4.6.2.2 'Attitude' questions	100
4.7 The social variables	101
4.7.1 Age	101
4.7.2 Gender	108
4.7.3 SNI	115

4.7.3.1 Measuring speakers' SNI scores	116
4.7.4 Speakers' Attitudes	121
4.7.4.1 Measuring the attitudes scores	124
4.8 The linguistic variables	125
4.8.1 (q) velarisation	127
4.8.2 (k) affrication	129
4.8.3 Vowel epenthesis	132
4.8.4 Vowel lowering	136
4.9 Statistical Analysis	139
4.10 Summary of Chapter Four	140
Chapter Five: Results and Discussion	142
5.1 Introduction	142
5.2 The relationship between the dependent and independent variables	142
5.2.1 Distribution across age groups	143
5.2.1.1 (q) velarization	145
5.2.1.2 (k) affrication	153
5.2.1.3 Vowel epenthesis	157
5.2.1.4 Vowel lowering	159
5.2.2 Distribution according to gender	163
5.2.2.1 (q) velarization	164
5.2.2.2 (k) affrication	168
5.2.2.3 Vowel lowering	170
5.2.2.4 Vowel epenthesis	171
5.2.3 Distribution according to SNI	173
5.2.3.1 Individual language behaviour	173
5.2.3.2 Group language behaviour	180
5.2.3.3 The SNI sub-variables	183
5.2.3.3.1 Friendship network	186
5.2.3.3.2 Workmates network	190
5.2.3.3.3 Leisure time activities	192
5.2.4 Distribution according to speakers' attitudes	194
5.3 Summary of Chapter Five	201
Chapter Six: Interactions between Independent Variables	202
6.1 Introduction	202

6.2 SNI.....	204
6.2.1 SNI and gender.....	204
6.2.2 SNI and age	206
6.2.3 Speakers’ SNI and attitudes	209
6.3 Friendship network.....	210
6.3.1 Friendship network and age	210
6.3.2 Friendship network and gender.....	212
6.4 Interaction of age and gender	213
6.5 Family-related differences.....	218
6.6 Summary of Chapter Six	225
Chapter Seven: Conclusion and Suggestions for Future Research.....	227
7.1 Overview of the main contribution.....	227
7.2 Findings	229
7.2.1 Socioeconomic situation in Hīt	229
7.2.2 Gender-related differences	231
7.2.3 The role of Social Network Integration (SNI)	233
7.2.4 Psycholinguistic factors.....	235
7.2.5 Linguistic factors.....	237
7.2.7 Family-related variations.....	238
7.3 Suggestions for future research.....	238
7.3.1 Investigating the speech of the <i>gilit</i> migrants in Hīt.	239
7.3.2 Investigating other <i>qiltu</i> dialects.	239
7.3.3 Longitudinal studies.	239
7.3.4 Investigating other phonological processes.	240
7.3.5 Examining the impact of other social factors.....	240
References	241
Appendix A: Ethical documents	256
A1: Research ethical review letter.....	256
A2: Research ethical approval letter.....	258
Appendix B: Speaker metadata	259
Appendix C: Informants’ individual scores for consonants	261
Appendix D: Informants’ individual scores for vowels.....	263

Appendix E: Indicators of SNI	265
Appendix F: Indicators of Attitudes.....	268
Appendix G: Research information sheet and participant’s consent form.....	270
G1: Consent form in Arabic	270
G2: Consent form in English.....	272
Appendix H: Examples of target and expected reflexes of words tested in picture description (target sounds in bold).....	274
Appendix I: Collection of pictures used in the interview to illicit linguistic variables	275
Appendix J: Sample of Transcribed Speech.....	279
Appendix K: A screenshot of the SPSS variable view	286
Appendix L: Sample of SPSS data view saved as MS Excel 2013	287