The Epenthetic Behaviour of Some Iraqi Words:

A Phonological Study

Arwa Abdulrasoul Salman

University of Diyala ,

College of Education for Humanities /Iraq

drarwaabdulrasoul 75@gmail.com

- Abstract :

The present paper is a phonological study of epenthesis in Iraqi Arabic (LA). By bringing light to syllable based phonemes found in IA, the present study aims to provide a basic foundation for further research on IA. It also aims at identifying and investigating the individual segments and the various types of Syllables which are subjected to epenthesis. The purpose of this paper is to demonstrate that the occurrence of epenthetic vowels and consonants can be attributed to Certain properties of Syllable structure .IA prohibits clusters of three consonants and it repairs this illicit structure with an epenthetic vowel or consonant. Crucially, when ccc clusters arise from verbal affixation, this dialect preserves the prosodic shape of its respective base verb. The syllable template of IA how it applies to the Iraqi dialects of Arabic is discussed in detail. It is assumed that epenthesis has different effect on the concatenation of phonemes in IA.

Key Words : epenthesis , Iraqi Arabic, consonant cluster

1-Introduction:

Epenthesis is a phonological process which refers to the insertion of a sound segment into a word, there by changing its syllable structure. This implies that there is in input-output mapping relationship in which the output contains more segments than the input.(Crystal ; 2003 , Ladefoged; 2006, Bauman-waergler; 2009, Davenport & Hannah ; 2010 & Hwaidi, 2016).The inserted sound can be a vowel as isell as Consonant. Epenthetic sounds are used to satisfy a morphological template or to

adjust the consonant cluster of a given language whether word initially, word-medially or word-Finally.

In this paper, the author investigates the epenthetic behaviour of some Iraqi words. IA is somehow different from Modern Standard Arabic (MSA) in that it illustrates a different treatment for the apparent invisibility of inserted vowels in MSA. MSA does not prefer consonant clusters Word initially. In SA however, the epenthetic La vowel appears vividly as a result of maximization of contrast between stems of different grammatical types and the contrast between singleton and geminated segments, MSA consists of three short vowels /a/,/u/ and /i/ with three long counterparts /aa/, /uu/ and /ii/. Two more long vowels Lech and /oo/ are added to the vowel system in LA. (AL-Ani, 1970 ; & Hassan, 1981. 2002)

2-Phonological Background :

Mitchell (19927: 1920) states that " in Classical Arabic syllables are delimitable by the fact of their beginning with a consonant and containing a vocalic nucleus , as well as the inadmissibility ton Syllable initial Clusters and sequences of more than two consonants " As such , it tends to break up such clusters M an /sirat/, 'path' where the vowel /i/ is added to break the s- cluster . On the same footing , IA prohibits three Consonant clusters .It repairs this illicit Structure with an epenthetic vowel SpeaKers of IA, Who display the phenomenon of epenthesis , Insert the vowels /i/, /e/ and /u/ to break up consonant clusters in words like firm /firin/ " oven" nabl /nahel/ and /harf/ 'letter' respectively.

In this connection , certain generalizations are to be made : first, IA speakers break up three or four consonant clusters that arise through morpheme concatenation, as in words like wajb-na→ wajibna 'our duty', ʔibn-na → ʔibinna 'our son' . Second, IA avoids a medial CCC cluster by adding a vowel between the first and the second member of the cluster , yielding CVCC cluster as in hilm-ha→ hilimha 'her dream'. Third IA often breaks up two consonant clusters word- finally as in ʔism→   ʔisim 'name'. kiparsky (2003: 148) realizes that non-final CVVC syllables are tolerated in IA as in baab-ha → aaba 'her door'.

Contrary to Hawaid (2016:) who assumes that /-l/and /t-/ in words like gilt- la are added at a later stage after the final word

phoneme /-t /bas entered the word; the author Finds that the It is a basic phoneme of that word 'gilt' and that the /-/ is also a basic

phoneme of the word , i.e . the epenthetic /i/ is inserted at a later stage of the Formation of the word gilt-la → gilitla - The author realizes that in IA , epenthesis is.1) obligatory in a cluster of two consonants as in rakad→   rakid 'running' ,2) it occurs in obstruent- sonorant clusters as in ramz →   ramiz ' symbol' , and 3) epenthesis occurs in the environments of /ml/,/rm/ and /mn/ as the   following examples respectively show : naml →   namel 'ant's ,farm →   faram 'to chop' and amn → amin, 'safety'.

An equally important notice is that IA speakers tend to insert the glottal consonant / ʕ/ at the initial sequence of /sp ,st& pl/ clusters of tabulated below:

Table 1. Epenthesis in loanwords

Loanwords	pronunciation	Epenthetic words
studio	stju:dɪəu	ʔstudio
strategy	strætədʒi	ʔstrateʒiyaa
sponge	spʌndʒ	ʔsfanʒ
slaid	slaid	ʔslayd
plastic	plæstik	ʔplaastɪk

3- Methodology:

This study is data-oriented in that it seeks to present a descriptive analysis of IA. The author relies heavily on the spoken repertoire of everyday speech and on her intuition as a native speaker of the language. Epenthetic IA words are compared with their counterparts in MSA to trace the way IA speakers insert vowels , and less frequently consonants , to words.

4-Discussions and Results:

Tables 2.5 (as well as table -1-) show word set comparison between IA and MSA to illustrate how IA speakers add epenthetic vowels to repair illicit consonant clusters.

Table -2- Epenthesis Two –consonants clusters

MSA	IA	Gloss
dras	diras	He studied
fham	fiham	He understood
shar	sihar	He stayed up
qrʔ	qira	He read
ktb	kitb	He wrote
bna	bina	He built

IA speakers tend to add /i/ vowel between the first and second consonant word -
initially mainly when these words are verbs in the third person singular.

The short vowel /i/ is also inserted Word- finally as shown in the following table.

Table -3- Epenthetic /i/ word –finally

MSA	IA	Gloss
ʒisr	ʒisir	Bridge
libs	libis	Clothes
bint	binit	Daughter
ʔbn	ʔbin	Son
ʃift	ʃifit	I saw
miθl	miθil	like

The short vowel   /u/   can also be inserted word finally especially when the first
member of the consonant cluster is /r/ or /s/ followed by /f/ or /k/ as is illustrated in
the table below:

Table -4- Epenthetic /u/ Word –Finally

MSD	IA	Gloss
Sarf	Saruf	Morphology
Harf	Haruf	Letter

ʕurf	ʕuruf	Custom
ʒurf	ʒuruf	Cliff
wasf	wasuf	Description
turk	turuk	paths

speakers of IA break consonant cluster word finally by inserting short /e/ as tabulated below:

Table-5- Epenthetic /e/ word-Finally

MSD	IA	Gloss
naml	namel	ants
haml	hamel	pregnancy
qatl	qatel	murder
hafl	hafel	party
yahl	yahel	solve
fahl	fahel	male
naðl	naðel	villainous

Table 5. shows that epenthetic /e/is inserted when the second consonant in the cluster is the glide /l/ preceded by one of the segments in the set /m, h, t, f & ð/.

Epenthesis also occurs across phonological boundaries in fast connected speech as illustrated in the following table

Table - 6 Epenthesis across Phonological Boundaries

MSD	IA	Gloss
Alhamdlillah	alhamdulillah	Thanks God
lathasba	lathasib	Don't punish him
latsarba	latsariha	Don't tell him the truth

wast elbayt	wasatelbayt	In the mid of the hous
mayqruun	mayiqruun	They don't read
mayqadruun	mayiqdruun	They don't respect
masmʒak	masimaɣak	He didn't hear you
marsamk	marisamak	He didn't portrait you
sabbhak alla blxeer	sabbahak Alla bilxeer	Good morning

This table shows that , in careful Speech , epenthesis occurs in IA across phonological word boundaries but within the phonological phrase , a most often when negative elements such as (la) and (ma) are used.

5- Conclusions:

- The present paper unveils a number of - outstanding findings that contribute in a way or another, to trace the landmarks of - how Iraqi Words are subsumed under the - process of epenthesis.

The glottal stop /ʔ/ is inserted word-initially to break two -consonant clusters when pronouncing English loanwords. Epenthetic vowels , on the contrary, are more likely to occur in IA, Epenthesis occurs word initially and most often word-finally. It also occurs within - the phonological phrase boundaries to break up illicit consonant cluster and this seems to lead to an easier way of pronunciation.

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