THE REALIZATION OF POLITENESS STRATEGIES IN VERBAL DISAGREEMENT BY JORDANIAN ARABIC SPEAKERS: A SOCIO-PRAGMATIC ANALYSIS

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by

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

LIST OF TABLES

Page

LIST OF FIGURES

Page

LIST OF THE INTERNATIONAL PHONETIC ALPHABET FOR MSA

SOUNDS

No.	Arabic Letter	IPA Symbol	No.	Arabic Letter	IPA Symbol
1	ء	/ʔ/	15	ض	/dˤ/
2	ب	/b/	16	ط	/tˤ/
3	ت	/t/	17	ظ	/ðˤ/
4	ث	/θ/	18	ع	/ʕ/
5	ج	/dʒ/	19	غ	/ɣ/
6	ح	/ħ/	20	ف	/f/
7	خ	/x/	21	ق	/q/
8	د	/d/	22	ك	/k/
9	ذ	/ð/	23	ل	/l/
10	ر	/r/	24	م	/m/
11	ز	/z/	25	ن	/n/
12	س	/s/	26	ه	/h/
13	ش	/ʃ/	28	و	/w/
14	ص	/sˤ/	29	ي	/j/

List of the International Phonetic Alphabet for MSA Vowels

No.	Arabic Letter/Vowel	IPA Symbol
1	◌َ	/a/
2	ا	/a:/
3	◌ِ	/i/
4	يُ	/i:/
5	◌ُ	/u/
6	و	/u:/

	Front Unrounded	Central	Back Rounded
High	i (i:)		
Mid	e (e:)		o (o:)
Low		a (a:)	

*Mid vowels are dialectal and do not appear in MSA.

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

CC	Counterclaim
CH	Challenge
CT	Contradiction
CT+CC	Contradiction followed by Counterclaim
DCT	Discourse Completion Test
FITCS	Faculty of Information Technology and Computer Sciences
FTA	Face Threatening Act
IC	Irrelevancy Claim
PC	Pragmatic Competence
SPSS	Statistical Package for Social Sciences

LIST OF APPENDICES

PENGGUNAAN STRATEGI KESANTUNAN DALAM MENYAMPAIKAN PERCANGGAHAN PENDAPAT SECARA LISAN DALAM KALANGAN PENUTUR (BAHASA) ARAB JORDAN: SEBUAH KAJIAN SOSIOPRAGMATIK

ABSTRAK

Percanggahan pendapat dalam komunikasi lisan sering berlaku dalam interaksi seharian. Perkara ini sukar dielak kerana penutur sering meluahkan serta menunjukkan tentangan terhadap pendapat dan cadangan orang lain. Tindakan ini berpotensi menimbulkan konflik antara orang yang berbual sesama mereka dan membawa kepada hasil yang tidak baik. Oleh itu, penggunaan strategi kesantunan yang sesuai diperlukan untuk mengurangkan kesan tindak tutur melarang (Face-Threatening Act) dan mengelak konflik yang mungkin berlaku sesama penutur. Kajian ini bertujuan untuk mengenal pasti strategi percanggahan pendapat yang digunakan dalam bahasa Arab Jordan, dan menentukan strategi kesantunan yang diguna pakai untuk menunjukkan percanggahan pendapat dalam bahasa Arab Jordan. Kajian ini juga meneliti pengaruh jantina, status sosial, dan jarak sosial sesama penutur terhadap pemilihan strategi kesantunan ketika mempamerkan percanggahan pendapat. Kajian ini menggunakan reka bentuk kaedah campuran iaitu pendekatan kualitatif dan kuantitatif. Sebahagian besar data kajian dikumpulkan melalui pemerhatian terhadap peristiwa percanggahan pendapat yang berlaku secara semula jadi dan instrumen ujian penyempurnaan wacana. Dua teknik analisis digunakan untuk menganalisis data kajian; teknik analisis tematik dan pakej statistik untuk perisian sains sosial. Hasil kajian menunjukkan 11 strategi yang cenderung digunakan oleh orang Jordan dalam interaksi harian mereka untuk menunjukkan

perbezaan pendapat, dan strategi ini berbeza mengikut tahap terus terang, kejelasan dan wajah yang menjengkelkan. Ternyata orang Jordan cenderung menggunakan strategi kesantunan yang berbeza untuk mengurangkan tahap kerosakan ke atas air muka seseorang disebabkan oleh percanggahan yang dipamerkan melalui penuturan mereka. Hasil kajian juga menunjukkan bahawa terdapat perbezaan yang signifikan dalam penggunaan strategi kesantunan orang Jordan ketika menunjukkan ketidaksepakatan yang disebabkan oleh pemboleh ubah sosial jantina (lelaki dan wanita), status sosial (tinggi, setara, dan rendah), dan jarak sosial sesama penutur (intim dan tidak rapat).

THE REALIZATION OF POLITENESS STRATEGIES IN VERBAL DISAGREEMENT BY JORDANIAN ARABIC SPEAKERS: A SOCIO-PRAGMATIC ANALYSIS

ABSTRACT

Disagreement is a very common occurring speech event in everyday interactions. It is not easy to be avoided as speakers frequently express and show opposition to other opinions and suggestions. This act of disagreement has always the potential to lead to conflict between the interlocutors and lead to unfavorable results. Therefore, using the appropriate politeness strategies is needed to mitigate the impact of this inherently face-threatening act and to avert conflicts that may happen between speakers. This study aims to identify the verbal disagreement strategies that are used in Jordanian Arabic, and to determine the politeness strategies that are used for showing verbal disagreement in Jordanian Arabic. The present study also attempts to examine how gender, social status, and social distance among interlocutors affect selection of politeness strategies when showing verbal disagreement. This study adopted a descriptive research design with both qualitative and quantitative approaches. Observation of naturally occurring verbal disagreement speech events and the instrument of discourse completion test are mainly used to collect the research data. Two analytical techniques are employed to analyze the research data; the thematic analysis technique and the statistical package for the social sciences software. The findings revealed 11 strategies that Jordanians tend to employ in their daily interactions to show verbal disagreement, and these strategies vary in their degree of directness, explicitness and face aggravating. It has been revealed that Jordanians tend to employ different politeness strategies to alleviate in

some way the degree of damage the speech of act of disagreement causes to the addressee's face. The findings also showed that there are significant differences in the Jordanians' use of politeness strategies when showing disagreement due to the social variables of gender (male and female), social status (high, equal, and low), and social distance among interlocutors (intimate and distant).

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1   Background of the Study

Language is of great importance to every aspect and interaction in our everyday life; it facilitates communications among members of societies. A close relationship exists between language and culture, language cannot be understood without a good knowledge of culture and the other way around, Sibru (2015, p. 405) confirms that "language is essentially a means of communication among the members of a society. In the expression of culture, language is a fundamental aspect". That means language is an inseparable part of any culture and it is the vital tool of communication; it enables people to share thoughts, feelings, emotions, beliefs, desires, and ideas with one another, and the objective of communication is fulfilled only if the hearer recognizes the intention of the speaker. If someone says 'I'm going to pay you back for that', this utterance can be recognized as a speech act of making a promise or issuing a threat (Bach & Harnish, 1991, p. 231). In communication, which is a collection of speech acts, speakers use words to perform certain actions, such as disagreeing, threatening, encouraging, discouraging, complaining, promising, warning, etc. Green (1996) defines communication as a combination of communicative acts or speech acts. Green (1996, p.1) points out that "communication is the successful interpretation by an addressee of a speaker's intent in performing a linguistic act", and these speech acts serve a specific function in communication and have a direct effect on the interlocutors' environment. Speech acts are considered to be one of the attractive fields in sociolinguistics and pragmatics. In this field, the linguistic and social structures work with each other in

order to accomplish the required purpose in communication (Hosseini, Panahandeh, & Mansoorzadeh, 2017). Sibru (2005, p. 405) confirms that "As a tool of communication among the members of a society, language is influenced by the very society where it functions".

Disagreement is one of the common occurring speech events in everyday communications. It is not easy to be avoided as speakers frequently express opposition to other opinions and suggestions. Speakers can show disagreement verbally and nonverbally. Body movement, gestures, and facial expressions are strategies of nonverbal communication that are used to show disagreement and they are beyond the scope of this study. However, verbal disagreement is achieved orally through the use of certain utterances, which is the main concern of this study. Verbal disagreement is defined as "a situated activity whose function is to express an opinion (or belief) the propositional content or illocutionary force of which is– or is intended to be– partly or fully inconsistent with that of a prior (non-verbal) utterance" (Koczogh, 2013, p. 220). In this sense, disagreement utterances are performed as a reaction to prior verbal or nonverbal actions, then they are not initial moves but response ones. These disagreement utterances are considered illocutionary acts by which speakers show their fully or partially disagreement to the whole or part of preceding claims. Disagreement is one of the face threatening acts by nature that inherently threatens the addressee's positive face and leads sometimes to unfavorable results because speakers are not much solicitous about the addressee's face-wants, so speakers sometimes tend to mitigate this threat by using different politeness strategies as face-saving steps that show respect to the addressee's face when producing disagreement (Brown & Levinson, 1987).

As a member of the Jordanian society, the researcher noticed that Jordanians have a tendency to express disagreement directly with the lack of mitigation of any degree, and they sometimes intend to attack the addressee himself rather the claim presented. So, Jordanians need to pay more attention to the ways that are used in showing their disagreement to avoid breakdown in the interaction process (Alkheder & Al-Abed Al-Haq, 2018). Although the concept of politeness is present in all cultures and languages, each language has its own ways in performing politeness. That means the notion of face is a cultural bound concept and it varies across cultures and languages. Being polite depends on different social variables that control speakers' communicative actions, and the value of these social variables varies from one context to another. The same is applied to speech acts, cultures directly affect the appropriateness of a speech act in communication, and each language has its own ways to construct speech acts (Blum-Kulka, 1987; Wierzbicka, 1991; Spencer-Oatey, 2000, 2002; Kusevska, 2014). In this regard, the Jordanian society, presumably is distinctive in constructing speech acts and has its own culture of expressing disagreement and expressing politeness, especially, this society is a conservative one and governed by Islamic regulations which control all life aspects.

Speech acts have been extensively studied in the Arabic context. Nevertheless, the speech act of disagreement has received little attention compared to other speech acts and it remains understudied (Harb, 2016; Alkheder & Al-Abed Al-Haq, 2018). Alkheder and Al-Abed Al-Haq (2018) might be the first study that investigated the speech act of disagreement in Jordanian Arabic, the researchers concluded that Jordanians employ different strategies in showing disagreement on the basis of their relationship with the addressees. Although their study made a contribution in the understanding of the speech act of disagreement in the Jordanian

society, the study would be more beneficial if it analyzed the disagreement strategies in depth within the framework of politeness, specifically, the speech act of disagreement may threaten the relationship between interlocutors and damage the self-image by questioning the recipient's truthfulness and competence which leads to undesirable results (Behnam & Niroomand, 2011). The correlation between politeness and disagreement helps provide a better clarification of the behavior of disagreement, which is the focus of the current study.

1.2   Statement of the Problem

The present study was stimulated by the fact that Arab scholars have extensively focused on specific speech acts to investigate such as compliment, invitation, promising, apology, request, etc. (see Section 2.5.5), and they avoided exploring others including the speech act of disagreement which remains uninvestigated. 'Apology' and 'request' are the most frequently investigated speech acts in Arabic in comparison to other speech acts. Harb (2016, p. 19) confirms that "there exists a plethora of studies on other speech acts, especially apologies and requests, but none on disagreement". He maintains that "further research is needed in the area of disagreement, especially in Arabic". This is also confirmed by Alkheder and Al-Abed Al-Haq (2018), they pointed out that Arab studies on the speech act of disagreement are rare and further research on this issue should be implemented. Alkheder and Al-Abed Al-Haq (2018, p. 425) assert that "there appears to be an absence of the studies which investigate the disagreement strategies used in Jordanian Arabic".

Obviously, little attention has been paid to the speech act of disagreement in the Arabic context. The majority of studies on disagreement focused on English as a

second or foreign language (Wu, 2006; Behnam & Niroomand, 2011; Fernandez, 2013; Khammari, 2021). More specifically, very few Arabic studies investigated the behavior of disagreement within the framework of politeness theory. Most of the disagreement studies conducted in the Arabic context focused on investigating the strategies used in showing disagreement without any connection to the notion of face (Fernandez, 2013; Alkheder & Al-Abed Al-Haq, 2018; Harb 2021). Hamdan (2018, p. 93) points out that "most of the studies that examined the speech act of disagreement focused on English, whereas other languages like Arabic have not received any scholarly attention". Thus, this study comes to bridge this gap and provide a socio-pragmatic account of using disagreement utterances in the Jordanians' everyday communications within the framework of politeness theory. The present study is different from other Arabic studies conducted on disagreement; it correlates the behavior of verbal disagreement with the notion of face and it completes other studies that were only limited to identify the disagreement strategies in the Jordanian community. In addition, this study depends on natural data collected from spontaneously occurring disagreement speech events happen at different locations on the campus of Yarmouk University such as cafeterias, student gym, libraries, campus healthcare, corridors and streets inside the University. Reliance on these natural data is the base on which the current study is built, this type of data helps lead to more reliable findings as it reflects the actual use of language and conveys what speakers have in their minds, Cyluk (2013, p. 101) confirms that" the study of a particular speech act cannot be carried out without some reliance on naturally occurring data".

At the same point, most of the non-Arab scholars confirmed that the speech act of disagreement has received the least scholarly attention compared to other

speech acts in non-Arabic contexts (Kreutel, 2007; Lawson, 2009). Behnam and Niroomand (2011) and Heidari, Eslami-Rasekh, and Simin, (2015) in the Iranian context, Wu (2006) in the Chinese context, Koutsantoni (2005) in the Greek context, and Koczogh (2012) in the Hungarian context agreed upon that studies on the speech act of disagreement are less than the studies carried out to investigate other speech acts, and more research is needed to be conducted on this area.

The speech act of disagreement has been particularly chosen to be investigated in the current study because disagreement is a significant communicative act that frequently occurs in everyday communications (Koczogh, 2013). It takes place at different locations such as family gatherings, restaurants, classrooms, markets, wedding halls and streets. The inappropriate use of the verbal strategies that are employed by Jordanians when they express disagreement and the potential unfavorable results that may occur between speakers attract the researcher's attention to investigate this speech act, especially, disagreement has a complex nature as it is not only a linguistic action but also a social one that has an influence on interpersonal rapport. Behnam and Niroomand (2011, p.204) state that "expressing disagreement, which is unavoidable in everyday interaction, might threaten the relationship between interlocutors".

Producing disagreement is a communicative act that mainly intends to show opposition toward other speakers' opinions (Koczogh, 2012), and this act has always the potential to lead to conflict between the interlocutors. In this regard, scholars have considered disagreement as a 'dispreferred speech act' (Sacks, 1987). Therefore, using the appropriate politeness strategies is needed to mitigate the impact of this intrinsically face-threatening act and to avert conflicts that may happen between speakers (Brown & Levinson, 1987). Because of its conflictive nature,

disagreement is considered to be one of those inherently face-threatening speech acts that manifests the interplay between politeness and social variables including gender, social status, and social distance (Liu, 2004; Bakry, 2015), and the value of these social variables varies from one culture to another and they directly influence people's politeness strategies in showing disagreement (Liu, 2004; Benhjam & Niroomand, 2011; Heidari et al., 2015). That means every society has its own culture of disagreeing, expressing disagreement and expressing politeness. The Jordanian community, presumably will be distinctive in these aspects too, especially with respect to the social variables said by many scholars to make these expressions of disagreement and politeness in disagreement different. These social variables include gender, social status, and social distance.

The social variable of gender is used to refer whether the interlocutor is male or female. Gender and language are closely related and gender has an influential effect on ways of using languages. At this point, Coates (2015) confirms that, in English, the language used by males is different from the language used by females, and each group has different ways of speaking. It has been concluded that women frequently tend to use more polite language than men. That is, women's language is usually full of hedges, tag questions, euphemism, and the frequent use of 'please' and 'thank you' (Lakoff, 1975). Koczogh (2012) asserts the need to further research on the relationship between gender and disagreement. Koczogh (2012, p. 234) points out that "so far there has been limited research on the relationship between gender and disagreement".

The variable of social status is defined as a relationship between at least two people, in which a person exercising power over another to the extent that he/she may control the other's behavior (Brown & Gilman, 2003). This variable refers to the

social status of the interlocutors in which professors, administrators, and students are on a hierarchy from powerful to powerless (Liu, 2004). Social status and politeness are two main features of face-to-face communications, and they are widely known in different everyday situations and relationships, for example, employers and employees (Locher, 2004). The social status of the interlocutors has a direct effect on the politeness strategies applied to show disagreement; that is, speakers employ on-record politeness strategies or off-record politeness strategies based on the social status of the addressees. Guodong and Jing (2005) confirm that the concept of being polite varies across culture, gender, and power relations. Having a similar point of view, Heidari et al. (2015, p. 34) point out that there is need to implement further research that is related to the influence of the two influential variables of social status and gender on choosing strategies to mitigate the threat of disagreement.

In addition to gender and social status, the variable of social distance has been clearly reported to influence the politeness strategies used to perform different speech acts including disagreement (Brown & Levinson, 1987). 'Social distance' refers to the degree of solidarity between speakers and how well the speakers know each other, friends or strangers. The association between the politeness strategies in showing disagreement and the variable of social distance among interlocutors is generally supported; this variable affects the behavior of disagreement as well as the ways by which speakers express disagreement (Benhjam & Niroomand, 2011; Koczogh, 2012).

It is evident that a close correlation exists between the politeness strategies that are employed in showing disagreement and the social variables of gender, social status, and social distance. This correlation makes the selection of politeness strategies variable under the effects of these social variables. Thus, the researcher has

chosen the aforementioned variables in order to examine how they affect selection of politeness strategies when showing disagreement in the Jordanian Arabic context, which provides new parameters in this field. Then, this study can be considered as a new contribution in the field of pragmatics, in general, and in the field of speech acts in particular as well as sociolinguistics.

In a nutshell, most of the speech acts (compliment, invitation, promising, apology, request, etc.) have been covered in Arabic and non-Arabic contexts. Meanwhile, disagreement and its relation to politeness have been fairly disregarded in comparison with other speech acts, and little attention has been paid to this behavior. Arab scholars stress that the speech act of disagreement has not been extensively investigated in Arabic, and further studies need to be carried out on this speech act to fill the paucity of disagreement studies in the related literature (Alkheder & Al-Abed Al-Haq, 2018; Hamdan, 2018; Harb, 2021). Therefore, this study attempts to identify the verbal disagreement strategies that are used in Jordanian Arabic, and determine the politeness strategies used for showing verbal disagreement. Also, this study attempts to examine how gender, social status, and social distance among interlocutors affect selection of politeness strategies when showing verbal disagreement.

1.3   Objectives of the Study

The purpose of this study is mainly threefold. First, it aims at identifying the verbal disagreement strategies that are used in Jordanian Arabic. Second, it determines the politeness strategies that are used for showing verbal disagreement in Jordanian Arabic. Third, it attempts to examine how gender, social status, and social distance among interlocutors affect selection of politeness strategies when showing

verbal disagreement. Thus, the current study aims to achieve the following objectives:

1. To identify the verbal disagreement strategies that are used in Jordanian Arabic.

2. To determine the politeness strategies that are used for showing verbal disagreement in Jordanian Arabic.

3. To examine how gender, social status, and social distance among interlocutors affect selection of politeness strategies when showing verbal disagreement.

1.4   Research Questions

The present study sets out to answer the following questions:

1. What are the verbal disagreement strategies used in Jordanian Arabic?

2. What are the politeness strategies used for showing verbal disagreement in Jordanian Arabic?

3. How do gender, social status, and social distance among interlocutors affect selection of politeness strategies when showing verbal disagreement?

1.5   Significance of the Study

The significance of the present study stems from the need to further investigate the speech act of disagreement and its relation to politeness in the Jordanian society as this topic has been hardly researched and it obtained the least attention in comparison with that of many other speech acts. Based on the available

10

related literature, no research has been carried out on the issue of politeness strategies that are used to express disagreement in the Jordanian Arabic everyday communications. Accordingly, this study will fill the gap in the fields of speech acts and politeness. In addition, this study contributes to the field of sociolinguistics as it examines how gender, social status, and social distance among interlocutors affect selection of politeness strategies when showing verbal disagreement.

Furthermore, because of the increasing concern in Arabic as a world language and culture (Harb, 2016), the findings of this study will hopefully help non-native Arabic speakers better understand this community and, accordingly, help reduce communication breakdowns as well as engage in more successful interactions. Particularly, speech acts give a good deal of information about norms of societies and language users. In this sense, Byon (2006, p. 137) confirms that "speech acts reflect the fundamental values and social norms of target language and demonstrate the rules of language use in a speech community". Plus, learners of second languages need to speak not only accurately, but also appropriately in order to achieve the communicative goals (Hymes, 1972 cited in Behnam & Niroomand, 2011), so the study's findings are expected to make non-native Arabic speakers more aware of their interlanguage pragmatic competence, which would then enable them to behave properly and communicate appropriately when expressing disagreement.

Moreover, the findings of this study might attract the attention of textbooks' designers to the importance of the notion of politeness, specially, this study provides a clear insight about the politeness strategies that are used in expressing disagreement in the Jordanian community. Thus, it is highly advised that textbooks' designers of the Arabic language ensure that the books include certain chapters that are mainly set for improving students' communication skills in terms of showing

disagreement while keeping politeness as well as respecting others' opinions whether in agreement or disagreement. Then, students can apply these communication skills in everyday activities. That means the findings can provide some pedagogical significance for those who work in Jordan Ministry of Education. In addition, textbooks' designers can include naturally occurring speech events that reflect the actual use of language rather than depending on their intuitions.

Finally, this study might inspire others to do further research on the same topic in more specific settings, for example, the speech act of disagreement in classrooms, and to do further research to compare the realizations of the behavior of disagreement between the Jordanian Arabic culture and other cultures.

1.6   Scope and Limitations of the Study

1.6.1   Scope of the Study

The present study focuses on identifying the verbal disagreement strategies which are used in Jordanian Arabic, but nonverbal strategies such as facial expressions, body movement and gestures are beyond the scope of this study. This study also focuses on exploring the politeness strategies employed by Jordanians to produce the speech act of disagreement. In addition, it examines how gender, social status, and social distance among interlocutors affect selection of politeness strategies when showing disagreement. To this end, spontaneous disagreement speech events in natural settings were collected as students were communicating on Yarmouk University campus, in places such as cafeterias, student gym, libraries, campus healthcare and streets inside the University. Yarmouk University is one of the biggest and oldest public universities in Jordan which helps gather various

12

examples of spontaneous disagreement speech events covering different life situations that occur in everyday interactions.

1.6.2   Limitations of the Study

It is worthwhile to take the following limitations into consideration:

1. Observation of naturally occurring disagreement speech events is a laborious and intensive method and a lot of time is required to cover all situations where disagreement utterances are used. Also, despite the rapidity of discourse completion test (DCT) in gathering data, it is always criticized for its naturalness and validity. Thus, the findings of the current study are limited by its procedures and instruments.

2. This study employs Muntigl and Turnbull (1998) disagreement model and Brown and Levinson (1987) politeness model to analyze the research data and meet the objectives. Other models may yield different results.

3. The present study concentrates only on analyzing the verbal disagreement strategies which are used in Jordanian Arabic, but nonverbal strategies such as facial expressions, body movement and gestures are beyond the scope of this study.

4. The findings can be generalized only to Jordanian Arabic. However, the findings can be used as a stepping stone for further studies to be conducted in different Arabic contexts.

1.7   Research Site

The research site of the present study is Yarmouk University in Irbid city, which is located in the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan. Jordan is an Asian Arab country that was under the British rule until 1946. It was called Transjordan until King Abdullah I renamed the country as the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan in 1950 (Jankowski, 2006).

Jordan is bordered by Saudi Arabia in the South, Iraq in the East, Syria in the North, and Palestine in the West. According to Jordanian Department of Statistics in 2017, Jordan has 10.053 million inhabitants live in an area of about 89.342 thousand square kilometers.

Worth mentioning is that the Arabic language has three varieties: Classical Arabic, Modern Standard Arabic and Colloquial Arabic (Ennaji, 2005). Classical Arabic is called 'Alfusha' and it is considered "the eloquent literary language" (p.50). Because Classical Arabic is the language of the Holy Quran, it is the most prestigious Arabic variety, and it is the language of Arabic classical literature, poetry, and grammar books that "reflect ancient periods of glory in the history of Arabs and Muslims" (Ennaji, 2005, p. 50).

Modern Standard Arabic is an uncomplicated and simplified form of classical Arabic. It is the 'lingua franca' of the Arabic speaking countries. Modern Standard Arabic is the official language in Jordan and it is mainly used in mass media, education, and public institutions (Ennaji, 2005)

The variety used in the everyday communications is called the Colloquial Arabic and this study intends to investigate the behavior of disagreement in this

variety. That is because Jordanians, educated and uneducated, usually tend to use the Colloquial Arabic in their daily interactions.

1.7.1 Yarmouk University

Yarmouk University, which lies in Irbid city, has been chosen as a research site for the present study because it is one of the biggest and oldest public universities in Jordan which helps gather various examples of spontaneous disagreement speech events covering different life situations that occur in everyday activities. This setting can represent the Jordanian society because university settings generally combine both crucial features of location and interest-based that make these settings have a sense of community (Mahan, Garrard, Lewis, & Newbrough, 2002). In addition, because the Jordanian society is linguistically homogeneous, any small subset is enough to represent the whole population (Endacott, 2005). Moreover, most students who are enrolled in Yarmouk University are of Jordanian origin and they are native speakers of Jordanian Arabic, particularly, they speak the variety of colloquial Jordanian Arabic in their everyday communications. This variety has not been affected by the refugees who came to Jordan. Plus, Yarmouk University is located in Irbid city where the researcher grew up, studied and live that makes the procedures of collecting data easier.

Officially, Yarmouk University is organized by Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research. It offers Bachelor, Masters, and PhD programs in several areas of studies. The number of students was 32,200 students in all academic programs in the Academic Year 2018/2019 according to the Admission and Registration Department in the University. Yarmouk University has 15 faculties including Medicine, Engineering, Nursing, Humanities, Economy, Business

Administration, Islamic Studies, Information technology and Computer Science, and

Science. The map below shows the location of Yarmouk University in Irbid city

(circled) in the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan.

Figure 1.1. Location of Yarmouk University in Irbid city (circled) in the
Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan.

1.8 Operational Definition of Terms

1.8.1 Sociopragmatics: Sociopragmatics investigates how the social and situational variables influence the pragmatically performed utterances. It explores the extent to which the social variables, such as social status, social distance, and gender influence the use of speech acts. For Leech (1983, pp.10-11) sociopragmatics is "the sociological interface of pragmatics".

1.8.2 Speech Acts: Speech acts are defined as doing actions by producing specific utterances, all definitions of speech acts contain the concept of utterances can function as actions. Speech acts are divided into three acts: locutionary act (the act of saying something), illocutionary act (the act performed in saying something), and perlocutionary act (the act performed by means of saying something) (Austin, 1962).

1.8.3 Disagreement: Disagreement can be defined as "a speech act of explicitly and implicitly expressing the opposition to that of the initiator" (Wu, 2006, p. 56). Accordingly, disagreement is considered as a response and it depends on previous actions employed by other interlocutors who are involved in the conversation (Liu, 2004).

1.8.4 Verbal Disagreement: "Verbal disagreement is a situated activity whose function is to express an opinion (or belief) the propositional content or illocutionary force of which is– or is intended to be– partly or fully inconsistent with that of a prior (non-verbal) utterance" (Koczogh, 2013, p. 220). Accordingly, the disagreeing utterance is considered an illocutionary act by which speakers show their fully or partially disagreement to others and this utterance contradicts the whole or part of a preceding claim.

1.8.5　Politeness: Holmes (1995, p.5) defines politeness as "a behavior which actively expresses positive concern for others as well as non-imposing distancing behavior". For Grundy (2000, p.146) "politeness phenomena are one manifestation of the wider concept of etiquette, or appropriate behavior".

1.8.6　Politeness Strategies: Politeness strategies are face-saving steps intend to maintain the interlocutor's face and mitigate the threat on his/her face. The politeness strategy a speaker decides to employ depends on the degree of seriousness of the face threatening act. This degree is determined by the following variables: distance, power, and rank of imposition (Brown & Levinson, 1987).

1.8.7　Face: Face is "the public self-image that every member wants to claim for himself" (Brown & Levinson, 1987, p. 61). They (p. 62) add that there are two types of 'face':

i.　Negative face: The want of every competent adult member that his actions be unimpeded by others.

ii.　Positive face: The want of every member that his wants be desirable to at least some others.

1.8.7　Face-Threatening Acts: Certain acts, by their nature, make it hard to maintain the face of all interlocutors involved in the speech event. These acts threaten the positive face or the negative face (Nelson, Carson, Al-Batal, & El-Bakary, 2002, p.165). It is noteworthy that the speech act of disagreement threatens the positive face of the hearer.

1.9 Summary of the Chapter

The main goal of the current study is to provide a sociopragmatic analysis of the speech act of disagreement in Jordanian Arabic. It aims at identifying the verbal disagreement strategies that are used in Jordanian Arabic, exploring the politeness strategies used by Jordanians when they disagree, and examining how gender, social status, and social distance among interlocutors affect selection of politeness strategies when showing verbal disagreement. This chapter starts by discussing the importance of language in everyday life. Then, it discusses the statement of the problem and the need of further research to be conducted in the area of disagreement in the Jordanian context. This is followed by objectives of the study, research questions, significance of the study, scope and limitations of the study. This chapter also provides some information related to Jordan, Irbid, and Yarmouk University where the present study is carried out. In addition, operational definitions of related terms are presented in this chapter. Finally, a summary of the chapter is presented to conclude the main points of the chapter. The following chapter provides a review of related literature.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1   Introduction

This chapter is concerned with clarifying the main concepts related to the objectives of the current study. It begins with defining sociolinguistics, pragmatics, and the speech act theory in general. Then, it presents Austin's theory of speech act, Searle's theory of speech act, disagreement as a speech act, and some disagreement taxonomies focusing on Muntigl and Turnbull (1998) disagreement taxonomy. This chapter also discusses the politeness theory; the politeness perspectives of Lakoff, Leech, and Brown and Levinson are presented. Plus, it explains the correlation between disagreement and politeness. Furthermore, the current chapter reviews a number of studies dealing with speech acts and politeness. The review is divided into two sections. The first section reviews studies conducted by non-Arab researchers, while the second one makes a review of studies conducted by Arab researchers. Then, a conceptual framework on which the study is based is introduced. Finally, a summary of the chapter is provided to conclude the main points of the chapter.

The fields of sociolinguistics and pragmatics meet together for the purpose of a better understanding of the functions of speech acts in communication. They share many areas of common interest including speech acts and their use. Holmes (1992) stresses the interrelation between sociolinguistics and pragmatics. She (p. 374) states that

> Indeed pragmatics and sociolinguistics share many areas of common interest, and sociolinguistics have contributed much to certain areas of pragmatics, especially the study of social deixis and speech acts and their use. However, pragmatics in turn has much to contribute to sociolinguistics.

Having a similar point of view, Banikalef, Maros, Aladdin, and Al-natour (2015, p. 84) point out that "speech acts or simply communicative acts have proved to be one of the attractive areas in pragmatics and sociolinguistics". This study contributes to the field of sociopragmatics because it provides analysis of the behavior of disagreement in the Jordanian society, and it examines the extent to which specific social variables, namely, gender, social status, and social distance influence the politeness strategies used in showing disagreement. The following two sections shed light on sociolinguistics and pragmatics and their relations to speech acts.

2.1.1   Sociolinguistics

Sociolinguistics is a branch of linguistics that is concerned with the relationship between language and society. This term 'sociolinguistics' combines sociology with linguistics. The former is mainly concerned with how societies are developed and organized, and the social interactions between individuals. The latter, linguistics, is defined as the study of the human language properties including phonetics, morphology, phonology, syntax, semantics and pragmatics. Hudson (1996, p. 4) defines sociolinguistics as "the study of language with relation to society", whereas the sociology of language is defined as "the study of society in relation to language".

Sociolinguistics is interested in "identifying the social functions of language and the ways it is used to convey social meaning" (Holmes, 1992, p. 1). This explains the need to study the society first in order to understand the functions of language that people use to interact with each other, and how social contexts determine the way people speak. Gumperz (1971, p.273) confirms that

sociolinguistics is "an attempt to find correlations between social structure and linguistic structure and to observe any changes that occur". It is clear that, in sociolinguistics, certain social variables strongly affect the speakers' linguistic choices. These variables include age, gender, social status, social distance, region, and religion. Many scholars have revealed that certain social variables, namely, gender, social status, and social distance among interlocutors have an influence on the politeness strategies employed when producing the speech act of disagreement (Bavarsad, Eslami-Rasekh, & Simin, 2015; Heidari et al., 2015; Koczogh, 2012). The relationship between the linguistic forms chosen and being polite is closely related. Holmes (1992, p. 284) points out that "being linguistically polite is often a matter of selecting linguistic forms which express the appropriate degree of social distance or which recognize relevant status differences", she adds that understanding the social values of a society is a prerequisite to speak politely. Holmes (1992, p.370) concludes "using language appropriately involves knowing the sociolinguistic rules for speaking in a community. It means understanding the influence of social factors on speech behavior".

Based on the purpose of communication, people tend to choose different pronunciation, vocabulary, grammar, and they may use a different style of speech. People sometimes tend to use different dialects or even different languages according to the situation in which they are interacting (Holmes, 1992). She also shows how linguistic choices can be changed to suit the surrounding circumstances, and these choices are related to the following sociolinguistic basic components: participants, setting, topic, and function. Consider the following four social scales that directly influence the way people speak (Holmes, 1992, pp. 12-14).

1.   The solidarity scale – social distance scale: this scale is concerned with the relationship between participants. For instance, are the speakers, friends or strangers?

Intimate ←————————→ Distant
High solidarity   Low solidarity

2.   The status scale: this is concerned with the participant relationships. Status here refers to the social power between speakers and addressees, and it can be higher, equal, or lower. That is, the status scale between speakers has an impact on the degree of solidarity; speakers of the same social status have more solidarity than those of different social status.

Superior ←————————→ Subordinate
High solidarity   Low solidarity

3.   The formality scale: this scale is concerned with the social setting of the interaction (formal or informal). The place where the interaction takes place, is it at home, religious place, business meeting, or sport center?

Formal ←————————→ Informal
High formality   Low formality

4.   The referential and affective function scales: these scales are related to the purpose and topic of the communication. The referential scale is connected to the amount of information that speakers convey to

addressees, and the affective one relates to the feelings and emotions that are conveyed to addressees.

Referential

High information content ⟷ Low information content

Affective

Low affective content ⟷ High affective content
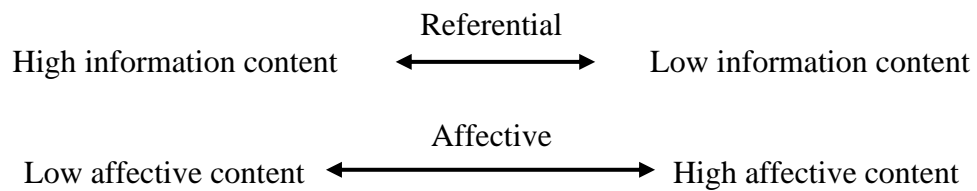
In short, the field of sociolinguistics is concerned with the relationship between language and society, and it explains the social factors that control ways of speaking. Sociolinguistics discusses the factors behind choosing different ways of speaking in different social contexts. Based on these factors, communication can succeed or break down and it sometimes leads to unfavorable results. These factors are generally related to the social distance scale, status scale, formality scale, and the two functional scales (Holmes, 1992).

2.1.2   Pragmatics

> What is crucial is not so much a better understanding of how language is structured, but a better understanding of how language is used; not so much what language is, as what language is for.
>
> (Hymes, 1972, p. xii)

In order to communicate effectively and avoid misunderstanding, speakers should not only focus on the linguistic forms, but also on the appropriateness of the pragmatic use of speech acts. That is why recognizing the specific speech act that a speaker performs within an utterance is a fundamental feature of pragmatic competence (Holtgraves, 2007). Abed (2011, p. 166) emphasizes that "the learners' ability to use appropriate speech acts in a given speech act event and to use appropriate linguistic forms to realize this speech act is a main component of