Qasim Hassan
University of Basra
quasimhassan@yahoo.de

Reconsidering the Lexical Features
of the south-Mesopotamian Dialects

Abstract

The purposes of this paper are threefold. The first and the most general purpose is to provide an update of Ingham's analysis of the southern lexical features that is based on data gathered more than forty years ago (Ingham 1973). On this basis, I will reconsider the lexical link postulated by Ingham (2009: 101, 2007: 577) between the southern *gilit*-dialects continuum, on the one hand, and the dialects of the Gulf Coast, on the other hand. The second purpose is to reconsider the hitherto maintained lexical frontiers of the southern continuum suggested by Ingham (1994), discussing a range of items that so far have always been treated as 'southern', though they are widely spread in other *gilit*- and, to a less extent, in *qeltu*-dialects in the western and northern parts of Iraq. The third purpose involves proposing the dichotomy *Šrūgi*/non-*Šrūgi* as a new and efficient way of classification of the *gilit*-dialects. At the end of this paper, a list of *Šrūgi* lexical features is given.

1. Introduction

Despite numerous studies on the south-Mesopotamian dialects, little is known about the lexicon in this region of dialects. In general, the early lexical efforts on the southern varieties do not necessary belong to the field of dialectological lexicology on the plea that some of them such as Thesiger (1967), Drower (1936), Field (1936) and Westphal-Hellbusch (1955) are anthropological in nature and they are, therefore, not sufficient to draw inferences about the lexicon of this dialects area. Nevertheless, studies of this type are relevant to

this paper as they entail a plethora of vocabulary that are presumed for the southern *gilit*-dialects continuum, particularly for the marsh Arabs.

Field (1936), for instance, was mainly concerned with the anthropometric characters, the ethnology and the history of several tribes in the Lower Euphrates region such as Albu Mohammad, Al-Suaid, Bani Laam, among other tribes inhabiting the surrounding marshy areas. However, while describing the life and the customs of these tribes, Field touches on a large set of vocabulary used by the tribesmen in this southern area of dialects. These are, among many others, *šōk* (scrub), *fidān* (plough), *mašḥūf* (a canoe of reeds or thin wood), *kāra* (graft), *ṣarāyif* (mat huts), *ḥinna* (henna).

The same is true for Drower's *Arabs of the Hor al Hwaiza* (1936), which was an integral part of a large-scale anthropological project run by Field. According to Field himself (1936: 237), Drower's main task was to record and transcribe words and phrases that were, in her opinion, peculiar to Albu Mohammad tribesmen such as, among others, *nāʕūr* (water wheel), *bāryāw* (flood), *īšān* (mound), *harfi* (small pot), *bu* (rice straw), *mišrab* (shallow gutter), *tibin* (chopped straw).

Some decades later, Westphal-Hellbusch (1955) and Thesiger (1967) have conducted similar anthropological studies on the marsh dwellers in southern Iraq. Their main concern, however, differ slightly from Fields' and Drowers' in that they completely left aside the anthropometric features of the tribesmen in the Lower Euphrates, focusing mainly on the daily lives of the marsh dwellers, their beliefs and traditions. Also in these two works, the interplay between anthropology and dialectological lexicology is noticeable, so that several lexical items heard in this area have been well documented in several parts of their works.

It is worth noting, however, that the most part of the words documented in these anthropological frameworks are not only specific for the south-Mesopotamian *gilit*-varieties, but they are also widely spread in other *gilit*- and *qeltu*-dialects of Iraq. Items like, among others, *nāʕūr*, *harfi*, *tibin*, *šōk*, *fidān*, *ṣarāyif* are found scattered in folk tales from the *qeltu*-dialect of Mosul (Al-Obaydi, 2011: 113–114, 193) and in the Lexicon of Maslawi-Arabic (Al-Bakri, 2010: 60, 202, 904, 928–929).

However, besides these anthropological frameworks, some purely lexical approaches on the southern and southeastern varieties deserve to be mentioned at this place. These frameworks can be divided into four broad categories: word lists (Edzard 1967, Denz & Edzard 1966), glossaries (Thesiger 1967, van Ess 1938, Meißner 1903), dictionaries (Woodhead & Beene 1967),[1] or short sections dealing with some southern lexical features (Ingham 2009, 2007, 2000, 1973). As indicated previously, the focus of this study will mainly be on Ingham's lexical accounts of the southern continuum; the other frameworks, however,

---

[1] Though dealing with Iraqi-Arabic in general, Woodhead & Beene touch on a wide range of lexical items that are widespread in the southern *gilit*-dialects area.

will be consulted for comparative reasons in order to prove the distribution of certain lexical features in various parts of the country.

For purposes of simplicity and convenience, the following abbreviations and acronyms shall be used to refer to frameworks and authors whose names repeatedly appear throughout this paper: Al-Bakri (BAK), Al-Obaydi (OBD), Denz & Edzard (DE), Drower (DR), Edzard (ED), Field (FL), Ingham (ING), Meißner (MEI), van Ess (vE), Wortatlas der Arabischen Dialekte (WAD), Woodhead & Beene (WB). However, wherever the abbreviation INF appears in this paper it can equally refer to informants I have used during my fieldwork trips in Mosul, Tikrit, Samara and Diyala as well as to informants whom I questioned by telephone or other electronic means.

2. Remarks on the lexical link between the southern varieties and the Gulf Coast

In some places of his works (1973: 547, 2007: 577, 2009: 101, among others), Ingham postulates a lexical link between the southern varieties and the dialects of the Gulf Coast. I try to point out in the following that the lexical items he mentions in this context (i.e. *anṭa*, *yinṭi* "to give", *hamm* "also", *čōl* "desert", *nišad* "to ask", among others) are not merely southern and thus not an ideal basis for such a linkage. As will be shown below, the lexical items *čōl* and *hamm* are, for example, also common in the *qeltu*-Arabic, and all four are widely used in the northern and western *gilit*- varieties of Iraq as well as in several dialects outside Mesopotamia.

anṭa/*yinṭi* "gave/to give" ING (2009: 101, 2007: 577). Babylon (MEI 144), Basra, Kirkuk, Mosul/Beḥzāni (WAD III: 376ab). It must be noted in this regard that, due to the massive waves of immigration from the surrounding *gilit*-areas, or the so-called *ʕarab ʔl-ǧaryah*, to the City of Mosul, the verbs *anṭa*/*yinṭi* are currently used side by side with the metathesized *qeltu* lexical item *ṭaʕa* (OBD 21).[2] In addition, traces of *anṭa*/*yinṭi* are found in, among others, the Bedouin speeches of the Arab Gulf (Socin 2004: 314b, Ingham 1982: 91), Urfe (Prochazka 2004: 81), Khawētna (Talay 1999: 173).

– *čōl* "desert" ING (2009: 101). Iraqi-Arabic (WB 88, vE 136); Babylon (MEI 141); Baghdadi Arabic (Oussani 1901: 110, Abu Haidar 1991: 186); Middle Euphrates and Basra (D & E 84); Mosul (BAK 278, OBD 90); pan-Iraqi (INF); Syrian desert (Bettini 2006: 82); Urfe and Anatolia (WADII 188).
– *hamm* "also" ING (2009: 101). Iraqi-Arabic (WB 483, vE 23); Babylon (MEI 146); Middle Euphrates and Basra (D & E 88); Christian Baghdadi (Abu Haidar 1991: 189); Mosul (BAK 873-873, OBD 11); pan-Iraqi (INF).

---

[2] *ṭaʔa* has also been recorded for Tikrit (Johnstone 1975: 107–108) and for Christian and Jewish Baghdadi Arabic (Abu Haidar 1991: 198).

– *nišad* "to ask" ING (1973: 538, 1976: 73, 2000: 127). Iraqi-Arabic (WB
  458); Babylon (MEI 144); Middle Euphrates and Basra (D & E 19); INF:
  Tikrit (rural), Samara (rural), Al-Anbar (rural).[3] Pan-Bedouin verb found
  in the Arab Gulf region, Khuzestan, Levantine, North Africa, Afghanistan,
  Antiochia, Urfe (WADIII, 359).

In addition, during several visits to Mosul and Tikrit I conducted a number
of face-to-face interviews with randomly selected *quḥḥi*-speakers[4] as well as
with speakers of *ǧaryāwi*.[5] All of them confirmed the use of the lexical items
ham and *čōl* in rural and urban areas in everyday speech. However, though
being typical for *gilit*-Arabic, *anṭa/yinṭi* seem to be interchangeably used with
the metathesized *qeltu*-Arabic lexical item *ṭaʕa*.

3. Lexical items without borders

In the following, I will touch upon certain lexical items that so far have
always been considered southern by Ingham (2007, 2000, and 1973). For many
of them I found evidence for their current usage in various *gilit*- and *qeltu*-areas
of dialects. As will be shown below, some of them are also listed in general
dictionaries on Iraqi-Arabic and Arabic dialectology.
– *rōba* "yoghurt" ING (2007: 577, 2000: 127, 1973: 547); Iraqi-Arabic (WB
  197); Marsh Arabs (ED 312, DR 386); INF: Diyala (rural/urban), Tikrit
  (rural), Al-Anbar (rural/urban), Samara (rural/urban). Recently *rōba* has
  been introduced to the *qeltu*-dialect of Mosul via *ǧaryāwi* and the newly
  arrived Sunni immigrants from southern Iraq.[6]
– *farax/frūx* "child" ING (2007: 577, 2000: 127, 1973: 547). Iraqi-Arabic
  (WB 348), not with this meaning, only *faraxči* (gay) and "birds"; INF:
  Diyala (rural/urban), Tikrit (rural), Al-Anbar (rural), Samara (rural). During
  my stay in Mosul, a *quḥḥi*-speaking woman introduced her children to
  me in saying *ḏōl afrāxi* 'These are my children'. In a chat-conversation
  with a group of women from Mosul, on the other hand, a woman used
  this word saying *ʔana kuntu āxuḏ fōlīk ʔasīd w kuntu ʔimfarxa kul sana
  walad* "I used to take folic acid and that was the reason why I gave birth
  to child every year". Some of my INF, highly educated native speakers
  of the *qeltu*-Arabic of Mosul, confirmed the use of the plural form *afrāx*
  only occasionally.

---

[3] Strangely, (BAK 911) adds *nišad* to his lexicon of Maslawi-Arabic. However, my INF from
Mosul did not confirm the use of this word in everyday life.
[4] Native speakers of *qeltu*-Arabic.
[5] Speakers of the rural *gilit*-Arabic surrounding Tikrit and Mosul.
[6] For its uses in several Arabic dialects, see (WADIII, 343, WADII, 257).

- *ḥarfi* "early" ING (2007: 577, 2000: 126, 1973: 547). Iraqi-Arabic (WB 479), with the meaning "newborn, young"; Lower Euphrates/Marsh Arabs (FL 244); Mosul (BAK 928-929); INF: Diyala (rural/urban), Tikrit (rural/urban), Al-Anbar (rural/urban), Samara (rural/urban), Kirkuk (rural/urban).
- *tāna, ytāni* "to wait" ING (2007: 577, 1973: 547). Iraqi-Arabic (WB 60); Babylon (MEI 116); according to INF also used in Diyala (rural/urban), Tikrit (rural), Al-Anbar (rural/urban), Samara (rural/urban), Kirkuk (rural/urban); also attested in some Arabic dialects outside Iraq (WAD III: 371a).
- *ḥader* "under, below" ING (1973: 547, 2000: 127, 2007: 577). South-Iraq, Khuzestan, Middle Euphrates, Central Arabia, the Arab Gulf, Uzbekistan (Prochazka, 1993: 226–227); used also as a verb *ḥadder* "to come down" in Iraqi-Arabic (WB 94, vE 127) as well as in Babylon (MEI 118); Syria/Bedouin, Jordan/ ʕaǧārma (WADIII, 317a).
- *širyāṣ* "glue" ING (1973: 547). Mosul (OBD 110, BAK 189); INF: almost obsolete in the *gilit*-dialects.
- *ġād* "there" ING (1973: 538, 2000: 128, 2007: 127). Babylon (MEI 136); Middle Euphrates (D & E 87); Iraqi-Arabic (WB 332); INF: all *gilit* varieties of Iraq. INF: *ġād* does not exist in *qeltu*-Arabic.
- *xašim* "nose" ING (2007: 127). Babylon (MEI 120); Middle Euphrates (D & E 89); Iraqi-Arabic (WB 135, van Ess 186); Baghdadi Arabic (Oussani 1901: 112); Mosul (BAK 201, 975, OBD 161); INF: pan-Iraqi.[7]
- *inišal* "to catch a cold" ING (2007: 577). Babylon (MEI 144); Iraqi-Arabic (WB 459); Christian Baghdadi (Abu Haidar 1991: 189, 193); Mosul (BAK 911). INF: pan-Iraqi.
- *laʕad* "so" ING (2007: 577). Iraqi-Arabic (WB 423); not mentioned in (MEI) and (vE) for south-Mesopotamia; *laʕad* is characteristic for Baghdadi Arabic (Erwin 2004: 311); it is only very sporadically heard in southern Iraq, particularly among educated people, under the influence of the prestigious Baghdadi Arabic.
- *bawaʕ* "to look at" ING (2007: 577). Iraqi-Arabic (WB 47, vE 172); Middle Euphrates (D & E 82); Christian and Muslim Baghdadi (Blanc 1964: 135); Kirkuk (WADIII, 363b); INF: pan-Iraqi. It is also attested in Saudi-Arabia/Ġāmid/ Zahrān/Mixwāt (WADIII, 363b).
- *zōd* "flood" ING (1973: 547, 2000: 127). Iraqi-Arabic (vE 142, WB 208); INF: Tikrit (rural), Al-Anbar (rural/urban).

---

[7] It is also found in North African Bedouin dialects, Saudi Arabia, Yemen, and Uzbekistan (WADI: 193).

4. South-Iraqi or Khuzestani?

Ingham (1973: 547) states that there is "a small number of items recorded in Khuzestan, which were not used by speakers of neighboring Iraqi dialects". Among these are the lexical items *dašš* "to enter", *rōšna* "alcove", and *mrēxān* "mist".[8] Nevertheless, Ingham (2000: 127) comes back to these three lexical items, but this time he considers them characteristic for the southern marsh Arabs. Interestingly, the Persian lexeme *rouzane*, from which *rōšna* derives, acquired cross-dialectally new forms and meanings (WADII, 201). In all Iraqi-Arabic dialects, for instance, one finds the forms *rāzūne* and *rōšna* with two quite different meanings: the former refers to a niche in a wall, which is usually used as a shelf, whereas the latter stands for small windows in, mainly, clay-made huts that are used for airing or cooling purposes.

At least as widespread is the lexical item *dašš*. Traces of this verb are found in several Iraqi-Arabic dialects (WB 135, vE 140). According to INF, *dašš* is often heard in Tikrit (rural/urban), also in contexts like *dašš ʔl-māy* "to enter into the water", and in Al-Anbar (rural/urban).[9] By contrast, the lexical item *mrēxān* seems to be restricted to the southern part of Mesopotamia; it is found scattered in some remote southern rural areas, particularly in the southern *gilit*-dialect area of Basra. However, this item is metathesized to *rxēmān* in the district of Al-Mdayna north of Basra. The following is a line of poem from Basra, where *mrēxān* is used: *w-inta, w-inta! ya-l-māxiḏli rūḥi čannak mrēxān wi-l-sičča biʔīda* 'And you, and you, who took my soul, you looks like mist and the way is long.'

5. The Dichotomy *Šrūgi/non-Šrūgi*

Building on the above-mentioned lexical diversity, I would like here to reconsider Ingham's definition of the geographic boundary for the southern dialects continuum, which, in his opinion, ends by Kut on the Tigris and Samawa on the Euphrates (1994: 93). In doing so, I base my following arguments on the religio-cultural dichotomy *Šrūgi/non-Šrūgi*; the former refers to *gilit*-dialects spoken in the southern region and the Middle Euphrates area, the latter to *gilit*-dialects outside these two areas. This dichotomy is based on the fact that people in the southern area share the same faith and values with the tribal communities in the neighboring Middle Euphrates area, they mainly follow the Shia faith, and they are therefore called *Šrūgis* by the non-*Šrūgi* population in the northern

---

[8] The same is true for the lexical item *bayyač* "it became stuck" (Ingham 1973: 547) which is very widely spread in all Iraqi-Arabic dialects (BAK 196).

[9] It is also attested in several Arabic dialects in Kuwait, Bahrain, Qatar, Emirates, Oman, Saudi Arabia/Shammar, and Najd (WAD III, 71–73).

and western parts of Iraq, with a majority following the *Sunni* faith. Taking in account these religio-cultural and linguistic dimensions in both of these *gilit-* areas, it seems that the lexical similarity between the southern varieties and those behind Kut and Samawa can be said to be of two types: total and partial.

The lexical similarity between the Shia-Muslim dialects, or *Šrūgi* dialects, in the southern continuum and the neighboring Middle Euphrates area, for instance, seems to be almost total, whereas there is only partial lexical similarity between these and those Sunni-Muslim dialects, or *non-Šrūgi* dialects, in the western and northern parts of the country. The wordlist below,[10] for example, contains lexical features, mostly rural, that are typical for *Šrūgis* in southern Iraq and the Middle Euphrates area, but not heard of in *non-Šrūgi* areas in the northern and the western parts of the country. By using this dichotomy, however, the *Šrūgi*-dialects in southern Iraq and the Middle Euphrates should be considered, at least on lexical level, one isogloss, in contrast to Ingham who separates between them.[11]

* * *

Root	lexeme	plural	translation	Examples with translation	Additional comments
ʔwl	*ʔawwal fāl*		first of all; first; basically; above all	*ʔawwal fāl xābra w baʕdēn rūḥla* Call him first and then go to him.	
ʔwl	*ʔawwal hēl*		first of all; first; basically; above all	*ʔawwal hēl xābra w baʕdēn rūḥla* Call him first and then go to him.	
ʔll	*ʔīlāli*		airy (clothes)	*ṯōbha ʔīlāli* Her dress is airy.	
btl	*batla*	*batlāt*	offshoot of a date palm	*ʔl-batla ʔl-wiḥda ṣārat ʔb-xamsīn ʔalif dīnār* One offshoot of a date palm costed 50 thousands Iraqi Dinar.	

[10] The wordlist is a part of VICAV (Vienna Corpus of Arabic Varieties).

[11] It would need a further study to find out to which degree these lexical items are stretching further south along the Gulf coast.

Root	lexeme	plural	translation	Examples with translation	Additional comments
bḫt	baḥat	baḥat	rice pudding		
bdq	bidag		to look at	ʔibdag ʔiḏ-ḏāk ʔr-rayyāl Look at that man!	Mainly used in the Middle Euphrates area of Iraq.
bdq	bidag		to pay attention	ʔibdag-lī Listen (to me)!	
bḏh	baḏḏah		to enjoy oneself		
brḥ	bāriḥ		hot summer wind		
brd	barad		Exclamation marker	barad! Oh my god!	Mainly used in the gilit-dialect of Naṣiriyya.
blṭ	ʔimballaṭ		barefaced; rude; brazenfaced		
bhz	bahaz		to suddenly look at so./sth.		
bhl	buhil		naïve; starry-eyed		
tbb	tibba	tibbab	bull neck		
tqf	taǧif	taǧfīn	clever; able; masterful		
tll	tall		to strongly pull sth.		
tnn	tinīn	tināyin	of the same age (sb.)		
ǧmġ	ǧmāġ	ǧmāġāt	cudgel; club		
ǧmm	ǧīma	ǧīmāt	group (of people)	il-yōm šifit ǧīma māl frūx I saw a group of kids today.	
ḥnb	ʔimḥannib		bending down	šmālak ʔimḥannib? Why are you bending down?	
xzl	xizla	ʔixzal	herd; group	xizla māl frūx/ṣxūl a group/herd of children/goats	

Root	lexeme	plural	translation	Examples with translation	Additional comments
xšl	*xašil*	*xašlāt*	gold pieces		
xnb	*xinab*		to encapsulate; to withdraw into one's shell		
xnb	*xinyāb*		water gush in springtime		
xnn	*xinnāra*	*xinnārāt*	small opening in clay oven		
dff	*dōf*	*dōfāt*	clay mortar		
ḏll	*ḏallal*		to turn down (TV or Radio)		
dwr	*ʔiddōr*		then; after that; once again	*ʔiddōr ʔiǧaw ʔiṯnēnhum.* After that, they came together.	
dww	*dāwī*		on	*il-kahrabā dāwya* The electric power is on.	
rdʕ	*ridaʕ*		to gradually add hot water to cold water or vice versa to have warm water		
rʕy	*riʕī*	*riʕī*	dirt		
rkb	*rakkab*		to cook; to boil		
rhl	*rihlī*		stupid		
rwḥ	*stōraḥ*		to shy	*ʔinta ṣidig mā tistōriḥ* You really do not shy.	
zbr	*zabbar*		to cut and collect thorny desert plants to be used as fuel for traditional clay oven		

Root	lexeme	plural	translation	Examples with translation	Additional comments
zbr	*zobar*			to chase away (an animal) *izbur ṭilyānak min gāʕī* Chase your sheep away from my ground!	
zrr	*zāyir*	*zuwwār*	a man who went to Mašhad		
zrr	*zāyra*	*zāyrāt*	a woman who went to Mašhad		
zrr	*ʔīzār*	*yizur*	hard blanket usually made from cotton		
sḥḥ	*siyyāḥ*	*siyyāḥāt*	rice bread		
sḥḥ	*saḥḥ*		to pull sth.		
sḥr	*saḥḥāra*	*saḥḥārāt*	storage chest		also *fātya*
snʕ	*sannaʕ*		to do something best		
snʕ	*saniʕ*	*saniʕīn*	competent; capable (person).		
šfǧ	*šifiǧ*	*ʔišifūǧa*	young buffalo		
šqṣ	*šaguṣ*	*ʔišaguṣ*	a reed enclosure functioning as an armor against the sun's heat during the day		
šqf	*šigaf*		to interrupt (a strike)		
šmt	*šamta*	*šamtāt*	sack		
šwf	*mašūfa*	*mašūfāt*	mirror		
šyr	*šyār*	*šyārāt*	a number of slices of bread		
ṣmx	*ṣumax*		to be patient with sth./sb.; to bear with sth./sb.		

Root	lexeme	plural	translation	Examples with translation	Additional comments
ṣlʕ	*ṣiliʕ*	*ʔiṣlūʕ*	a patch of land		
ṣngr	*ṣangar*	*ṣanāgir*	observation post		
ṣhw	*ṣahawa*	*ṣahawat*	small hut		
ṣyy	*ṣāy*		unrestless; untireless; unfailing (a boy).		
ṭrm	*ṭarmiya*	*ṭarmiyāt*	water tap		
ṭff	*ṭaff*		to chase after sb.		
ʕdd	*ʔiʕdād*	*ʔiʕdādāt*	dowry	*lamla ʔiʕdād ʔl-ʕirsah* He collected money for his wedding.	
ʕkl	*ʕačla*	*ʕačlāt*	human crowd		
ġbb	*ġāb*		saucer		
ġlq	*ġalag*	*ʔiġlūga*	lid (of a pot etc.).		
ġlq	*ġalag*		to close (a door, a window); to turn off a radio or TV		
ġmq	*ġimīǧ*		deep (e.g. river)		
ġwl	*ġōla*	*ġōlāt*	shirt collar		
fšl	*fišal*		to shame	*wallah fišal*! What a shame!	
flhd	*falhad*		to lie down to sleep	*wilak rūḥ falhid w nām* Hey, you, lie down to sleep!	
qrʕ	*garaʕ*		to mate; to pair (zool.)		
qʕd	*gaʕad*		thieve's companion who guards him		
qfz	*gofaz*		to mate; to pair (zool.)		see *qrʕ*

Root	lexeme	plural	translation	Examples with translation	Additional comments
kḍḍ	*kaḍ*		to grasp sth./sb.		
kmm	*čīma*	*čīmāt*	fuel for traditional clay oven such as cow pats, horse droppings as well as rests of plants etc.		
kmr	*čimrī*		green unripe dates		
khb	*čahab*		to enter	*čahab ʔṣ-ṣuffā* He entered the cattle market.	
kwk	*kawāk*		good; fine		
kwn	*čīwāniya*	*čīwāniyāt*	homecarer; housekeeper		
lbb	labb		to kick sb./sth.		
lbḥ	*libaḥ*		to urge; to cajole		
lḥḥ	*laḥḥ*		to overfill sth.		
lḥf	*lāḥaf*		to take care of sb.		
lṭṭ	*lāṭiya*	*lāṭiyāt*	head cap		
mḏr	*mamḏūr*	*mamḏūrīn*	mischief-maker; trouble-maker (child)		
mshd	*timashad*		to deride sb./sth; to make fun of sb./sth.		
mšš	*mašš*		to wipe (e.g. a table); to clean (e.g. one's mouth)		
nbb	*nabb*		to say sth.		
nbb	*nāb*		wound		
nḥš	*naḥaš*		to urge; to cajole		
nxḏ	*nōxiḏa*	*nwāxīḏ*	ship captain		
nṭṭ	*nāyaṭ*		to do one's best		
nwḥ	*nāḥa*		to persist	*ʔiḥib ʔināḥīni* He likes to be stubborn.	

Root	lexeme	plural	translation	Examples with translation	Additional comments
nwʕ	ʔitnawaʕ		to look at	ʔitnawaʕ-la. Look at him!	
ḥṭr	ḥṭar	ʔiḥṭarāt	bundle of reed		
hyl	hayāla	hayālāt	a sort of fishing net		
wǧġ	ʔwǧāġ	ʔwǧāġāt	fireplace		
wqq	ʔwga	ʔwgāt	top-of-head protection made of cloth, which is usually worn by women in the rural areas when transporting heavy loads on the head		
whq	wahag		to take someone by surprise		
yṯl	yaṯil	yaṯlīn	stocky (person)		
yrd	yarid	ʔirūd	old clothes		
yrk	yarak		to sit on one's knees		
yšǧ	ʔīšāǧī		to interrupt (a strike)		see *šigaf*
yġm	yuġma	yuġmāt	mouthful of water		
yšn	ʔīšān	yišin	island of reed		

Conclusion

This study was an elaboration of Ingham's accounts on the lexical features and the boundary of the so-called southern continuum. For this purpose, the study focused on three dimensions: (a) reconsidering the link made by Ingham between the southern continuum and the dialects of the Gulf Coast, (b) discussing some lexical features that have always been considered 'southern' though they are widely spread in both *gilit*- and *qeltu*-groups of dialects, and (c) drawing new demarcation line for the lexical features of south-Mesopotamia by suggesting the dichotomy *Šrūgi*/non-*Šrūgi*.

References

Abu-Haidar, F. 1991. *Christian Arabic of Baghdad*, Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz (Semitica Viva 7).

Al-Bakri, H. 2011. *Muʕǧam al-alfāẓ wal-mawrūṯāt al-mawṣiliyah*, University of Mosul.

Al-Obaydi, A. 2011. *Al-ḥikāyāt aš-šaʕbiya al-mawṣiliya*, University of Mosul.

Behnstedt, P. & Woidich, M. 2005. *Wortatlas der Arabischen Dialekte* I. Leiden, Boston: Brill.

Behnstedt, P. & Woidich, M. 2012. *Wortatlas der Arabischen Dialekte* II. Leiden, Boston: Brill.

Behnstedt, P. & Woidich, M. 2014. *Wortatlas der Arabischen Dialekte* III. Leiden, Boston: Brill.

Bettini, L. 2006. *Contes féminins de la haute Jézireh syriennes. Matériaux ethno-linguistiques d'un parler nomade*, Firenze.

Blanc, H. 1964. *Communal Dialects in Baghdad*, Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press.

Denz, A. & Edzard, D.O. 1966. "Iraq-arabische Texte nach Tonbandaufnahmen aus al-Hilla, al-'Afac und al-Basra", in *ZDMG*, 116, 60–96.

Drower, E.S. 1936. "Arabs of the Hor al Hawiza", in Henry Field, *The Anthropology of Iraq*, Chicago: Field Museum Press, 368–406.

Ezard, D.O. 1967. "Zum Vokabular der Ma'dan-Araber im siidlichen Iraq", in *Eilers*, Wiesbaden: Otto Harrosowitz, 305–317.

Ess, J. v. 1938. *The Spoken Arabic of Iraq*, Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Field, H. 1936. *The Anthropology of Iraq*. Chicago: Field Museum Press.

Ingham, B. 2009. "The dialect of the Euphrates Bedouin. A fringe Mesopotamian dialect", in: Al-Wer, Enam and de Jong, Rudolf, (eds.), *Arabic Dialectology*: in Honor of Clive Holes on his Sixtieth Birthday, Leiden, Boston: Brill, pp. 99–108.

— 2007. "The Arabic dialect of Khuzestan", *EALL* II, 571–578.

— 2000. "The Dialect of the Miʔdān or 'Marsh Arabs'", *AIDA* III, 125–130.

— 1994. "Ethnolinguistic Links between Southern Iraq and Khuzestan", in K.S. McLachlan, (ed.), *the Boundaries of Modern Iran*, London: USC Press, 93–103.

— 1976. "Regional and Social Factors in the Dialect Geography of Southern Iraq and Khuzestan", *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies*, Vol. 39, No. 1, pp. 62–82.

— 1973. "Urban and Rural Arabic in Khuzestan", *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies*, 36 (3), pp. 533–555.

Johnstone, T.M. 1975. "The Spoken Arabic of Tikrit", *Annual of Leeds University*, *Oriental Society*, VII, pp. 89–109.

Meißner, B. 1903. "Neuarabische Geschichten aus dem Iraq", in: *Beiträge zur Assyriologie und zur semitischen Sprachwissenschaft*, Leipzig: John Hopkins Press, V, pp 1–148.

Oussani, G. 1901. "The Arabic Dialect of Baghdad", *Journal of the American Oriental Society*, 22, pp. 67–114.

Prochazka, S. 2004. "Unmarked Feminine Nouns in Modern Arabic Dialects", in: M. Haak, R. de Jong u. K. Versteegh (eds.), *Approaches to Arabic Dialects*, A Collection of Articles presented to Manfred Woidich on his Sixtieth Birthday, Leiden/Boston, pp. 237–262.

— 1993. *Die Präpositionen in den neuarabischen Dialekten*, Vienna: VWGÖ.

Socin, A. 2004. *Diwan aus Centralarabien*. von H. Stumme (eds.), Leipzig: Hildesheim.

Talay, S. 1999. *Der arabische Dialekt der Khawētna*. I: Grammatik. Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz.

Thesiger, W. 1967. "The Marsh Arabs of Iraq", *Geographical Magazine*, 27, pp. 138–144.

Wehr, H. 1961. *Dictionary of Modern Written Arabic*, Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz.

Westphal-Helbusch, S. & Westphal, H. 1962. *Die Miʔdān: Kultur und Geschichte der Marschenaraber im Süd-Iraq*, Berlin: Humboldt.

Woodhead, D.R. & Beene, W. 1967. *A dictionary of Iraqi Arabic: Arabic-English*, Georgetown: Georgetown University Press.