

**The Use of some New Post–War Iraqi Colloquial
Utterances among University Teachers**

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Abstract

This research study investigates the use of some new Iraqi colloquial utterances among academics within the university context as a professional environment. The study aims to explore this sociolinguistic phenomenon through investigating the mechanism of this language use and the factors influencing the development and distribution of such colloquial expressions.

In this sense, the 2003 Iraq War and the following tragic events have had a great impact on all aspects of life. In Iraq, as elsewhere in the Middle East, the social and technological changes of the 21st century are giving birth to a new identity landscape (Craner, 2011). The three most consequential drivers behind the change in social relations have been the political changes in Iraq after 2003; the spread of new media and social networking (USIP, 2013).

Iraqi dialect, as an Arabic variety of daily use, is subject to change because of social interactions of daily life, which frequently produces new expressions and meanings. Iraqi dialect is more affected by sociocultural changes than its standard version. As an example, there has been a new group of Iraqi slang words emerging resulted from pressing social needs, such as the order ("رُمِشلي") rumishly = make a miss call / making a flashing car light as signals to warn other pedestrians or cars). The drivers of change are related to the issues of globalization, increasing use of social media, and high levels of illiteracy. The study of how a particular society uses a language can reveal important aspects of social behaviours, including how people organize activities, socialize, worship, argue, and imagine.

This research study is important because it attempts to contribute to the current state of art on the issue of the relationship between language use and social context. As the case with other standard languages, the relationship between Arabic language and its varieties has attracted a growing debate recently. The study is trying to shed the light on this issue again through looking at the linguistic changes that have affected the lexical structure of the Iraqi dialect after the 2003 war.

Introduction

A modern standard literary Arabic exists and binds all Arabic-speaking countries together in spite of the presence of many local linguistic differences. Standardized Arabic has been the official language of literature and international communication in the Arab world (Chejne, 1969, p. 172). Nonetheless, there is a wide population of the Iraqi people, from different social backgrounds, who use a variety of new slang expressions in their social interactions. This study shows how language use is significantly influenced by the current political, historical and social landscape.

General slang is language that speakers deliberately use to break with the standard language and to break the level of discourse in the direction of informality. It signals the speaker's intention to break conventions and their need to be fresh in their expressions, to ease social exchanges and induce friendliness, to reduce excessive seriousness and avoid clichés, in brief to enrich the language (Dumas & Lighter, 1978; Flexner, 1960).

The literature review has dealt with two related topics in order to develop the research questions regarding the nature of language use and the sociocultural drivers behind the spread of colloquial utterances. Tracking this sensitive relationship between language and culture requires understanding of the dynamic nature of language and how it is influenced by the physical context (Yule, 2010). This investigation also needs to explain the links between the linguistic sign and meanings as informed by Halliday's theory of language semiotics (1978).

Thus, this qualitative study conducted a contextual inquiry into the ways in which these Iraqi colloquial expressions are used within the workshop setting to fulfil specific meanings (Lee, 1992). Documents, interviews and focus groups were employed to collect a variety of Iraqi slang expressions and personal perspectives. This data was later analysed and interpreted using coding and content analysis.

Statement of Problem

This initial section of the paper describes the purpose of the study and the problem context. The study investigates the use of some new Iraqi slang utterances by and among academics within the university context as a professional environment. It aims to explore and describe the nature of these colloquial expressions and their language use.

The research study has targeted academics at the College of Arts in Thi-Qar University in the City of Nasiriyah, South of Iraq. Iraq is an Arabic-speaking country in Western Asia bordered by Turkey, Iran, Kuwait, Saudi Arabia, Jordan and Syria. The capital, and largest city, is Baghdad. The main ethnic groups are Arabs, Kurds, Assyrians, Turkmen, Shabakis, Yazidis, Armenians, Mandeans, and Circassians. Around 95% of the country's 37 million citizens are Muslims, with Christianity, Yarsan, Yezidism and Mandeism also present. The official languages of Iraq are Arabic (Iraqi dialect) and Kurdish (Bengio & Litvak, 2011).

In any language, there are different ways of speaking or varieties. A variety can be defined as a set of linguistic items with similar social distribution. However, a variety is not necessarily a full-grown language with a large system of vocabulary and grammar. It may simply consist of a small set of linguistic items, as is the case with a slang, which may typically be defined as a quite restricted set of new words and meanings, mixed with linguistic items with a much larger social distribution. In this sense, a dialect is regarded

as a geographical variety of a language, spoken in a certain area, such as Iraqi Arabic spoken in Iraq (Yule, 2010).

Accordingly, colloquial refers to words or expressions used in ordinary language by common people. An example of colloquial is casual conversation where some slang terms are used and where no attempt is made at being formal. However, jargon is a set of vocabulary items used by members of a particular profession, that is, their technical terms (Yule, 2010), as those used between academics.

It is useful to briefly explain these different terms of language varieties in order to clarify the focus of the research study. The research deals with the new slang expressions emerged in the Iraqi dialect after the invasion of Iraq in 2003 by the Western coalition troops. Most of us nowadays use slang words and expressions, but many people feel them to be inappropriate, at least at certain situations because of their high informality and derogatory character. Other people probably object to slang expressions simply because they are new and bizarre. Yet other people dislike specific slang items because they happen to be associated with a social group of which they are not members (Mattiello, 2003).

With the spread of Islam, Arabic came to acquire a religious and national significance in a vast Arab Empire and it was this significance which motivated the study and codification of the language. The purpose has always been to preserve its purity and conformity with the language of the Qur'an and to attain uniformity and standardization of the language. Special care was given to check the spread of colloquialism and the impact of foreign languages. It almost became a religious duty to know the Qur'an and pronounce correctly every word of it (Chejne, 1969, p. 170).

To the Muslims, the place of Arabic will always remain secure as long as the Qur'an and Islam stay in existence. To the lover of the classical literature, Arabic is here to stay as the preserver of a great and fecund legacy; and to the nationalist, it is the mainstay of nationalism on historical, cultural, and psychological grounds, in addition to being the distinctive identifying mark of a people inhabiting a wide area of the world (Chejne, 1969, p. 172).

Literature review

The research study is more concerned with the way new meanings and texts are created or reproduced in any dialect or slang as language varieties. Exploring this complex process is critical to understand the dynamic relationship between language and sociocultural context (Halliday, 1978).

Through the language we use, we share with others our ways of being in the world, our ways of doing things, and our ways of saying what we think. Language is a tremendous tool for the organization of ideas and social realities, including a wide variety of social relationships and norms (Wardhaugh, 2002, p. 2). It is both individual and social since it belongs to us as individuals and shaped by social conventions, which are beyond our control (Gee & Hayes, 2001).

In this sense, language cannot be separated from culture since language is part of the cultural heritage of any nation. Culture is usually understood as cultural artefacts, values, ideas, ways of living, customs, places, education, habits, behaviours and political/economic systems that characterise a specific group of people or society (Brown,

2007, p. 380). Therefore, culture shapes what we say, when we say it, and how we say it from the simplest language we use to the most complex. It is fundamental to the way we speak, write, listen, and read (Liddicoat, 2000).

Therefore, language and culture are both integral parts of human life. The study of the relationship between the two has attracted scholars from different fields. They state that language determines thought and culture. They also agree that language and culture influence each other. Similarly, Witherspoon (1980, p. 2) advocates that language and culture are highly interrelated and proposed that any language phenomenon cannot be studied in isolation from the culture in which it is spoken. Language and culture are linked in the transmission of knowledge and in the construction of social life.

Theoretically speaking, this association between language use and the physical context or culture can be detected through Halliday's sociosemiotic theory of language, in which he stresses the unity of the text (language), context (linguistic or non-linguistic) and social structure. Halliday sees language as a unique system of signs with a social function, capable of expressing the meanings, which all other sign systems can make (1978). Semiotics is concerned with the ways we represent our world to ourselves and to others. Humans can communicate verbally or non-verbally as they use signs, symbols, sounds or paralinguistic means to communicate a message. Semiotics studies the production and interpretation of meaning. Its main principle is that meaning is made by the deployment of acts and objects, which function as signs in relation to other signs. The meaning relations that can exist between one sign and another constitute the system of signs and are deployed in space and time in the process of text production (Halliday, 1978; Eco, 1976).

In a semiotic sense, signs can take the form of words, images, sounds, gestures and objects (Chandler, 2002, p. 2). Contemporary semioticians do not study signs in isolation, they are increasingly interested in studying meaning making and exchange through texts and discourse, rooted in their historical contexts.

The term 'social semiotics' was first introduced by Halliday (1978). He proposes that language cannot be separated from society. He views language as a 'social semiotic' in which language, the means by which people interact, must be considered in a social context. Individual human beings become part of a group through language and a society does not consist of participants but of relations, and these relations define a social role (Halliday, 1978, p. 14). Hodge and Kress (1988) state that social semiotics is an inherently social phenomenon in its sources, functions, contexts and effects: social meanings are constructed through the full range of semiotic forms, semiotic texts and semiotic practices.

This concise literature review aimed at exploring current perspectives on language use and the role of sociocultural context in producing language texts. Halliday's sociosemiotic theory of language is selected to inform the main research question and the research findings:

What are the motives that stand behind the use of some new post-war Iraqi slang utterances by and among university academics?

To thoroughly investigate the research problem, the main research question has been into three secondary questions. Through these research questions, the research study has managed to explore the use of these specific slang expressions by university teachers:

- *What are the causes behind the production of some new Iraqi colloquial utterances?*
- *What are the factors influencing the distribution of these new expressions, which have been introduced after 2003?*

Methodology

This research study aimed at examining the personal perceptions of a group of academics in order to investigate their use of some new colloquial Iraqi expressions in their daily transactions. There are 11 participants, 8 males and 3 females, from Iraqi nationality, who are university lecturers at the University of Thi-Qar. The field of the inquiry is the College of Arts at the same university in the City of Nasiriyah. The new knowledge, which has emerged from this research study, was originally embedded in the minds of the knowers (the academics) and has been elicited in the form of personal perspectives through interview and focus group questions (Crotty, 1998).

By adopting a poststructuralist approach, this research study conducted a contextual inquiry into the ways in which Iraqi colloquial expressions are used within the workshop settings to fulfil specific meanings (Lee, 1992). Poststructuralist theory enabled an exploration of these discursive meanings since it focusses on how selves are constituted and how identity relations shift in different political, social and cultural contexts (Wright, 2003, p. 36). The research study provided an effective way to demonstrate the relationship between the professional identities of academic teachers and their use of colloquial expressions to communicate meaning in the university society (Ahluwalia, 2010).

This research study employed a qualitative methodology, which is usually employed by social constructionists since this is consistent with their ontological and epistemological views of a world that is socially constructed and knowledge is subject to multiple perspectives in order to discover the meaning of social behaviour (Denzin & Lincoln, 1994). Qualitative methodology helped to elicit and interpret the personal perceptions of participants and reproduce the social knowledge embedded in their life experiences about Iraqi dialect and language use in general, which represent a set of multiple realities that reflect background knowledge of the social context (Crotty, 1998).

The semi-structured interview is a useful qualitative data-collection technique to explore personal experiences since it is able to accommodate narratives told by respondents (Wang, 1999). Semi-structured interviewing was designed for this study to allow respondents the time and scope to uncover their life experiences and talk about their personal perspectives of social interaction and language use. The focus of the interviews was determined in advance through designing specific questions, which aimed to gain sufficient understanding of the areas under investigation.

A list of 10 key questions was designed to pursue new perspectives of daily language use that might emerge from the work experiences of these participants. Other questions or prompts emerged naturally during the course of the interviews (DiCicco-Bloom & Crabtree, 2006). All participants were selected from the members of the teaching staff because of their availability after getting their agreement to take part in the research study. When conducting interviews, all eleven interviewees were inducted and informed of the purpose of interviews. Each participant was interviewed once for 30-45 minutes in

a place agreed upon by both parties, but most of the interviews were conducted on campus. All interviews were recorded and saved into a computer drive.

Focus groups were also used to collect specific data. In general, focus groups can provide insights into how people think and provide a deeper understanding of the phenomena under investigation. They are group interviews that give the researcher the ability to capture deeper information more economically than individual interviews. Group interaction and non-verbal communication are primary benefits of focus groups. Group interaction between members of the target population during focus groups may encourage participants to make connections to various concepts through the discussions that may not occur during individual interviews (Denzin & Lincoln, 1994).

The analytical approach used a set of interpretive-descriptive data analysis tools since this approach views the text 'as a window into human experience' (Ryan & Bernard, 2003, p. 259). This kind of data analysis is better achieved through using multiple data analysis techniques: documentation, content analysis, as well as coding, to make sense of raw data. Documentation was first used to collect a sample of new Iraqi slang expressions, which were created and entered the vocabulary of Iraqi colloquial after 2003. These new utterances were examined and organized as in appendix (A). Using this flexible data analysis approach assists in transforming the raw narrative-like data into meaningful concepts. This analysis consolidated the raw data into thematic categories, followed by drawing the conceptual relationships among these categories in order to make 'assumptions that inform the respondents' view of the world in general and of the topic in particular' (Basit, 2010, p. 183; Maykut & Morehouse, 1994). A number of data analysis processes was conducted in order to construct meaning from the interview data. These included reducing data, attaching tags, identifying patterns, looking for valid explanations, sub-dividing the themes to differentiate between them and building conceptual relationships between categories and themes (Miles & Huberman, 1994).

Discussion

As understood earlier, the purpose of the study is to investigate the nature of some new slang utterances that existed in Iraqi dialect after 2003. Participants have provided valuable insights of their language use and in-depth perspectives and explanations about the nature and creation of these new slang utterances and the factors affecting their distribution between different groups of people. Generally speaking, all participants are aware of the outstanding changes on the Iraqi dialect and its varieties after the 2003 war, as mentioned by Hameed, one of the participants, *'I think the original sources of these colloquial words are: the media, contact with outer world through mixing with foreigners whether soldiers or employees in humanitarian mission agencies.'*

The use of standard Arabic is restricted to formal ranks, for example in governmental transactions, education, formal media channels, and printed publications, otherwise Iraqi dialect and its varieties are used broadly in other social settings and transactions, as informed by Ali:

The language I used at the workplace is the Iraqi dialect mixed with some administration terms, but with students, I used a mix of standard Arabic and Iraqi dialect based on different levels of understanding. I use these types of colloquial language because it is part of the language of the society and they commonly used by different people who have different levels of education.

A unique mix of standard Arabic and its Iraqi dialect with restricted use of new colloquial utterances is generally used within the university context among academics but the level of formality becomes apparent when they switch to managers and students, as described above. The use of such new colloquial utterances depends on the person and his or her purposes behind such uses.

However, Ali and some other academics, especially those from the Department of Arabic, completely reject the use of dialects or varieties within the university context instead of Arabic as the standard language. In fact, participants indicated different reasons and long-term debates related to the exceptional status of Arabic language as the language of the Holy Qur'an and the religious obligation upon all Muslims, especially Arabic language speakers, to protect it (Chejne, 1969). Nevertheless, this rejection might also be due to identity and group membership issues.

I don't think that the use of colloquial words is a good strategy because it helps to forget standard Arabic, the language of the Quran, which in turn makes it difficult to interpret the Quranic text. ... These colloquial expressions are not supposed to be used within the university context as it is a source of enlightenment.

The main part of the interviews and focus group focuses on the motives or aims behind the use of new colloquial utterances. The majority of participants agree that some slang words are more capable of communicating the meaning and expressing accompanied feelings than their equivalents in the standard variety, as described below.

First: describing social reality

Some slang utterances are used frequently in daily interactions because they have the capacity to convey meaning efficiently and smoothly. They are more capable of communicating social reality than their equivalents in standard Arabic. They are able to convey not only literal meaning but also contextual details. Conceptual meaning refers to the basic components of meaning conveyed by the literal use of words. On the other hand, associative meaning represents the type of meaning that people might connect with the use of words (e.g. needle = "painful") that is not part of conceptual meaning (Yule, 2010). Conceptual meaning is stable and invariable since it can be represented by means of a finite set of symbols and semantic rules. In contrast, associative meaning is variable and therefore unstable, since it owes its validity to socio-psychological and contextual factors (Lyons, 1981).

Some colloquial words were created to express a unique meaning, which did not exist before 2003. For example, both adjectives, (طاك = taq) in Iraqi colloquial and (غني = ghani) in standard Arabic, convey the conceptual meaning of (rich) but the word may convey some other meanings related to massive or illegal wealth.

We use colloquial expressions for daily social interaction since these words have become part of our daily life. These colloquial words and expressions express meaning easier and faster because they are extensive in meaning, sometimes one word can express one thought. For example, we use the word (haji = sheikh) to show respect among our colleagues. Also, we use (shako makoo = what's up) to inquire about updates or the news on the social level or for social interaction or current university issues.

Hence, these new colloquial utterances are popular and used by different people with different levels of education in their daily interactions. They are not sophisticated but have the capacity to show richness in meaning by expressing related connotations. An important aspect of the language use of these new colloquial utterances is that some of them are deeply rooted in the local culture of the Iraqi society. The meaning of each utterance is somehow associated with a proverb, story or as a reflection of a social situation or political issue.

Statement -8- There are words with existing meanings, but they have acquired new connotations, such as, haji (a person with high official or social status) or hediqa (an unemployed person).

Understanding the function of these new utterances and analysing their language use cannot be reached without analysing the Iraqi sociocultural context before and after the fall of the Saddam regime in 2003. New meanings had emerged, which required unique signs to convey them. Thus, pragmatic knowledge of Iraqi slang and political background are essential to understand the links between the form of the word and its meaning (Eun & Lim, 2009).

These examples indicate that social reality is to a large extent socially constructed. It is what we make of it, and individuals who interact help construct the reality of the situation in which they interact. Sociologists refer to this process as the social construction of reality (Berger & Luckmann, 1966). Although we usually come into a situation with shared shared expectations or understandings of what is about to happen, as the interaction proceeds, the actors continue to define the situation and thus to construct its reality.

Second: expressing emotional connections

Participants also agree that the use of new colloquial utterances creates an atmosphere of mutual affection, closeness and sarcasm or humour and this represents another positive cause for the use of such new utterances. In actual language use, it is not only the form of language text that conveys meaning, but language in its cultural context that creates and interprets meaning (Svalberg, 2007).

I believe that people prefer to use brief expressions to express meaning and imply a kind of sarcasm, criticism and amusement. For example, the word (Ghani), which means rich, doesn't provide that kind of amusement which the word (Taak) provides.

The focus group participants also reflected on the sarcastic and sensitive nature of some colloquial expressions:

Statement -1- Iraqi society enjoys a high sense of humor and cynicism and this might be a reflection of the difficult times and suffering they have experienced. Some people might look funny or sarcastic in order to forget their problems and show persistence through these creative uses of language.

Statement -2- These unique slang expressions are commonly used among people who are family members, friends, or belong to the same professional or age group.

Third: maintaining and developing identity

Some participants openly reject the use of slang expressions within the university context based on identity grounds. Although they use an Iraqi colloquial, they still think it is better to avoid these utterances in formal contexts because of the insulting nature of some of them. Some other colloquial words and expressions are relatively accepted and used by academics since they are less offensive or threatening and also more effective in conveying the language message, such as (شكو ماكو = what's up) and (توب = top = the best).

I rarely use them because I consider them uncivilized language. I rarely use them with my peer colleagues but I don't use them with my manager cuz as I said they form uncivilized tongue for me. I don't feel comfortable when using such colloquial words because they negatively affect my social statues and the place I belong to.

They believe that they have to avoid using colloquial vocabulary mainly because it negatively affects their social status as academics. In this regard, individuals can construct their social identities from aspects of their profession. A professional identity is an individual's image of who they are as a professional (Van Mannan & Barley, 1984); the constellation of attributes, beliefs, values, motives and experiences that people use to define themselves in their professional capacity (Schein, 1978).

In contrast, slang is sometimes used by speakers to reinforce social identity and unity within a group in society (Eble, 1996, p. 11). As a language variety, slang exhibits a leaning towards lexical innovation (Trudgill, 2004). Despite its local peculiarities, slang is not necessarily associated with a specific region or social class since some slang words might happen to be understood by anyone within the language community (Stenstrom et al. 2002, p. 67).

Factors influencing the distribution of new colloquial utterances

Personal perspectives of participants on the issue of fast distribution of new Iraqi slang words described the role of three factors in driving such growth. **The first of these factors** is the impact of globalization on all aspects of life. Prior to 2003, Iraq had been under the international embargo, which restricted all types of communications and relations with the outer world. After the collapse of Saddam's regime, Iraq has been open to the world and the society has been changing, which subsequently helped the spread of new meanings and utterances.

Before 2003, media and journalism were restricted and then became open to the rest of the world as a result of the spread of new technologies and social media. ... I think most of these colloquial words came as a result of economic and social crises because the country has gone from one crises to another during the last decade and this was reflected in the language.

Iraqi Arabic has reflected all these changes in the new Iraqi society after 2003. The new culture is featured by violence, political crises, poverty, corruption, cultural distortion, the use of technology, and anxiety. On the other hand, globalization demands comprehensive transformation of a society, its impact on language and culture can be

detected in every facet of life. The global economy has been influencing traditional values and ways of thinking for a long time. The concept of the global village has changed the outlook of future society. The sweeping changes that are taking place worldwide based on commonly accepted values, beliefs, political trends and views (Wade, 1997).

Statement -7- There are indecent expressions, which reflect a vulgar popular culture coming from poor areas, to replace the original and traditional Iraqi colloquial words best exemplified by the Iraqi Baghdadi dialect, which enriched Iraqi Arabic with many words and expressions. Therefore, the factors causing this spread are social and psychological.

The second factor fostering the distribution of some Iraqi slang utterances is related to types of language use employed by social media, especially on Facebook and YouTube. These media outlets use mostly Iraqi colloquial, especially when addressing or commenting on social and political issues satirically. In this way, they contributed to the promotion of these colloquial utterances. In particular, social media, such as Facebook, YouTube, and Twitter have played a major role in circulating new colloquial utterances through broadcasting famous comedy video series produced by Iraqi actors, as indicated by a participant ‘*Social media enhanced the use of such expressions and this why they spread quickly and are welcomed very well because of their sarcastic nature.*’

The new slang words are not restricted to one area or a specific social class but different speakers from the whole Iraqi community have used them. In this case, slang is a wider concept than a vernacular as it is not strictly indigenous local speech. It is instead a hybrid language and often permeated with foreign lexical material (Walker, 1984). The majority of Iraqi people who share similar lifestyle and political views (Trudgill, 2004) have used the new slang utterances.

Statement -4- There are words, which are borrowed from other languages, such as English, like maseh dhaue (scanner). Our culture produced the text or the signifier but it did not invent the meaning or the signified.

Statement -5- Globalisation and cultural openness are behind the spread of such language expressions.

Statement -6- Political atmosphere has helped to produce and blowout new slang expressions. People especially the young used social media to express their opinions and anger and sometimes used funny comments or short sarcastic videos to criticise the government.

The third influencing factor is related to the high levels of illiteracy among Iraqi people, especially the youth, and the decline of the Iraqi education system, which represents the formal institution that teach modern standard Arabic. This has contributed to the increasing use of Iraqi dialect in general and the new slang utterances in particular.

There are many reasons for using colloquial words but most of them are related to low education and generally related to political, social and economic instability in the country.

There is a great gap between education institutions and religious organizations on one hand and society on the other hand.

Conclusion

This research study is concerned with the critical relationship between language use and sociocultural context through the complex issue of sign and meaning duality. A text (sign) is seen by Halliday (1978, p. 139) as a sociological event, a semiotic encounter through which the meanings that constitute the social system are exchanged. A text is an actualized meaning potential, which can be referred to as the range of options that belong to a specific situation type (Halliday, 1978, p. 109).

There are different groups of Iraqi people, including individuals with high status in society, who use a variety of new Iraqi slang utterances in their social interactions, especially when conversations are related to the current political situation and social instability. The study shows why these new language utterances and meanings are used, as well as, the factors that govern its distribution.

As taking a poststructuralist stand in dealing with discursive relations and personal perspectives and being informed by Halliday's theory of social semiotics (1978), this research study focusses on the unique function of language as a social practice of meaning-making and interpretation. Language is 'open, dynamic, energetic, constantly evolving and personal' (Shohamy, 2007, p. 5). These new Iraqi colloquial utterances and meanings have been produced to describe current social realities emerged after the 2003 war, which resulted in great political, economic and social changes. Iraqi dialect users needed a specific linguistic atmosphere to express their emotions and political freedom through creating and using new slang expressions that are characterised by irony, directness and richness of meaning. These new and unique language signs and meanings also used to show sympathy, solidarity and identity association.

Freshness and innovation are the main distinctive features of slang and the primary reasons for its pervasiveness across speech (Mattiello, 2003). Iraqi slang terms are coined recurrently based on social developments while denoting the same sense as another term in modern standard Arabic. Iraqi dialect, including slang, as the language of daily use, is subject to constant change because of social interactions on all levels of human life. It is highly influenced by the current sociocultural context shaped by globalisation changes, social media issues, and recent advances in tele-communications and illiteracy levels.

In addition, this study of how a particular culture uses or governs language use can reveal important aspects of social behaviours, including how people express opinions, socialise, argue, and show sympathy. Language is not only a rule-governed system, but also a system of tools for the constitution of social life and harmony. Vygotsky (1987) argues that the distinctive feature of human speech is generalised meaning; that is, the purpose of language is to convey meaning and ideas, as well as emotional attachments as shown by this research study

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Appendices

Appendix (A): Sample of Iraqi slang utterances produced after 2003

No.	Examples of Iraqi slang utterances & English transcription	Arabic equivalent	English translation
1.	عاوي (awee)	عديم الفائدة	Useless
2.	شلع قلع (shelaa qelaa)	قطعاً	Absolutely
3.	شكو ماكو (shako makoo)	ماذا حدث	What's up
4.	حواسم (hawasim)	تجاوز	Breaking the law
5.	مطفي (mutafi)	غبى	Stupid
6.	حجي (haji)	حاج	V.I.P person
7.	طاك (taaq)	غني	Rich
8.	حبشكلات (hebashkalaat)	نقود	Money
9.	اللوك (allook)	المظهر	Appearance
10.	رمشلي (ramishlee)	اتصل بي	Give me a missed call
11.	توب (toop)	الافضل	Top /the best
12.	بوري (boory)	غبن	Injustice
13.	مقاطاة (muqtata)	غش	Cheating
14.	تاج راسي (taj rassi)	محترم	Respectable
15.	تحشيش (tahsheesh)	هزل	Making jokes
16.	فدشي (fedshi)	روعة / مميز	Amazing/charming
17.	خربانه (kharbana)	يأس / احباط	Desperation