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themselves from old generations who some of them refuse this phenomenon, they would also prefer to show their identity and separate themselves from other groups by their special slang words.

Slang expressions are in their way of increasing and wide spreading, either in face to face interaction or on the social media, yet young informants specially girls face problems in the sense that Najaf society would normally do not accept such expressions. This does not mean that those young informants will reduce their use of these words, instead they consider them as part of their identity or their linguistic repertoire. In other words as a medium of maintaining social relations with other youth and a means of spreading the resulting group from other subgroups. To sum up slang expressions are unusual vocabularies that enable young people to strengthen their bonds and mark their co-existence.

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one hand they do not understand their meanings and on the other hand older people consider it impolite to use such words , so most of the parents warn their sons and daughters from using such words . However , 15% of the responses state that some parents would like to use such words to maintain the intimacy relations with their sons and daughters, although it seems a low percentage, yet it is interesting to have such percent. It is important to add that females are accused of using males boy's expressions when they use such words and this will break off with their prestigious tones . After examining the responses of the informants the following table will illustrate the view points of the participants:

**Table (4)**

Reasons	Percentage
Social media	56.4%
Express my identity	21%
Secret code between us as friends	13.6%
It makes me different	10%

It can be seen that more than 56.4% of the informants gain their words from the social media. In Najaf most of the informants spend most of the time on internet, chatting, commenting, maintaining friendship with others , so during their harmony with others , they would adopt their words and use these words in their real life. About 21% of the informants confess that the use of slang words express their identity or to signal them from others. 13.6% of the informants these words as secret codes between friends to separate them from other groups. The lowest percentage that form 10% of the total number is associated with the group who make themselves different from others by those slang expressions, in other words to show their freedom.

### Section Three

#### Conclusion

In many aspects of their life, Najafi youth make use of slang expressions , so they become part of their social standing. Young informants show their creativity and interest in their use of slang. The expressions analyzed so far shows that informants are using these words for different purposes: to show degrees of intimacy, separate

undergo the morphological process of derivation to form feminine out of masculine to show the degree of intimacy between speakers and addressees.

The word عزة is derived out of the noun عزاء, the adjective يموت is derived out of the noun موت, the word موخوش is the opposite of خوش, this means that

the word موخوش is formed by negating the word خوش by using (مو).

Syntactic structures has also take their rules in forming slang expressions this is shown in the phrase اكل عسل, the phrase is formed by compounding two parts of speech ( verb+noun) to signify disagreement. It is important to note that almost all the slang expressions are motivated to serve their function by virtue of being tied to metaphor, e.g a word like (عربانة, صاروخ) are inanimate entities are used to describe people and the question " how is that ?" can be answered easily by saying it is the metaphoric projection of Arabic language.

## 2.6 Societal Perception of Youth Slang

Iraq is an Arabic speaking diglossic country, this means that there are two varieties: the high variety and low variety, speakers choose one variety rather than another according to the situation. Al-Badawiyy (1973) mentions classifies these varieties into:

(1) Classical Arabic is the language of Qura'n, mosques and preaches.

(2) Modern Standard Arabic that is used in news and education.

(3) Colloquial Arabic associated with educated people.

(4) Colloquial of uneducated people.

Each of the previous varieties serve to reflect the social, cultural and educational background of it's user. This study investigates the degree to which the society accept / refuse the existence of slang of the Najafi Iraqi youth. Najafi people have certain restriction in their use of slang expression this is because Najaf is a holy city, for this reason those informants who use slang expressions are criticized of being users of "street language" . Almost 65% of informants confess their avoidance of using slang expressions with older people , on the

another denotation associated with them, they have insult indication too. However other words like (ممتاز , ورد) has in addition to agreement function, a praising function associated with them. To this end, it is important to note that these words have a special kind of meaning related to them, arises not from the literal meaning but from their pragmatics functions.

**Table (3) -Address oriented tags**

ARABIC EXPRESSION	LITERAL TRANSLATION	PRAGMATIC FUNCTION
لك	hey you	acute intensity
لج	hey you	serious intensity
خاله	my aunt	indicating intimacy between friends
خاله	my uncle	indicating intimacy between friends
بابه	my dad	Strong intimacy

Najafi informants confess that they prefer to use slang expression when they address each other, they do not usually use names of persons being talked to, girls used the term (لج) either to address or to call her friends, this word has gender association, so it will become (لك), when it is used for the similar purpose, (خاله) is also a slang expression that has gender association, it becomes (لك) when it is used between boys, yet they have the same function, in that both used to indicate intimacy between friends.

## 2.5 Formation process of Arabic slang expressions

Slang exists in Arabic language and it is not related to the standard language, however it based it's formation of expressions and phrases on the standard rules of Arabic both morphologically and syntactically.

After the analysis of slang expressions according to the semantic and pragmatic domains, it has been founded that most of the slang expressions follow morphological rules of Arabic language, the most apparent morphological process is derivation, words like صاك اصاكة undergo affixation process to form a feminine out of masculine by adding (ة) to signify "a female chick" and "a handsome male". This is also applicable to the words خاله خاله where the word خاله has also

order to neglect them he/she says (مضغوظين), a person sometimes would like to use the word (صاروخ) instead of (صاك، صاكة) to describe a handsome man or a beautiful woman, since this word is neutral in sexuality, expressions like (انسحلنا) is likely to be used by a group of students who do not do well in the exam because the questions are difficult.

The last two expressions (يقط) and ( زاحف) are also commonly used, the former is used by Najafi informants to refer to someone who for instance when he/she goes to a restaurant or a shop and eat or buy something would make others pay money instead of him/her, the later is a single expression that carries a lot of meaning, it refers to someone who most of the time keep looking for girls, bothering them and throwing them words to become closer.

**Table (2) – (Dis)agreement Slang**

ARABIC EXPRESSION	LITERAL TRANSLATION	PRAGMATIC FUNCTION
اكل عسل	eat honey	Disagreement
اشطح	go away	Disagreement
ولي	go away	Strongly disagree
انجب	shut up	Don't think of it at all
دطير	fly off	ignore it
لا ع	No	Of course no
ايون	Yah	tentatively yes
خوش	Ok	In between , not good and not bad
مو خوش	Not ok	not liking this
ورد	Flower	Agreement with praise
ممتاز	Excellent	Preference
امين	Ameen	Agreement
عزة	Meaningless	disagreement with a shock
شلونك/ج	how are you	Disagreement with mockery

Slang expression in the above table are of two groups, the first group include those slang words that indicate agreement, and the other group denote slang words that indicate disagreement. The semantic formation process of slang expression of the words is something interesting to discuss. Starting with ( انجب، ولي، اشطح، اكل ) this group of words have in addition to disagreement function,

The most common slang expressions used by the informants are part of the domains of: personal/thing description, (dis)agreement and address oriented tags. The following table will show some of the slang expressions related to the domain of personality/thing descriptive slang .

**Table (1) personality/thing descriptive slang**

ARABIC EXPRESSION	LITERAL TRANSLATION	PRAGMATIC FUNCTION
عربانة	Wagon	agitated easily
صاك	Frozen	a handsome male
صاكة	Frozen	female chick
يحمى	Overheated	exaggerating , lying
يكطع	Cutting	so beautiful
يموت	causing death	so beautiful
اشرد	run away	very nice
يفصل	separated	spilt his mind
مضغوظين	Compressed	feeling jealous
صاروخ	missile	Very good looking man/woman
انسحلنا	Dragged	refers to the feeling of wastage
يقط	Meaningless	spending others money
زاحف	crawl	A person who is always seeks for girls

The above chart shows that there are (42%) of informants draw most of the time on descriptive slang expressions, concerning the first slang expression (عربانة), it is derived from the inanimate object (wagon) to describe a person who can easily be agitated, (صاك&صاكة) both denote the same expression, yet one is used for male (صاك) and the other for female (صاكة) , (يحمى) is a person who is most of the time telling lies,

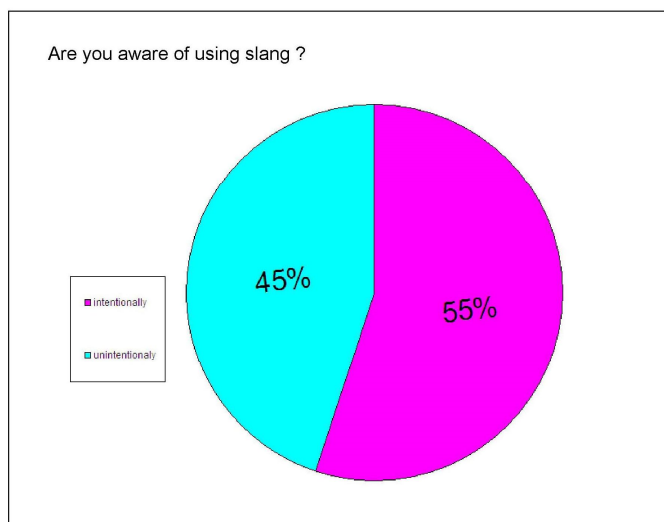
(اشرد, يموت, يكطع) are slang expression that are used to describe nice entities yet each word carries a degree of description different from the other, (يفصل) is an expression that describes a person who in one topic of a conversation spilt his/her mind to another topic, that is not associated with the original topic of the conversation, (مضغوظين) is an expression with a special meaning , a speaker often used this expression to refer to a group who keep criticizing the speaker, so in

The current investigation carries out qualitative analysis. The collected vocabularies are analyzed linguistically and ideologically. The statistical results have stressed the surrounding context, within which the study is carried out. The qualitative – quantitative analysis forms a clear picture on the ideological motivation of the usage of slang expressions in Najaf community.

## 2.4 Results

After the careful examination of the subjects, a number of findings have been uncovered. Slang as it is previously mentioned is a social process that people use in their daily life to maintain the on going sense of their face to face interaction.

This process has a special support from the social media and broadcast media. After all this process becomes part of the linguistic competence of Najafi society . Some of the informants reveal the fact that these expressions are unconsciously used by them, however others say that they intentionally use these expression to create identity to themselves, after all the percentages are close to each other as they are illustrated by this chart:



As the chart shows the percentage of slang expressions for intentional and unintentional slang expressions are close to each other, this means that process is spontaneous and inherited through personal ideological components of speakers.

6. Slang adds a special kind of meaning to speech, since it is creative, colorful and interesting.

Differences in the choice of the linguistic expressions as well as differences in language use are clearly indicating the fact that language continuously changes. However, the change can be observed through the use of new expressions. In the case of slang, a comparable study shows that although slang exists among members of the community, it is mostly used by younger groups rather than older. This leads to the division of the community into two groups: older age group who shows low use of variant linguistic expressions and the younger group who are characterized by the increasing use of new linguistic expressions. Slang increases in the real time, yet this increase is not warranted, since younger groups tended to overcome their choices of slang words as they grow in age. (Mesthrine, 2001: 117).

### 2.3 Methodology

After a survey conducted on a total group of (50) informants, aged between 17 and 28 years old, through the use of methods of sampling, the primary results are obtained. It is important to note here that the informants who represent the sample are selected randomly, not by any means of social, linguistic, cultural or membership. The survey included questions on: how do informants use slang expressions? what are these expressions?, and why do they prefer to use these expressions?.

Oral questions have been undertaken for this purpose, to show Najafi informants real use of slang expressions in actual situations . Furthermore , the oral method of data collection based primarily on information seeking questions with the goal of getting the answers not only on how the informants use slang expressions, what are these expressions and why do they use them, but also they are questioned on the sources of these slang expressions and the community acceptance/rejection of these expressions as well as the awareness/unawareness of their use.

The slang expressions are classified into groups according to their semantic denotation as (personality/thing descriptive slang, (Dis)agreement Slang and Address oriented tags). After that the expressions are translated literally and pragmatically depending on the intended meaning of such expressions.

resources in individual's hybrid linguistic repertoires shift as an index of globality".

## 2.2 Slang and the expression of reality

Each person in the community can use slang unconsciously or unintentionally, in spite of this, the term is hard to define. Moreover slang language provides a sense of humor. So speakers show a great deal of creativity in using slang expressions. There are some clear features of this form of language:

1. slang forms an important part of casual or informal styles of language use.
2. traditionally, the term slang carries with it a negative connotation.
3. Slang can be compared with fashion in clothing and popular music, in the sense of being changed so rapidly. Nevertheless, slang falls out of fashion in the passage of time.
4. it is sometimes referred to as vernacular, in the sense that slang can be associated with a specific social group like the slang of criminals, workers, teenagers, the slang of drug cultures ....etc. Over the above slang may fall under the term colloquialism, to indicate informal style of conversation. Both terms vernacular and colloquialism do not denote negative connotation, yet the term slang is more suitable for the purpose of this study. ( Akmajian, et al, 2001:303)

Anderson and Trudge (1990:42) state other features of slang, they are:

1. Slang language lies below the stylistic level, where the stylistic scale ranges from colloquial to vulgar and obscene.
2. It is typically used in informal situations i.e swearing.
3. It is restricted to spoken language.
4. Slang is a variation in vocabulary choice , rather than grammar or pronunciation .
5. Slang is not considered as a register, although register may contain slang vocabularies, it is also not a jargon.

discourse. Moreover , formal language is closely related to the standard form of language, and which is often sensitive to any perspective judgment.

## Section Two

### 2.1 Contexts of Situation and culture

Context determines the appropriate rules or expressions to be employed. Shimanoff (57), cited in (Samover , et al , 2007 : 286) states in her seminal work on this topic that rules are "a followable perception that indicates what behavior is obligated, preferred or prohibited in certain context".

An important distinction has to be drawn between "context of culture" as it is also referred as "register " and " context of situation " or "genera". Register is "a variation according to use" ( Halliday & Hasan, 1985/1989:41). Genera on the other hand is described as " register plus purpose", Thompson put it in another way by saying: "it is something located at a higher level than register ", in addition it is often associated with context of culture rather than context of situation". (Thompson, 1996:36 )

The prominent figure who relates context to linguistics is Malinowski (1993:307 ), speech events are said to take place in a context of situation which he wrote:

"Utterance and situation are bound up inextricably with each other and the context of situation is indispensable for the understanding of the words. Exactly as in the reality spoken or written languages, a word without linguistic context is a mere fragment and stands for nothing by itself, so in the reality of a spoken living tongue, the utterance has no meaning except in the context of situation". ( Sunderland , 2006 : 42).

Malinowski stresses the importance of context of situation. He states that linguistic expressions make sense only when they are interpreted in the context of situation. (Sampson, 1980:226).

This assumption calls forth to an important concept that is; slang expressions demand a context to be uttered in an understandable way. Furthermore, Shin ( 2012 : 2 ) points out that current linguistic forms "highlights ways in which symbolic values of linguistic

region, social groups or even individuals within that group. Variation in this sense denote a basic fact of linguistic life. (Wardough, 2006:23).

Not only geographical and social factors that make languages varieties, Gender differences cannot be denied, since it has played an important role in signaling variation within languages. Gender is considered as a key component to identity, " it is not a pool of attribute possessed by a person , but something a person does (Wodak ,1997:4) cited in ibid (333-334). In such a view gender is something cannot be avoided in studying language variation. It is just a way of ordering societies around us.

According to Trudgill (2000:6), the first thing that attract your attention when you meet somebody for the first time is what sex he/she is.

He further states that the different ways of speaking we notice in men's and women's speech is a result of using different vocabularies, so they are said to be speaking different varieties of one language rather than different languages (Trudgill, 2000:65). Women's speech is more prestigious than men's speech, men try to use competitive and challenging vocabularies, they try to insult and tease each other , women on the other hand tend not to do so(Wardough, 2006:317). As far as gender differences are concerned one can draw a conclusion that : slang language is commonly used by men more often than women.

Every language change with respect to the changes in it's environment , however language change cannot be considered as occasional fact, instead it is because of the conditions of existence as a system, continuous changes among languages changes in language state are observed. Conversations cannot be maintained without the aid of systematic language ( Halliday , 2003 : 119 ). Here one may deduct that language change gave rise to so many slang vocabularies in every day life.

Crystal (2008:195), regarded slang language along with regionalism, neologism and code mixing as a highly informal language, since it involves a high range of colloquial expressions, as well as being described with a very loose structure. In this way slang is contrasted with highly formal language which is characterized by the use of complex syntactic structures and carefully organized

## 1. Introduction

Slang is defines as "words or phrases that are used instead of more everyday terms among younger speakers and other groups with special interest".(Yule, 2006: 260).

Slang language draws the attention of the community due to it's idiosyncratic existence. Speakers of a single community use a variety of expressions to refer to different phenomenon. In the present time and as a result of social and economic factors new slang vocabularies begin to appear among young people. Society in particular has accomplished mass transformation in it's adopting of slang vocabularies. Most sociolinguistic studies in spite of the fact they are not focusing on the role of gender in signaling different forms of speaking, these studies have shown that women unlike men are more careful in their choice of the vocabulary. However, slang expressions may widely be spread among younger males rather than females, and younger rather than old people , this may due to the fact that some young people consider the use of slang expressions as an important way of making themselves distinct from old generations.

This study investigates the use of slang expressions among Iraqi's people in the city of Najaf. Furthermore the examples are drawn from the actual use of slang by Iraqi's adolescent. The linguistic choices of slang expressions are then interpreted within the framework of social context of Iraqi's culture.

### 1.1 Literature review

Language is the cornerstone of human interaction. It provides a means of exchanging ideas and thoughts, it is a gift given to humans in order to separate them from animal species, allowing them to read, write and interact in the wider world around them. Moreover it is through language, humans learn their culture values and behaviors. (Samover, et al, 2007: 221).

It is a well known fact that each language has a limited number of varieties or a set of varieties. To put it in another way, language is a higher term under which variety and dialect lie. Language therefore vary and this variety exists whether one is talking about geographical

**Abstract:-**

This study sheds the light on a socio-pragma linguistic study of slang in Najafi Iraqi society. This group of young people use a variety of linguistic expressions that have no association with the standard language, however these expressions are evaluated by other people specially the older generations as being nonsensical or street words. For the authority of this study it draws on real data conducted after a survey in the form of questionnaire. After the data collection, the slang expressions are grouped according to their semantic meaning into (expressive, address oriented and (dis)agreement slang expressions). In addition to that pragmatic meaning, the formation process of these words as well as the society attitude towards these expressions have been taken into consideration, arguing that the desire of expressing identity, uniqueness and building bonds are enough reasons to motivate the existence of the slang expressions.

**Keywords:** Socio, Pragmatic meaning, Slang, Dialect, Society, Bond

**الخلاصة:**

تسلط هذه الدراسة الضوء على اللهجة العراقية النجفية، حيث يميل مجموعة من الشباب الى استخدام تعابير غير مرتبطة باللغة الفصحى. وجرى تقييم هذه التعابير من قبل الاجيال السابقة لهؤلاء الشباب خاصة على انها كلمات بلا معنى ولا تعدو استخدامات لغة الشارع. وقد اعتمدت هذه الدراسة على بيانات حقيقية عن طريق الاستبيانات. وقد لجأ الباحثون الى تصنيف المعلومات التي جمعوها عن استخدامات هذه اللهجة الى مجموعات حسب معانيها الدلالية. أضف الى ذلك ان الدراسة لم تغفل المعنى البراغماتي لهذه الكلمات وطريقة تكوينها وموقف المجتمع منها. وقد جادلت الدراسة بان اسباب ظهور هذه التعابير تأتي ضمن طريقة تعبير هذه المجموعة عن هويتها وتميزها وهو حافظ قوي لنشأة مثل هذه التعابير.

**الكلمات المفتاحية:** اجتماعي، المعنى التداولي، اللهجة، المجتمع، الرابطة الاجتماعية.

# **A Socio-pragmatic linguistic Study of Najafi Iraqi Slang**

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