

Diglossia summarized (H vs. L varieties)

Criteria of difference	High (Standard language/variety) e.g., Standard Arabic	Low (regional dialects/ varieties) e.g., Algerian Arabic
Function: one variety is used in a context where the other cannot be used.	H is used in formal settings and for formal/ academic purposes such as university lectures, mosques, letters, poetry, political speech, etc.	L is used in informal contexts and for casual conversations such as home, among friends and family members, folk literature, etc.
Prestige: the social value given to each variety	H is superior, logical, beautiful, and possess the effectiveness of communication	L is less prestigious and is seen in a lower status compared to the standard language
Literary heritage: the amount of written material in both varieties	H is the language of art and poetry; there are lots of books written in standard languages	L is only restricted to folk literature
Acquisition: the process of language learning by children in early ages	H is learned by means of formal education	L is acquired as a mother tongue from childhood
Standardization: established norms for language use including grammar, orthography and pronunciation	H is standardized in terms of grammar, style, vocabulary.	L is characterized by a wide variation in pronunciation and vocabulary; and there is no established orthography for it
Stability: the persistence of the varieties over time	H is more stable in morphological and syntactic structures	L shows a lot of borrowings from the H variety and is varied in morphology, inflections and syntax as well.
Grammar: rules of correct language structure and use	H has an inflectional system of nouns and verbs	The inflectional system is reduced or rarely used
Lexicon: number of vocabulary items and lexemes (words)	H includes in its total lexicon technical terms and learned expressions which have no regular L equivalents	L varieties include in their total lexicon popular expressions and the names of very homely objects or objects of very localized distribution which have no regular H equivalents
Phonology: sound systems of H and L	H sounds are fixed in pronunciation	L consists of sounds that can be absent in H

DIGLOSSIA is a relatively stable language situation in which, in addition to the primary dialects of the language (which may include a standard or regional standards), there is a very divergent, highly codified (often grammatically more complex) superposed variety, the vehicle of a large and respected body of written literature, either of an earlier period or in another speech community, which is learned largely by formal education and is used for most written and formal spoken purposes but is not used by any sector of the community for ordinary conversation. (Ferguson, 1959: 336)