



# Arabic in Iraq

## A Diglossic Situation

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### Abstract

In some speech communities two distinct varieties of one language are used side by side, each of which serving a different range of social functions. One variety, called High, is used only under formal and public circumstances, while the other one, referred to as Low is used in normal daily-life events. Phonological, semantic and syntactic differences between the two varieties are so drastic that the two varieties are mutually incomprehensible. This sociolinguistic phenomenon is termed "diglossia". It is very common especially in Arabic-speaking countries. One good example is the diglossic situation, held between the Modern Standard Arabic and the Iraqi Colloquial Arabic. The present article aims to illustrate the differences between the two varieties at different linguistics levels, to account for this mutual unintelligibility. To achieve this objective, appropriate data were collected from the two varieties. The linguistic differences were spotted, and categorized according to the Surface Strategy Taxonomy. The data were analyzed and supported by respective explanations, where necessary.

**Keywords:** Diglossia, Modern Standard Arabic, Iraqi Arabic, High Variety, Low Variety etc.

### 1. Introduction

Diglossia is a language situation in which two distinct varieties of one language are used within a speech community. One variety, referred to as the High variety (H), is used only on formal and public occasions, while the other one, referred to as the Low variety (L), is used under normal, everyday circumstances. Varieties of the Arabic language shape a continuous spectrum of variation, with the dialects spoken in the Arab-speaking world being mutually incomprehensible. One good example of Arabic diglossia is held between the Modern Standard Arabic (MSA) and the Iraqi Colloquial Arabic (ICA). This article aims to compare MSA and ICA at different linguistic levels, to find out what factors have made the two varieties mutually incomprehensible. To do so, a good number of data belonging to the two varieties were collected. The differences were scrutinized, and categorized according to the Surface Strategy Taxonomy. The data were analyzed and supported by respective explanations, where necessary. The alterations between the two varieties proved so drastic in nature which can justify the aforesaid mutual unintelligibility. The findings are especially revealing for the Arabic Language curriculum planners. As a step forward, suggestions for further research are addressed.

### 2. Background

Trudgil (2009) defines diglossia as:

A particular kind of language standardization where two distinct varieties of a language exist side by side throughout the speech community (not just in the case of a particular group of speakers, such as Scots or Blacks) and where each of the two varieties is assigned a definite social function. (p.113)

The term 'Diglossia' was first introduced into the literature by Charles Ferguson (1959) as follows:

Diglossia is a relatively stable language situation in which, in addition to the dialects of the language (which may include a standard or regional standards), there is a very divergent, highly coded (often grammatically more complex) superposed variety, the vehicle of a large and respected body of written literature, either of an earlier period or in another speech community, which is learned largely by formal education and is used for most written and formal spoken purposes but is not used by any sector of the community for ordinary conversation. (p. 336)

Some scholars, however, maintain that diglossia holds between two languages rather than two varieties of one language. According to Meyerhoff (2006), "One language may be used for some social functions or in a specific social context, while another language is served for other" (p.103). Fishman (1971) refers to Paraguay as an example of a diglossic community, in which the two varieties do not belong to one language, but are Spanish and Guarani.

A key point in diglossia is that the two varieties are kept apart functionally. One variety, referred to as Low (L), is used at home or in other informal situations, however, if someone needs to give a lecture at a university or in any formal circumstance, (s)he is expected to use the other variety, referred to as High (H).

According to Wardhaugh (2006, p. 90), "The two varieties cannot be interchangeably used...[You do not use an H variety in circumstances calling for an L variety, e.g. for addressing a servant; nor does one use an L variety when an H variety is called for, e.g., for writing a serious work of literature".

In a diglossic situation, the two varieties have co-existed for a long time, sometimes, as in Arabic-speaking communities, for many centuries. Wardhaugh (2006: 89) asserts that "the phenomenon of diglossia is not ephemeral in nature: in fact, the opposite is true: it appears to be a persistent social and linguistic phenomenon".

Ferguson identifies four situations which show the major characteristics of this diglossic phenomenon: Arabic, Swiss German, Haitian (French and Creole), and Greek.

Arabic diglossic situation is of special interest for some sociolinguistics. Watson (2002) asserts that "Dialects of Arabic form a roughly continuous spectrum of variation, with the dialects spoken in the eastern and western extremes of the Arab-speaking world being mutually unintelligible" (p.8).

In an Arabic-speaking diglossic community, the two varieties are, on the one hand, Standard Arabic (H) and, on the other, the various regional colloquial Arabic dialects (L). For example, this "diglossic situation may also be found in Egypt, where both classical Arabic and colloquial Arabic is used"(Finch, 2005, p. 214).

Children, in the Arabic diglossic society, acquire the low variety at home. Some may simultaneously learn the high variety, usually at school, but many do not learn it at all. There has been this view that the spoken varieties of Arabic are corruptions of MSA (Modern Standard Arabic) or CA (Classical Arabic) as found in the Quran and are, therefore, less prestigious varieties of Arabic. According to Wardhaugh (2006):

The H variety is the prestige variety; the L variety lacks prestige. In fact, there can be so little prestige attached to the L variety that people may even deny that they know it although they may be observed to use it far more frequently than the H variety]...[This feeling about the superiority of the H variety is reinforced by the fact that a body of literature exists in that variety and almost none in the L variety. That literature may reflect essential values about the culture. Speakers of Arabic in particular gain prestige from being able to allude to classical sources. The folk literature associated with the L variety will have none of the same prestige. (p. 90)

In a recent study, Jabbari (2012) has compared the Modern Standard Arabic and the Egyptian Colloquial Arabic. The article has introduced the drastic phonological, semantic, and morphosyntactic differences between the two varieties which have resulted in a mutual incomprehensibility.

### 3. Data of the Study

The data of the study are collated from an Iraqi Arabic language guide, titled *Hamrah-e-Shoma dar Araq* (literary meaning: with you in Iraq), by Ameri<sup>i</sup> and Zeighami<sup>ii</sup> (2007). The book is meant to be used by Iranian pilgrims to Iraq. It includes a good number of words, phrases, expressions and sentences in both Standard Arabic and Iraqi colloquial Arabic, with their translations into Persian. By Standard Arabic is meant the variety based on the speech and writing of educated native speakers of Arabic, e.g. the variety used by the Arab media.

### 4. Methodology

To illustrate the linguistic differences between Modern Standard Arabic (MSA), and Iraqi Colloquial Arabic (ICA), the Surface Strategy Taxonomy has been utilized. This perspective, "highlights the ways surface structures are altered" (Dulay, Burt and Krashen, 1982, p. 150). Categorizing linguistic items within the framework of the Surface Strategy Taxonomy helps researchers analyze linguistic alterations, in more details. To achieve this, (1) the collected data were transcribed phonemically<sup>iii</sup>, (2) the meanings were given in English, (3) when needed, a rough literal (morpheme-based) back translation of the (Arabic) examples into English was added, to help the non-Arab reader follow the discussions, and (4) necessary explanations were provided.

#### 4.1. Pronunciation Key

Arabic shares a good number of phonemes with other languages. Yet, there are a few phonemes, only found in Arabic and some sister languages. The Arabic phonemes are presented in tables (1) to (4).

Table 1. Consonants Specific to Arabic

Consonant	Arabic Letter	Arabic Example	Meaning	Phonetic Features
/s <sup>ʕ</sup> /	ص	صباح	/s <sup>ʕ</sup> aba:h/	morning (Emphatic) Voiceless alveolar fricative
/d <sup>ʕ</sup> /	ض	ضيف	/d <sup>ʕ</sup> ajf/	guest (Emphatic) Voiced alveolar fricative
/t <sup>ʕ</sup> /	ط	طالب	/t <sup>ʕ</sup> a:lib/	student (Emphatic) Voiceless dental-alveolar stop
/ð <sup>ʕ</sup> /	ظ	ظرف	/ð <sup>ʕ</sup> arf/	envelope (Emphatic) Voiceless dental-alveolar stop
/ʔ/	ا ن هـ	إنا	/ʔana/	I (Voiceless) glottal stop
/ʕ/	ع	عين	/ʕajn/	eye Voiced pharyngeal fricative

/ʕ/	غ	غَدَا	/ʕadan/	tomorrow	Voiced uvular fricative
/x/	خ	خَال	/xa:l/	uncle	Voiceless uvular fricative
/q/	ق	قَرِيب	qari:b/	relative	Voiceless uvular stop

Table 2. Shared Consonants

Consonant	Arabic Letter	Arabic Example	Meaning	Meaning	English Example
/b/	ب	بَحْر	/bahr/	sea	by
/t/	ت	تَمْر	/tamr/	dates	table
/θ/	ث	ثَلَاجِه	/θalla:dʒa/	refrigerator	think
/dʒ/	ج	جَمَل	/dʒamal/	camel	John
/g/	ق	قَمَر	/qamar/ IA	moon	go
/tʃ/	ك	سَكِين	/sitʃi:n/ IA	knife	chair
/h/	ح	حَبِيب	/habi:b/	friend	hand
/d/	د	دِرْس	/dars/	lesson	day
/ð/	ذ	ذَلِكَ	/ða:lika/	that	that
/r/	ر	رُوح	/ru:h/	soul	run
/z/	ز	زَهْر	/zahr/	bloom	zoo
/s/	س	سَيَّارَة	/sajja:ra/	car	say
/ʃ/	ش	شَيْء	/ʃajʃ/	thing	ship
/f/	ف	فِرْنَسَا	/faransa:/	France	France
/k/	ك	كِتَاب	/kita:b/	book	key
/l/	ل	لِكَ	/laka/	for you	love
/m/	م	مَنْ	/man/	who	man
/n/	ن	نَاس	/na:s/	people	nice
/w/	و	وَقْت	/waqt/	time	way
/h/	ه	هَذَا	/ha:ða:/	this	home
/j/	ي	يَمَن	/jaman/	Yemen	yes

Table 3. Arabic Vowels

Vowel		Arabic Letter	Arabic Example	Meaning
Short	/a/	اَ	نَحْنُ /nahnu/	we
	/i/	اِ	مِنْ /min/	of, from
	/u/	اُ	غُرْفَة /ʕurfa/	room
Long	/a:/	آ	بَاب /ba:b/	door
	/u:/	وُ	صَابُون /sʕa:bu:n/	soap
	/i:/	يِ	فِي /fi:/	in, at

Table 4. Arabic Diphthongs

Diphthong	Arabic Example	Meaning	English Example
/aw/	يَوْم /jawm/	day	house
/aj/	ضَيْف /ðʕajf/	guest	eye

## 5. Data Analysis

In a diglossic situation "most linguistic items belong to one of the two non-overlapping sets" (Hudson, 2005, p.55). The differences between H and L are manifested in (1) grammar, (2) lexicon and (3) phonology. According to Dittmar (2000):

"1-L has fewer grammatical (morphological) categories and a reduced system of inflection; H has a greater grammatical (morphological) complexity.

2- H and L have, in the main, a complementary lexicon. It is a particular characteristic of the diglossic situation that pairs are used situation-specifically with the same meaning in the H variety and the L variety.

3- H and L share one single phonological system, in which the L phonology represents the basic system and the deviant characteristics of the H phonology from a subsystem or parasystem"(p. 120).

In the forthcoming sections, phonological, lexical and morpho-syntactic differences between MSA and ICA will be introduced and analyzed, in detail.

### 5.1 Phonological Differences

As regards phonology, "the L system will often appear to be the more basic"...[there is quite a difference between Classical Arabic and the colloquial varieties]"(Wardhaugh, 2006, p. 91).

#### 5.1.1 Some Arabic Phonological Rules

Standard Arabic, lacks consonants /tʃ/, /ʒ/, /g/, /v/ and /p/, however, the first three sounds, are not ruled out in different colloquial varieties of Arabic. The only phonemes not found in any variety of Arabic are the voiceless bilabial stop/p<sup>iv</sup> and the voiced labio-dental fricative /v/.

Arabic syllable structure is CV(C)(C). It means that: (a) any syllable necessarily starts with a consonant, (b) the initial consonant is necessarily followed by a vowel, i.e. consonant clusters are not allowed syllable initially, and (c) the (nucleus) vowel can be followed by 0 up to 2 consonants. Some phonological differences between the MSA and ICA are:

#### 5.1.2 Rule-governed Phonological Alterations

##### 5.1.2.1 Consonant Change

"/q/ and /k/ are pronounced in Iraqi dialect of Arabic /g/ and /tʃ/ respectively, inspired by Turkish" (Ameri and Zeighami, 2007, p. 5). Some examples are:

	<u>MSA</u>	<u>ICA</u>	<u>Meaning</u>
	/k/	/tʃ/	
(1)	/sikki:n/	/sitʃʃi:n/	knife
(2)	/kalb/	/tʃalib /	dog
(3)	/samak/	/simatʃ/	fish
(4)	/katif/	/tʃitif/	shoulder
(5)	/kam/	/tʃam/	how much, how many
	/q/	/g/	
(6)	/su:q/	/su:g/	market
(7)	/qamar/	/gamar/	moon
(8)	/qul/	/gul/	say

Consonant /ʔ/ tends to change to /j/ in ICA:

	/ʔ/	/j/	
(9)	/ma:ʔ/	/ma:j /	water
(10)	/miʔa/	/mijja /	hundred
(11)	/ðiʔb/	/ðijb/	wolf
(12)	/ma:ʔil/	/ma:jil/	willing
(13)	/sa:ʔiq/	/sa:jiq/	driver
(14)	/qa:ʔima/	/qa:jma/	bill
(15)	/ʔabaʔ/	/ʔabaj/	veil

##### 5.1.2.2 Vowel Change

Vowels /u/ and /a/ in MSA often change to /i/ in ICA. Some examples are as follows:

/u/            /i/

The present verb prefix vowel /u/ in MSA changes to /i/ in ICA:

(16)	/tuntadz(u)/	/tintidz/	is produced
(17)	/jukallif(u)/	/jikallif/	it costs

/a/            /i/

The present verb prefix vowel /a/ changes to /i/ in ICA:

(18)	/jafʔaxil(u)/	/jiftaxil/	it works
(19)	/nahta:dʒ(u)/	/nihta:dʒ/	we need

	<u>MSA</u>	<u>ICA</u>	<u>Meaning</u>
Vowel /a/ in MSA definite articles changes to /i/ in ICA:			
(20)	/ʔal-kita:b/	/ʔil-kita:b/	the book
(21)	/ʔad-dars/	/ʔid-dars/	the lesson

	/u/	/a/	
Present tense prefix /ʔu-/ in MSA changes to /ʔa-/ in ICA:			
(22)	ʔuri:d(u)/	ʔari:d/	I want

### 5.1.2.3 Change of Initial CV to CVC

In ICA the empty morph /ʔi-/ may be added to the beginning of a word, while the following vowel is deleted. This phonological rule usually occurs in words of more than one syllable. This way the initial syllable changes from CV (in MSA) to CVC (in ICA). This phonological process is very productive in ICA and may happen in words of different parts of speech. Examples (23) to (30) are examples of this rule. The deleted vowels are underlined, and the syllable boundaries are marked (ˀ):

(23)	/n <u>u</u> ˀrid(u)/	/ʔinˀrid/	we want
(24)	/t <u>a</u> ˀʔaxxar/	/ʔitˀʔaxxar/	delayed(v)
(25)	/f <u>i</u> ˀra:f/	/ʔifˀra:f/	carpet
(26)	/q <u>u</u> ˀma:f/	/ʔiqˀma:f/	fabric, clothing material
(27)	/t <u>a</u> ˀfadˀdˀal/	/ʔi-tˀfadˀdˀal /	Here you are.
(28)	/h <u>u</u> ˀna:/	/ʔihˀna:/	here
(29)	/h <u>i</u> ˀsa:b/	/ʔihˀsa:b/	account
(30)	/m <u>u</u> ˀna:sib/	/ʔimˀna:sib/	appropriate

### 5.1.2.4 Final Deletion

There is a tendency of the deletion of /u(n)/, /a(n)/, /i(n)/ word finally in ICA:

(31)	ʔal-miftah-u la: jaftah-u/	ʔil-miftah-Ø la: jaftah-Ø/	The key does not open.
(32)	ʔarid <u>u</u> hiða:ʔ- <u>an</u> ridʒa:lij- <u>an</u> qijas- <u>a</u> əala:əat- <u>in</u> wa əala:əin- <u>a</u> /	ʔarid-Ø hiða:ʔ-Ø ridʒa:lij-Ø qijas-Ø əala:ə-Ø wa əala:əin-Ø/	I want a man shoe of a size 33.

### 5.1.3. Occasional Phonological changes

Occasional phonological changes are those ones which do not take place systematically and frequently. They can be found in only few examples. Occasional phonological changes are of different types. Some examples are as follows:

#### 5.1.3.1. Consonant Change

/q/ may occasionally change to /k/:

	/q/	/k /	
(33)	/waqt/	/wakit/	time

/θ/ may occasionally change to /t/ particularly in some numbers.

	/θ/	/t/	
(34)	/θala:θa/	/ʔitla:θa/	three (fem.)
(35)	/θala:θ/	/ʔitlaθ/	three (mas)

#### 5.1.3.2 Vowel Change

Vowels /a/ and /u/ in MSA may change to /i/ in ICA, occasionally. Some examples are:

	/a/	/i/	
(36)	/sˀaba:h/	/sˀiba:h/	morning
(37)	/ʔada:ʔ/	/ʔida/	lunch
(38)	/ʔafa:ʔ/	/ʔifa/	dinner

	/u/	/i/	
(39)	/ʔunwa:n/	/ʔinwa:n/	address
(40)	/ʔunduq/	/ʔindiq/	hotel
(41)	/ʔudʒra/	/ʔidʒra/	room
(42)	/dʒumʔa/	/dʒimʔa/	Friday
(43)	/dʒundi:/	/dʒindi:/	soldier, private

## 5.2 Morphological Differences

Palmer (2000, P. 120) asserts that "L has fewer grammatical (morphological) categories and a reduced system of inflection; H has a greater grammatical (morphological) complexity". This implies that the two varieties do not necessarily follow the same set of grammatical rules.

## 5.2.1 Suffix Deletion

A good example of the said reduced system of inflection is the tendency of /u(n)/, /a(n)/, /i(n)/ deletion word finally in ICA. This deletion, also mentioned as a phonological process, is of morphological importance too. As a matter of fact, the said deleted items are verb suffices or case markers.

<u>MSA</u>	<u>ICA</u>	<u>Meaning</u>
(44) /ʔarid- <u>u</u> maʔdʒu:n- <u>a</u> ʔasna:n- <u>in</u> / I- want- <u>suff.</u> paste- <u>ACC</u> teeth- <u>GEN</u>		I want a tooth paste.

/ʔarid-Ø maʔdʒu:n-Ø ʔasna:n-Ø/  
I- want      paste-ACC    teeth-GEN

(45) /ʔuaid- <u>u</u> hiða:- <u>an</u> ʔakbar- <u>an</u> / I-want- <u>suff.</u> shoe- <u>ACC</u> larger- <u>ACC</u>	I want a larger pair of shoes.
--	--------------------------------

/ʔarid-Ø hiða:-Ø ʔakbar-Ø  
I- want. shoe-ACC larger-ACC

MSA

(46) /siʔr-u    ha:ðih-il-maha:sʕi:l-i li-l-mustahlak-i huwa ʔalf-u dula:r-in/  
price-NOM    these -ART-products-GEN    for ART consumer-GEN    it thousand-NOM    dollar-GEN

ICA

/siʔr-Ø    ha:ðih-il-maha:sʕi:l-Ø    li-l-mustahlak-Ø huwa ʔalif-Ø dula:r-Ø/  
price-NOM    these -ART-products-GEN    for ART consumer-GEN    it thousand-NOM    dollar-GEN

Meaning

The price of these products for the customer is 1000 dollars.

## 5.2.2 Avoiding Obligatory Deletion

In Arabic, the regular dual and masculine plural markers end in /n/, e.g. /muʔallim-a:n/, /muʔallim-ajn/ (two [masculine] teachers), /muʔallim-at-a:n/, /muʔallim-at-ajn/ (two [feminine] teachers), muʔallim-u:n/ and /muʔallim-i:n/ ([three or more masculine] teachers). In MSA, "when the first noun of a genitive noun phrase, referred to as the /mudʕa:f/, is dual or masculine regular plural, the final /n/ is deleted" (Mahyar, 1994, p. 159). Some examples are follows:

(47) /muʔallim-a:n/+ /madrīsatu-na/ → (48) /muʔallim-a:Ø madrīsatu-na/  
**teacher-dualNOM school-of ours**  
The two teachers of our school

(48) /ʔafat-ajn/ + /-hi/ → (50) /ʔafat-ajØ-hi/  
lip-dualACC/GEN of his  
his two lips

(49) /muslim-i:n/+ /ʔifri:qi:ja:/ → (52) /muslim-i:Ø ʔifri:qi:ja:/

muslim-pl.ACC/GEN    Africa

Muslims of Africa

In ICA this rule is sometimes violated.

(50) /mi:lja:rajØ mitr mukaʕʕab/    /mi:lja:rajn mitir mukaʕʕab/  
Two milliard cubic meters.

(51) /ʔalfajØ dʒarra:r/    /ʔalfajn traktur/  
Two thousand tractors.

(52) /siʔr-u-ø-øalla:dʒa mijata:Ø ʔalif tu:man/  
/siʔr-u-ø-øalla:dʒa mijata:n ʔalif dula:r/  
The refrigerator costs two thousand \$

## 5.2.3 Subject-predicate Agreement Violation

In MSA, dual and masculine regular plural markers, undergo a vowel change with regard to case. Some examples are :

- (53) . /muʔallim-a:n/ (two [masculine] teachers) = Nominative  
 (54) /muʔallim-ajn/ (two [masculine] teachers) = Accusative and Genitive  
 (55) /muʔallim-u:n/ ([three or more masculine] teachers) = Nominative  
 (56) /muʔallim-i:n/ ([three or more masculine] teachers) = Accusative and Genitive.

On the other hand, the Subject and the predicate in MSA must be in accord with regard to case. In the following example, this rule is sometimes violated in ICA:

<u>MSA</u>	<u>ICA</u>	<u>Meaning</u>
(57) /ʔumri: ʔiθnatan wa ʔifru:na sanatan/ NOM dual NOM pl. NOM age-my two and twenty year	/ʔumri: ʔiθnajn wa ʔifri:n sana/ NOM dual ACC-GEN pl. ACC-GEN age-my two and twenty year	I am 22 years.
(58) /tʕu:lu-ha xamsa wa ʔifru:n mitr-an/ NOM length-of it five and twenty meter	/tʕu:lu-ha xamsa wa ʔifri:n mitr-a/ NOM ACC length-of it five and twenty meter	It is 25 meters long.

### 5.2.3 Deletion of the Conjunction /ʔan/

The conjunction /ʔan/ (literally meaning "that") tends to be deleted in ICA, much more than in Standard Arabic. Some examples are:

<u>MSA</u>	<u>ICA</u>	<u>Meaning</u>
(59) /ʔuri:du ʔan ʔabqa: huna:/ I-want that I-stay here	/ʔari:d ʔabqa ʔihna:/ I-want I-stay here	I want to stay here.
(60) /ʔuri:du ʔan ʔuhawwala dula:ran ʔila: dina:rin/ I-want that I-exchange dollar to dinar	/ʔari:d ʔuhawwal dula:r li-dina:rin/ I-want I-exchange dollar to dinar	I want to exchange dollars to dinars.

## 5.3 Lexical Differences

### 5.3.1 Lexical Complementary Distribution

In a diglossic situation, "There may be distinctly different pairs of words, i.e., doublets, in the H and L varieties to refer to very common objects and concepts. Since the domain of the two varieties do not intersect, there will be an L word for use in L situations and an H word for use in H situations with no possibility of transferring the one to the other" (Wardhaugh, 2006, p.91). In other words, the "H and L have, in the main, a complementary lexicon. It is a particular characteristic of the diglossic situation that pairs are used situation-specifically with the same meaning in the H variety and the L variety" (Dittmar, 2000, p.120). Lexical Complementary Distribution includes all parts of speech. Some examples are:

<u>MSA</u>	<u>ICA</u>	<u>Meaning</u>
5.3.1.1 Adjectives		
(61) /qali:l/	/ʔuwajja /	little
(62) /ba:sil/	/ʔudʒa:ʕ/	brave
(63) /ba:ʔis/	/miski:n/	poor
(64) /kaθi:r/	/ʔihwa:ja/	much
(65) /sʕa:rim/	/dʒiddi:/	serious
(66) /sʕaqi:r/	/ʔizʕajjar/	small
(67) /mutʕib/	/taʕba:n/	tired

### 5.3.1.2 Adverbs

(68) /ʔiðan/	/laʕad/	then, so
(69) /ʕadan/	/ba:ʕ ir/	tomorrow
(70) /huna:/	/ʔihna:/	here
(71) /ʔiðʕan/	/ham/	also
(72) /ʔalʔa:n/	/hassa/	now

<u>MSA</u>	<u>ICA</u>	<u>Meaning</u>
5.3.1.3 Prepositions		
(73) /fi:/	/bi/	in
(74) /min/	/ʔimni/	from, of
(75) /ʔila:/	/l(i)-/	toward
(76) /dʒawf/	/ʔibda:xil/	inside
(77) /bila:/	/bidu:n/	without
(78) /maʕa/	/wajja:/	with

## 5.3.1.4 Interrogative Pronouns

(79)	/ʔajjiʔajʔin/	/ʔajʃ/, /ʃinu:/	what
(80)	/mata:/	/ʔiʃwakit/	when
(81)	/kam/	/ʔiʃgad/, /ʔbajʃ/	how much, how many
(82)	/man/	/minu:/	who
(83)	/ʔajna/	/wajn/	where
(84)	/lima:ða:/, /li-ʔajjiʔajʔin/	/lajʃ/	what for, why

## 5.3.1.5 Negative Pronouns

(85)	/lajsa/	/ma:/	It is not
(86)	/lan/	/ʔabada:/	never
(87)	/la:/	/mu/	no, don't
(88)	/la:/	/ma:ku:/	There is not

## 5.3.1.6 Verbs

(89)	/ʔaðhabu/	/ʔaru:h/	I go
(90)	/balaʕa/	/wasʕala/	He reached
(91)	/baʕaθa/	/ʔarsala/	He sent
(92)	/ʔastatʕi:ʕu/	/ʔagdar/	I can

## 5.3.1.7 Pronouns and Demonstratives

(93)	/tilka/	/ði:tʃi/	that (fem.)(pl.)
(94)	/nahnu/	/ʔihn/	we
(95)	/ha:ða:/	/ha:ða/	this (mas.)
(96)	/ha:ðihi:/	/ha:j/, / ha:ði:/	this (fem.)

## 5.3.1.8 Nouns

Nouns tend to be in complementary distribution, in the two varieties, much more than any other grammatical category, (97 to 116) being only few examples:

(97)	/ʔimraʔa/	/mara/	woman
(98)	/mindi:l/	/ʔfafi:jjja/	handkerchief
(99)	/θaʕalab/	/wa:wi:/	fox
(100)	/laban-ul-ra:ʔib/	/ru:ba/	yoghurt
(101)	/laban/	/hali:b/	milk
(102)	/zajt/	/dahan/	cooking oil
(103)	/ʔarruz/	/timman/	rice
(104)	/durat-ul-mija:h/	/mara:fiq/	washroom
(105)	/fata:/	/ʃa:bb/	young man
(106)	/qamh/	/hintʕa/	wheat
(107)	/mukassara:t/	/karaza:t/	nuts
(108)	/mirʔa:t/	/ʔimra:ja/	mirror
(109)	/na:fiða/	/ʃibbatʃ/	window
(110)	/waqu:d/	/mahru:qa:t/	fuel
(111)	/hudʒra /	/ʕurfa /	room
(112)	/babʕa:ʔ/	/bibi mattu:/	parrot
(113)	/sulahfa:t/	/ragga/	turtle
(114)	/dik ru.mi/	/didʒa:ɖʒ xajbar/	turkey cock
(115)	/qatʕʕ/	/bazzu:n/	cat
(116)	/kurat-ul-qadam/	/tʕawba/	football, soccer

## 5.3.2 Borrowed Words

The lexicon of a language is said to be an open ended system. There are different strategies for adding new words to the lexical inventory of a language. Borrowing is the most familiar technique of adding words. No language variety is needless of borrowing. MSA and ICA are not exceptions to the rule, though there are some differences. On the one hand "The L variety shows a tendency to borrow learned words from the H variety, particularly when speakers try to use the L variety in more formal ways" (Wardhaugh, 2006, p. 91). This has resulted in a certain admixture of H vocabulary into the L. On the other hand, while ICA tends to borrow words from MSA, and other languages, the tendency in MSA is rather "loan translation". The loan translations in ICA, if any, are usually learned words borrowed from MSA. Some examples of borrowing are as follows. The borrowed words, are either borrowed from (geographically) neighboring languages such as Persian, Turkish and Russian, or from European languages, particularly



English and French. It should be born in mind that any borrowed word may undergo phonological and/or semantic change.

	<u>MSA</u>	<u>ICA</u>	<u>Meaning</u>
<b>5.3.2.1 Word Borrowed from Persian</b>			
(117)	/karaz/	/gila:s/	cherry
(118)	/ʔalkaraz-ul-hamid <sup>ʕ</sup> /	/ʔa:lu:/	sour cherry
(119)	/hari:r/	/biri:fam/	silk
(120)	/sari:r/	/taxt/	bed
(121)	/t <sup>ʕ</sup> a:wila/	/majz/	table
(122)	/satta:ra/	/barda/	curtain
(123)	/mis <sup>ʕ</sup> ba:h naft <sup>ʕ</sup> i:/	/la:la/	hurricane lamp
(124)	/mahat <sup>ʕ</sup> tu taʔbijat-il-waqu:d/		
		/ba:nzi:n xa:na/	gas station
(125)	/dabbu:s/	/tʕanga:l/	pin
(126)	/darra:q/	/gawdʒa/	plum
(127)	/mirwaha kahruba:ʔ-ija/	/panka/ <sup>vi</sup>	electric fan
<b>5.3.2.2 Word Borrowed from Turkish</b>			
(128)	/milʔaqa/	/xafu:g/ <sup>vii</sup>	spoon
(129)	/ʕilba/	/qu:t <sup>ʕ</sup> i:/ <sup>viii</sup>	box
(130)	/ʔazzur/	/digma/	button
(131)	/ʔalhafja/	/dufag/	mattress
<b>5.3.2.3 Word Borrowed from Russian</b>			
(132)	/qadah-uf-fa:j/	/ʔistika:n/ <sup>ix</sup>	tea cup
<b>5.3.2.4 Word Borrowed from English</b>			
(133)	/fa:hana/	/lu:ri:/	lorry. truck
(134)	/sajja:rat-is <sup>ʕ</sup> -s <sup>ʕ</sup> a:lu:n/	/ʔistejfin/	station car
(135)	/mat <sup>ʕ</sup> ʕaf/	/kawt/	coat
(136)	/taðkira/	/tikit/	ticket
(137)	/durra:dʒa /	/bajsi:kil/	bicycle
<b>5.3.2.5 Word Borrowed from French</b>			
(138)	/bit <sup>ʕ</sup> a:qa/	/ka:rt/	card
(139)	/qit <sup>ʕ</sup> a:r-ul-ʔinfa:q/	/mitru:/	subway
(140)	/sarwa:l/	/bant <sup>ʕ</sup> ilu:n/	trousers
<b>5.3.2.6 Word Borrowed from an Ambiguous Source Language</b>			
Sometimes tracing the source of a borrowed word is not possible with certainty, as the word is somehow commonly used in different languages. The source of ICA borrowed words (141) to (151) is ambiguous. Example (149) could have been borrowed from English or French. The source of the ICA borrowed word in (150) may equally be French or German, and in example (151) the source can be English or German, though Arabic has hardly borrowed words from German:			
(141)	/dʒarra:ra/	/tiractur/	tractor
(142)	/ha:tif/	/tilifun/	telephone
(143)	/kaʔs/	/gila:s <sup>ʕ</sup> /	glass
(144)	/miðja:ʕ/	/ra:di:ju:/	radio
(145)	/mana:di:l waraqi:ja/	/kiliniks/	tissue
(146)	/ʕurfa/	/balku:na/	balcony
	<u>MSA</u>	<u>ICA</u>	<u>Meaning</u>
(147)	/mawqaf/	/gara:dʒ/	garage
(148)	/sajja:rat-ul-ʔudʒra/	/taksi:/	taxi, cab
(149)	/qurs <sup>ʕ</sup> -ul-mudammadʒ/	/si:di:/	CD
(150)	/raffa:f-ul-ma:ʔ/	/duf/	shower
(151)	/ha:su:b/	/kambi:u:tar/	computer

#### 5.4 Syntactic Differences

MSA and ICA are also different at the levels larger than lexicon. These differences are classified under syntactic differences.

##### 5.4.1 Different Word Order

There are several phrases and sentences with different word orders, in the two varieties. Examples are:

- (152) /sa:ʕadak alla:h/      /ʔalla:h jusa:ʕadak/      May God help you  
 helps-you God      God helps-you
- (153) /hafað<sup>s</sup>a-k-allah/      /ʔallah ʔij-hifð<sup>s</sup>ak/      May God help you  
 protects-you God      God protects-you
- (154) /ʔams-ul-ʔawwal/      /ʔawwal-ul- ʔims/      the day befor yesterday  
 yesterday-ART-first      first-ART-yesterday
- (155) /ʔa bi-l-wazn-i tabiʕu-l-xubz-a ʔam bi-l-ʕadad-(i)/  
 do with - ART-weight you sell ART bread or with -ART-number
- /ʔil-xobz ʔitbiʕa bi-l-wazn ʔaw bi-l-ʕadad/  
 ART-bread you sell with-ART-weight or with-ART-number

Do you sell bread by weight or number?

#### 5.5 Multiple Differences

The above-mentioned partial differences, hand in hand, make the two varieties totally different at the levels larger than phonology and lexicon. MSA and ICA use drastically different phrases and sentences in the same situations. The following example clarifies the extent of the difference.

##### 5.5.1 Some Productive Expressions Unique to Iraqi Colloquial Arabic

- (156) /ju:ɖʒad/      /ʔaku:/      There( is)<sup>x</sup> ....
- (157) /la:ju:ɖʒad/      /ma:ku:/      There (is) not....
- (158) /la: ʔahad/      /mahhad/      There (is) no one...
- (159) /ma:ʔismuk-a/      /ʕismik/      What (is) your name?
- (160) /min ʔajn/      /ʔimnajn/      Where (is)... from?
- (161) /ʔa lajsa kaða:lik/      /mawa lifakkil/      Is'nt it so?
- (162) /la: baʔs/      /majxa:lif/, /ma:ku: muʕkila/      No problem.
- (163) /mahma: jakun min ʔamr-in/      /ʔala kul-i ha:l/      Anyway
- (164) /bi-ʔajji-ʕajʔin/, /bi-ʔajji-siʕrin/      /ʔibajf/      How much

##### 5.5.2 Totally Different Sentences

- (165) /ma mihnatu ʔabijk-a / /ʔabu:k ʕinu: jiftiʕil /  
 What job      father-your      father-your what job  
 What is your father's job?

(166)

- MSA** a. /kajfa ʔastat<sup>i</sup>:ʕu-ul-ʔistifa:da min barna:maɖʒ/  
 how I-can      ART benefit(n)      from program
- ICA** b. /ʔiʕlawn ʔagdar ʔastifid min barna:maɖʒ /  
 how      I-can      I-benefit(v) from program  
**Meaning** How can I use this program?

Sentences 166 (a) and (b), uttered in the same situation and bearing the same general meaning, are drastically different. They are different, except for the word /barna:maɖʒ/ (program), which is a learned word, borrowed by ICA, from MSA. This is a good example showing why the two varieties are mutually unintelligible. Some other examples are as follows:

	<u>MSA</u>	<u>ICA</u>	<u>Meaning</u>
(167)	/mata: juʃlaqu-l-masʕraf/	/ʔifwakit jinsadd ʔil-bang/	When does the bank close?
	what time is closed-ART-bank	what time closes-ART-bank	
(168)	/ʔana faqadtu bitʕa:qati:/	/bitʕa:qati: dʕa:ʔat/	I lost my card.
	I lost card-my	card-my (was) lost	
(169)	/fi: ajji funduqin taskunu/	/wajn na:zil ibja: findiq/	
	in which hotel you-stay	where staying which hotel	
			In what hotel are you staying?
(170)	/hal ʔastatʕi:ʔu ʔirsa:la baʕdʕa-l-nuqu:di ʔila: bila:d-i/		
	question-word I-can sending some ART money to	country-my	
		/ʔagdar ʔadizz ʔiflu:s l-ahli:/	
		I-can I-send money for-home	
			Can I send money to my country?
(171)	/ma huwa fu:lta:dʒ-al-kahrubaʔ hona:/		
	what voltage ART electricity here		
		/ʔil-kahruba:ʔ ʔihna: ʔʕam fult/	
		ART -electricity here how many volt	
			What is the electricity voltage here?

## 6. Conclusions

The data of the study manifest a good number of differences between Modern Standard Arabic and Iraqi Colloquial Arabic. These differences were found at the levels of phonology, morphology, lexicon and syntax. Phonological alterations were vowel change, consonant change, final deletion, and CV to CVC syllable change. Lexical differences were mainly a lexical complementary distribution between MSA and ICA. This complementary distribution was found to occur in words of different parts of speech, nominal alterations being the most frequent one. Morphological alterations included suffix deletion, deletion of conjunction and subject-predicate non-agreement in Iraqi Colloquial Arabic. And, last but not least, at the syntactic level, the two varieties showed some word order differences. These alterations, going hand in hand, have resulted in drastic differences, thereby a mutual unintelligibility.

## 7. Suggestion for Further Studies

Diglossic relationship holds between the Standard Arabic, on the one hand, and such other varieties of spoken Arabic as Egyptian, Jordanian, Lebanese, Algerian, Syrian, etc., on the other. It is advisable that similar studies on any of the said varieties be conducted. Furthermore, while this article studies the differences between MSA and ICA synthetically and qualitatively, narrower analytic and quantitative studies on the subject are recommended.

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**Notes**

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<sup>iii</sup> The transcription is read from left to right although Arabic is written from right to left in the script.

<sup>iv</sup> At least one word, i.e. /panka/ = (fan) is found in ICA.

<sup>v</sup> /ʔan/ is referred to as /harf-ul-tafsi:r/(literary meaning letter of interpretation) in Arabic traditional grammar and "is supposed to occur between two sentences, the first of which introduces the second" (Jorr, 1974:38).

<sup>vi</sup> One of the very few Arabic words with /p/.

<sup>vii</sup> Also used in Persian.

<sup>viii</sup> Also used in Persian.

<sup>ix</sup> Also used in Persian.

<sup>x</sup> Copular (present) verb does not have any phonetic manifestation in Arabic.