People's Democratic Republic of Algeria

Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research

University of Mohammed Seddik Ben Yahia, Jijel

Faculty of Letters and Languages

Department of English Language and Literature

Investigating Students' Use of Politeness Strategies When Expressing Disagreement

The Case of Second Year Licence Students and First Year Master Students at the University of Mohammed Seddik Ben Yahia , Jijel

Dissertation submitted in partial fulfillments of the requirement for the degree of master in English Language Sciences

Candidates:

-Ismahan GHEDDAR

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-Chairperson: Nouri Malika, University of Mohammed Seddik Ben Yahia , Jijel

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Dedication

In the Name of God, Most Merciful, Most Compassionate

Ismahan

This work is dedicated to:

my beloved parents

for their love and support;

my dear brother Mohammed;

my uncle Ahmad;

all my friends;

Wassila, Fatya, Zineb, Iman,

Madjda, Fatima, Ibtissam, Bahia,

Leila, Nasira, Souad, Mina, Ratiba,

and, Samah.

Wassila

This work is dedicated to:

my dear parents who supported

me throughout the course of my life;

my beloved brothers: Zohir and

Imad;

my adorable sisters: Lamia and

Wafia;

the sweet kids: Assile, Amani,

and Issu;

my fiancée Hocine;

and, all my friends.

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Gratitude is also offered to all the participants who kindly provided us with the data required to bring the present research to an end.

Abstract

The present study aimed at investigating politeness strategies used by the Algerian university learners of English in expressing one particular type of speech act namely, disagreement. The politeness strategies used by two levels which are second year license students and first year master students were identified , and a comparison was made between the two levels. In addition, it sought to investigate whether the pragmatic instruction received by master one students enabled them to reach pragmatic appropriateness or not. Therefore, it was hypothesized that the more learners are exposed to pragmatic knowledge, the more their pragmatic competence is developed, and they will be able to use various politeness strategies when expressing disagreement. Data were collected from 100 English students from two levels (second year license and first year master). When identifying disagreement expressions from responses, the taxonomy of Muntigl and Turnbull (1998) was used, and when identifying politeness strategies, Brown and Levinson's (1987) model of politeness strategies was followed. The results showed that students from both levels used politeness strategies when expressing disagreement. Besides, the interlocutors' social distance and power differences also found to influence the use of politeness strategies when disagreeing. The findings of this study revealed also that there was a development in the use of politeness strategies but the difference between the two levels was not significant.

List of abbreviations and symbols

%: Percentage

Big “C”: Big Culture

CP: Cooperative Principle

CH: Challenges

CT: Contradictions

EFL: English as a Foreign Language

FTAs: Face Threatening Acts

H: Hearer

IC: Irrelevancy Claims

L2: Second Language

LMD: License Master Doctorate

PP: Politeness Principle

Small “c”: Small culture

S: Speaker

WDCT: Written Discourse Completion Task

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General Introduction

1. Background of the Study

While communicating, learners perform different speech acts through using language in various ways. That is, different functions of speech may be used to express the same meaning, and social factors such as power, age, and degree of formality can be regarded as the factors which influence these differences. One of the unavoidable speech acts in everyday interaction is disagreement. The latter occurs when there is a contradiction in the opinions between the interlocutors. Add to this, the speech act of disagreement may threaten the relationship between the interlocutors as it usually questions the recipient's competence or even truthfulness and thus damages his or her self image. Actually, the threat caused by disagreement can be softened and minimized through the employment of different politeness strategies. Accordingly, politeness strategies serve as a suitable means for developing richer and healthier relationship between the interlocutors.

Beebe and Takahashi (1989) in "*Do you have a bag*" examined Americans and Japanese performance of two face threatening acts namely, disagreement and giving embarrassing information. The findings revealed that Americans were not always more direct and explicit than Japanese. Additionally, cross cultural studies by Beebe and Takahachi (1989) on Japanese and Americans on different speech acts revealed that Japanese are not so direct, however, Americans used positive markers and they are more polite and indirect especially when interacting with people who have high authoritative role.

Rees Miller (2000) looked at the act of disagreement in terms of the factors of power, severity and, context in university courses and academic talks in USA. The findings of this study revealed that professors use more positive politeness strategies when disagreeing

with students than do peers disagreeing with each other or students disagreeing with professors.

Shrif and Noor (2011) in their article "*disagreement politeness among adolescents*" examined some adolescents who had a poor L2 spoken politeness due to their low proficiency level. Thus, for identifying the extent of this factor, they carried out a contrastive study of disagreement for eliciting data. In this study, social distance and power difference were analyzed. The findings suggested that both variables influence adolescent's spoken disagreement politeness. (as cited in Koczogh, 2013, p. 213)

2. Statement of the Problem

One of the significant concerns of pragmatics is that for achieving communicative goals. Foreign language learners not only need to acquire grammatical competence, but also need to internalize socoipragmatic rules to help them use appropriate linguistic forms. Foreign language learners who have a lack of sociopragmatic rules may encounter communicating problems which lead to break downs in conversation; phrased differently, it results in pragmatic failure. Thus, for EFL learners, internalizing those rules is important if they want to employ correct linguistic forms and know when and how to use these forms. Pragmatic instruction is ignored in foreign language classrooms because classroom attention focuses mostly on linguistic features of the target language rather than, the social and cultural norms. Therefore, there is a need for focusing on the pragmatic competence of EFL learners.

3. Aims of the Study

The present study aims at unveiling the differences and similarities in using politeness strategies while expressing disagreement across different levels, exploring whether the period of pragmatic instruction received by first year master EFL students at the university

of Mohammed Seddik Ben Yahia, Jijel has enabled them to reach pragmatic success or not and, helping the teachers to figure out situations where EFL learners may fail pragmatically.

4. Research Questions

This research work addresses the following questions:

1) What are the different disagreement types used by EFL students of the two levels of proficiency (second year and master one) at the university of Mohammed Seddik Ben Yahia, Jijel?
2) Are there any differences between the two levels in expressing disagreement?
3) Do EFL students use politeness strategies?
4) What are the different politeness strategies used by EFL students in the two levels at the university of Mohammed Seddik Ben Yahia, Jijel?
5) What factors contribute to the use of politeness strategies when expressing disagreement?

5. Research hypotheses

On the basis of the afore-stated questions, the present investigation seeks to examine the following hypotheses:

The more EFL learners are exposed to pragmatic knowledge the more their pragmatic competence is developed, and they will be able to use various politeness strategies when expressing disagreement.

6. Methodology of Research

As far as the present study is concerned, the data collected for this study are analyzed through a mix of the two types of analytical approaches namely, quantitative and qualitative. This involves the collection of data from a considerable number of students.

Concerning the research instrument, a discourse completion task (DCT) is used. It is a written role-play questionnaire consists of ten situations. Each situation describes the context of the supposed conversation and the social variables in relation to the interlocutors. Respondents are required to express their disagreement.

7. Structure of the Dissertation

The present research is chiefly divided into three chapters. The first two chapters are devoted to the literature review. Chapter one discusses pragmatics and communicative competence. The second chapter is mainly concerned with politeness theory and the speech act of disagreement. Chapter three, however, represents the practical part of the present research. It is divided into two sections; the first section is concerned with the methodology of research. The second section is about analyzing and discussing the use of the different disagreement types and the various politeness strategies.

Chapter One: Pragmatics: An Overview

Introduction

This chapter shades light on pragmatics as a field of applied linguistics. It starts with a historical background of pragmatics, and its definitions. Then it highlights the development of the term competence and its different types. It examines the notion of pragmatic competence, and gives an overview about some related issues namely, deixis, reference, context and co-text, presupposition, cooperation and implicature,and culture. Then,it introduces the speech act theory. This chapter ends with exploring the concept of disagreement and other related speech acts.

1.1. Pragmatics: A Historical Background

Ishihara and Cohen (2010) pointed out that although pragmatics is a relatively new branch of linguistics, yet, it dates back to ancient Greece and Rome. It was derived from the Greek word 'pragma' which indicates action or activity. In addition to that, modern use of pragmatics is due to the influence of Charles Morris (1938). He introduced the terms syntax, semantics, and pragmatics which forms the three components of semiotics. The latter refers to the description of certain system of signs. Morris (1938) asserted that syntax is the abstract study of signs disregarding their use; and semantics is more concrete and it includes both syntax and the study of denotations but not the use. Finally, pragmatics includes both syntax and semantics.

In the same vein, Mey (1993) stated that pragmatics has received great deal of attention during the past twenty years. It was presented in seven international conferences, namely (Viareggio 1985, Antwerp 1987, Barcelon 1990, Kobe 1993, Mexico 1996, Reims 1998, and Budapast 2008). Add to this, the international pragmatic association (IPrA), and international journals such as the journal of pragmatics since 1991. Plus, other official and

unofficial publications, theses, dissertations, books on pragmatic topics, and a concise encyclopedia of pragmatics 1998. Hence, pragmatics was developed through discussing it in several events and writings. However, Mey (1993) argued that pragmatic approach as a field of linguistics dates back to the late sixties and early seventies as a response to the decline of Chomsky's theory, in particular, the syntax approach. At that time, that paradigm came under attack for its limitations. Therefore, a new paradigm gradually took shape trying to overstep the shortcomings of the previous one. One of those limitations is the difficulty of interpreting some phenomena such as presupposition. Another common charge made against the old paradigm is the neglection of users and context which play an important role in determining the meaning of what is being said at a given time or place. As a result, there was a shift from the paradigm of syntax and from semantics to the paradigm of language user.

Also relevant to the history of pragmatics, Bublitz and Norrick (2011) stated that is the work of some scholars namely, Austin (1962), Searle (1969), and Grice (1978) who were interested in studying meaning as communicated by actual speakers rather than word meaning. In other words, what the speakers want their utterances to mean rather than what the utterances themselves mean. They added that there are some scientific movements which contribute to the development of pragmatics namely, anthropology, contextualism, Functionlism, ethnography, and European sociology. Since 1970, pragmatics started to expand in Europe and elsewhere. All in all, the development of the field of pragmatics has been an authentic success story.

1.2. Defining Pragmatics

It is worth mentioning that the core of pragmatics, mainly the study of language in relation to context, participants of conversation, speakers' intentions, and shared knowledge, is shared among many scholarly definitions of this field.

According to Yule (1996) "pragmatics is concerned with the study of meaning as communicated by a speaker and interpreted by a listener (or reader)" (p.3) .That is, what the speaker means or intends by his utterance. In addition to that, it is the study of how context affects what is said, and how speech is structured in accordance with who is listening. Moreover, for Yule (1996), "pragmatics is the study of how more gets communicated than is said" (p.3). That is, pragmatics is interested in what inferences can be meant from the speaker's utterances. Furthermore, Yule pointed out that "pragmatics is the study of the expression of relative distance" (p.3). In other words, how the speaker and hearer experienced closeness or distance and how it affects what is said and not said.

Levinson (1993) also gave a series of definitions to the term pragmatics, claiming that there is diversity in these definitions. In one definition, Levinson argued that:

> Pragmatics is concerned solely with performance principles of language use.
>
> Thus, Katz & Fodor (1963) suggested that a theory of pragmatics (or a theory
>
> of **setting selection** as they then call it) would essentially be concerned with the
>
> Disambiguation of sentences by the context in which they were uttered (pp.5-6).

Putting it another way, pragmatics is concerned with the interpretation of linguistic forms in a context.

In the same vein, Mey (2001) claimed that pragmatics puts sharp focus on social context where users can perform different speech acts. It contrasts with the grammatical aspect of context; and it is the study of communication in relation to the users of language. For Mey, the discipline of pragmatics is much about how humans use their language during the communication process, taking into account the conditions of the society.

Similarly, Cutting (2008) distinguished between three different types of spoken context namely, background knowledge (what the interlocutors know about each other), the interpreted or the world knowledge, and co-textual knowledge, i.e. what the interlocutors know about what they have been saying. In this regard, Christie (2000) stated that "pragmatics provides a theoretical framework that can account for the relationship between the cultural setting, the language user, the linguistic choices that the user makes, and the factors that underlie those choices" (as cited in O'keefee, Clancy, & Adolphs, 2011, p.1).

For others, Ishihara and Cohen (2010) pointed out that pragmatics as a notion has multiple interpretations depending on the context. For instance, if someone is taking a pragmatic approach to something means that that person is more concerned with real situations rather than ideas or theories. However, the notion of pragmatics has another meaning with regard to applied linguistics. According to Ishihara and Cohen (2010) pragmatic ability involves the four major elements of communication. That is, listening and reading which are receptive, and speaking and writing which are productive. In order to reach pragmatic appropriateness in the given target language, proficiency in the target language, background knowledge, multicultural experience, and the related authoritative role and social distance are highly demanded.

For some others, Bublitz and Norrick (2011) argued that pragmatics is the field which deals with meaning in context. It oversteps the gap between the system part of

language and the use part and it relates, in fact, both of them at the same time. Opposed to other fields such as syntax, semantics, and sociology, pragmatics takes into account the linguistic action and inter action. Bublitz & Norrick (2010) added that pragmatics is concerned with the whole speech events that may occur in real situations; focusing on both of the current states or actions of the participants and its connection with prior actions. They stated that pragmatics rejects the localization of language in a limited part of speaking, and replace a view of language as an abstraction without reference to speaker, time, and place.

From the above definitions of pragmatics, it may seem to the reader that pragmatics is a difficult area of communicative interaction to analyze because it is difficult to interpret what different people might be intending. However, pragmatic competence depends heavily on conventionally and culturally appropriate and socially acceptable ways of interacting. These appropriate rules create regular and expected behavior in language use. Generally, within a given cultural group, people know what is considered appropriate behavior. Therefore, they can interpret the different language uses that they encounter in their daily communication.

1.3. The Advantages of Learning Pragmatics

According to Kasper and Rose (2002) studying pragmatics has many advantages. First, by exposure to pragmatic knowledge, the learners can decode language meaning from a wider intercultural viewpoint. In addition, they can easily interpret people's intended meaning during international interactions. They argued that pragmatics enables people to discover various speech act strategies as well as intercultural interaction strategies. Those structures play an important role in solving misunderstanding difficulties founded in the foreign social contexts. In addition to that, they claimed that it is very important to teach

pragmatics from the very first years that language learners study a foreign language, most importantly, appropriateness and politeness matters. In other words, learners cannot reach their communicative goal unless they are able to interact in an appropriate way.

To sum up, through learning pragmatics, students will be able to optimize their communicative competence. The latter is going to be discussed next.

1.4. Communicative Competence

Before shedding light on the term communicative competence, it is first, worth mentioning that the development of this term begins with Chomsky's (1965) distinction between the two linguistic concepts competence and performance. For him, competence is the intuitive grammatical knowledge of the mother tongue that a native speaker has so that he can produce grammatically correct sentences that are acceptable by his speech community. On the other hand, performance is the linguistic behaviour of the native speaker. Stated differently, it is the use of the language _ determined by the linguistic competence _in real life situations.

Chomsky (1965) adds that the linguistic competence is the only aspect a speaker needs when communicating, and considering any other factor as irrelevant. In accordance with this, he says that the linguistic competence is:

> Concerned primarily with an ideal speaker-hearer, in a completely homogenous speech community, who knows its language perfectly and is unaffected by such grammatically irrelevant conditions as memory limitations, distractions, shifts of attention and interest, and errors (random or characteristic) in applying his knowledge of the language in actual performance. (p.3)

In other words, grammar rules that exist in the mind (in isolation from any odd considerations) are sufficient enough for the language users to communicate.

However, the idea of Chomsky (1965) was criticized by many scholars. Hymes (1972) suggested that in order to communicate successfully, the speaker needs -in addition to the linguistic competence- the knowledge of how the language is performed by his speech communion. Moreover, Hymes (1972) insisted on the point of the appropriateness of utterances to their related context. As a result, the term communicative competence came into existence as an umbrella term for the linguistic competence which consists of the various rules of the components of the abstract language, and the contextual/sociolinguistic competence. The latter is concerned with the respect of the pragmatic side of the language use. To illustrate, the cultural values and society conventions are aspects that must be taken into consideration while putting into practice the linguistic system.

In subsequent development, Canale and Swain (1980) claimed that communicative competence in second language teaching is a combination of the essential grammatical principles as one type of it and, the following three types:

1.4.1. Sociolinguistic Competence

According to Canale and Swain (1980) sociolinguistic competence refers to being aware of all the social factors that may lead to the act of changing the words and the way they are said. To make it clear, each time there is a change -for instance - in the topic or participants the register is in want of revision. The social status and age are significant examples of those social factors. This element is discussed in greater detail hereafter under the title ‘pragmatic competence’.

1.4.2. Discourse Competence

Canale and Swain (1980) defined it as the knowledge of cohesion (structural linking) and coherence (meaningful relationships in language). Indeed, discourse competence is about communicating purposefully. That is to say, when the speaker or writer produces a certain utterance that has a literal meaning but the intended meaning is different, the aspects of coherence and cohesion help in figuring out the purpose of that speaker or writer.

1.4.3. Strategic Competence

Is related to the verbal and non verbal strategies used to make up for break downs (e.g. comprehension checks and conversation filler). Moreover, it betters the effectiveness of communication. In fact, this type of knowledge is tightly related to the ability of interlocutors to use communication strategies.(Canale and Swain, 1980)

To sum up, the term communicative competence indicates the knowledge that a language user has about the abstract rules and forms; in addition to the knowledge which makes him someone who communicates and interacts at the same time.

1.5. Pragmatic Competence

According to Chomsky (1965) pragmatic competence is the understanding of the circumstances and manners of appropriate use of language, taking into consideration different goals. It is opposed to grammatical competence which was introduced by Chomsky as the knowledge of form and meaning.

In the same respect, Rose and Kasper (1997) asserted that pragmatic competence is composed of the understanding of the sociocultural rules for expressing the functions of language correctly in different situations. In other words, pragmatic competence includes

communication activities in the people‘s language. In these activities, both knowledge of language itself and social factors are needed.

Relevant to the above discussion, Rose and Kasper (1997) added that one important element of students’ pragmatic competence is being conscious of what is and what is not appropriate in a given context. In this respect, he claimed that pragmatics enables people to appropriately accomplish the complementary comprehension, and politely deals with the challenges that are due to the misunderstanding and miscommunication in the foreign contexts.

1.5.1. Issues in Pragmatic Competence

The following part is devoted to discuss some pragmatic concepts that are important to determine and differentiate a pragmatically competent speaker. These involve deixis, reference, context and co-text, presupposition, and speech acts.

1.5.1.1. Deixis and Distance

According to Yule (1996) deixis refers to “pointing via language” (p.9). He asserted that in order to perform this pointing, some linguistic forms namely deictic expressions are utilized. For instance, asking about a strange object by using the utterance: “What’s that?”(p.9). In the previous example, ‘that’ is an indexical expression used to indicate something in the immediate context of speaking. In fact, Yule put sharp focus on the context shared by speaker and hearer. In the same vein, Trask (2005) said: “The reference points are always the identity of the speaker and the time and place of speaking” (p.45). In other words, interpreting an utterance which consists of a deictic expression is speaker central and context based.

Deictic expressions are categorized according to their functions by many scholars. Yule (1996) suggested three types of deixis.

Yule (1996) introduced person deixis, and he stated that interlocutors in a conversation tend to shift from the use of 'I' to 'you', and sometimes they use the third person singular (he, she, and it). Indeed, the choice of using a pronoun or a form rather than another is described as social deixis. To illustrate, a French speaker resorts to the pronoun 'tu' to say indirectly to the addresser: I am higher, older or more powerful than you. Consequently, the addressee replies by the pronoun 'vous'. Moreover, the substitution of the second person for the third person, indicates a sort of distance between speaker and hearer.

For Yule (1996), also spatial deixis has to do with the notion of distance. This can be noted in the use of the two adverbs: 'here' and 'there'. Generally speaking, the two adverbs of time and place, 'now' and 'here', when invested by a speaker lead the addressee to perceive the time and place of the addresser while uttering the words. Yet, in some cases knowing the context is necessary for an utterance to be considered true. As an example, the utterance: 'I am not here now' (p.13).seems to be incorrect unless the hearer knows that it is said on a recorder of a telephone answering. It is worth noting that verbs of motion (e.g. come to bed and go to bed) can have a deictic sense when used to mark movement towards or away from the speaker.

The other type is temporal deixis; in which Yule (1996) referred to the proximal form 'now' as having its distal form 'then'; which is used in the past as well as the future. In addition, yesterday, tomorrow, and this week are examples of temporal deictic expressions. It is worthy of note that English tenses are a kind of temporal deixis.

In the same respect, Fillmor (1981) suggested five types of deixis. The first three types are similar to those suggested by Yule. The forth type is discourse deixis and it is related to

textual coherence. For instance, ‘to begin with ’and ‘next’ are forms that function as transitional signals to make logical connections in texts. Moreover, Fillmor(1981) considered social deixis as an independent type (not part of person deixis as Yule(1996) stated); and associated it with fulfilling politeness purposes in social interaction.(as cited in Cole, 1981, p. 150)

1.5.1.2. Reference

Carlson (2006) asserted that in the theory of reference the focus is on the constituents of sentence or utterance that reveal the intuitive nature of reference. However, Yule (1996) said: “We do know that words themselves don’t refer to anything, people refer” (p. 17). That is, the act of referring is done by the speaker through certain linguistic forms called referring expressions. The latter can be a proper noun (e.g. Shakespear), definite or indefinite noun phrases (e.g. the author, a man), and also pronouns (e.g. he, her). In fact, the speaker uses one linguistic form rather than another depending on what the listener already has in mind, so that, he (the listener) infers the right referent . In some cases, when using a deictic term in an utterance such as, Give me ‘this’, there must be a shared visual context; otherwise a noun phrase can be used to achieve successful reference.

In their discussion of the notion of reference, Schawarz-Friesel and Consten(1999) viewed it as the relation between language and the world (as cited in Mey,2001, p. 54). But, in the tradition of philosophical logic and formal semantics, reference is considered as that fixed association between words and entities they indicate. In other words, objectivity exists while subjectivity is denied along with other elements like intention. On the other hand, Yule (1996) argued that ‘naming’ is not about being objectively correct or not, rather, it is about the successful choice of expressions. This is illustrated in the use of invented words relying on the skills of inference by listener or reader.

1.5.1.2.1. Anaphoric Reference

Anaphora is one way to express reference. According to Schwarz-Friesel and Consten (1999) anaphora is a linguistic form that substitutes an existing reference. Its role is providing coherent representation in a text as well as topic continuity (Mey, 2001, p.56). In the same respect, Yule (1996) stated that the first element mentioned is called the antecedent, and it can be represented in the form of an indefinite noun phrase (e.g. a man). The succeeding element is called the anaphor, it may appear in the form of a definite noun phrase (e.g. the man) or a pronoun (e.g.it and he). Yet, in some cases the anaphor appears before the antecedent. The pattern is known as cataphora.

1.5.1.3. Context

For its role in the spoken and written language, the pragmatic concept context was studied by many scholars. Yule (1996) said: “The physical environment, or context, is perhaps more easily recognized as having a powerful impact on how referring expressions are to be interpreted” (p.21). To put it another way, knowing about the environment in which a conversation takes place helps in understanding the referring expressions as well as the meaning intended by the speaker or writer. Indeed, meaning is context dependent. In this respect, Mey (2001) stated that context is changeable and each time the context changes, the interpretation of one linguistic expression differs. He added that the register used in a friendly situation differs from the one used in a case of tension between interlocutors. In other words, the unwritten law of context obliges the speaker to switch to a distinctive terminology as a result of a shift in the attitude towards his interlocutor. In fact, the contextual factors as time, place and participants are not useful only for their role in figuring out the pragmatic meaning; they also lead to avoid mentioning details each time a certain construction is used.

1.5.1.4. Co-text

Yule (1996) defined co-text as the linguistic material that helps in the identification of the reference expressions. Indeed, the referring expression provides various possible interpretations for the intended referent but, co-text or the rest of the sentence restricts the possibilities. As a result, the listener or reader relates successfully the mentioned reference with its referent. Yule exemplified this with the sentence: “Brazil wins world cup” (p.21). In the previous example ‘Brazil’ is the referring expression and the rest of the sentence is the co-text.

1.5.1.5. Presupposition and Entailment

Huang (2011) asserted that the inference that its truth is absolute in the utterance of a sentence is called presupposition. He also stated that the existence of presupposition is related to the use of certain words namely presupposition triggers. Also, Yule (1996) added that deciding on the type of presupposition is due to the linguistic forms used. To illustrate, the factive presupposition usually occurs after verbs such as, ‘to know’, ‘to realize’ ‘to regret’, etc. to indicate a fact. In his distinction between the two terms presuppose and entailment, Yule asserted that the act of proposing is from the part of the speaker or writer who communicates something not said. In contrast, entailment is about concluding things depending on what is asserted in the utterance, that is, the sentence is the one that has presuppositions. For instance, in the utterance: “Mary’s brother bought three horses” (p.25).the speaker is supposed to infer that a person named ‘Mary’ exists. At the same time, the utterance may entails, for example, that Mary‘s brother bought three animals.

It is worth mentioning that Yule (1996) stateg that there is a property for presupposition called constancy under negation. That is, when negating a sentence that consists of a lexical item or a syntactic structure, which is there to create presupposition, the latter is not

affected by the negation. To exemplify, when saying “Mary’s dog is cute” (p.26).or “Mary’s dog isn’t cute” (p.26).the same presupposition is obtained in the two utterances which is, ‘ Mary has a dog’.

1.5.1.6. Cooperation and Implicature

When speaking about cooperation and implicature there is always a reference to Gricean theories. First, Grice (1978) introduced the Cooperative Principle theory. The latter provided guidelines that lead to efficient and effective use of language in conversation; that is, being cooperative when using language. In fact, four used maxims in conversations are presented. Grice (1978) listed, first, the maxim of Quality; which is related to making a true contribution. In other words, not saying what is supposed to be false or lacks adequate relevance. Second, the maxim of Quantity is about making the contribution as informative as is required (no more no less). Third, the maxim of Relevance requires a relevant or a related contribution. Finally, Grice (1978) presented the maxim of Manner under which he listed avoiding obscurity and ambiguity, in addition to being brief and orderly. In short, the four maxims indicate what participants must do in order to be maximally efficient and to converse in a cooperative way. (as cited in Levinson,1983, p.101-102)

However, in real communication people do not follow these guidelines to the letter; and that is what Grice(1978) admitted. To illustrate, the reply of the question “where is bill?” (p.102) is “There is a yellow VW outside Sue’s house” (p.102). In this case, the two principles of Quantity and Relevance are violated. Thus, the reply is supposed to be interpreted as non co-operative. But, in fact it is co-operative if it is assumed that the location of Bill is the same location of a yellow VW (knowing that Bill has a yellow VW). Hence, making inference in a deeper level (non-superficial) is another way for being co-

operative. Indeed, Grice called this kind of inference as conversational implicature. (as cited in Levinson,1983,p.102-103)

Second, according to Grice (1978), implicature is about how people use language. He added that the content of what has been said and some specific assumptions about the co-operative nature of ordinary verbal interaction are basic elements in the process of inference. One way through which inference is generated is the flouting of the maxims. For instance, a husband says: "Let's get the kids something" (p.104).The wife replies by saying: "Okay, but I veto T-C-E-C-R-E-A-M-S" (p.104). In the previous example the maxim of Manner is violated, because, the word ice-creams was spelled out (not in a clear way). The aim is conveying to the husband that the word should not be mentioned in the presence of children; in case they are promoted to demand some. Hence, Conversational implicature is about conveying something not said through inferring from what is said. (as cited in Levinson,1983,p.104-105)

All in all, the previous pragmatic notions are, notably, related to each other. In other words, they share interdependent relationships and serve each other during the processes of conveying and interpreting meaning. Since the main concern of the paper is language, the next element must be culture; because of the mutual influence between the two.

1.5.1.7. Culture

The notion of culture is difficult to define due to its complex nature. It was defined differently by a range of disciplines; and is first defined by anthropologists. Tylor (1871) an English anthropologist gave the following classic definition to culture "culture is that complex whole which includes knowledge, belief, art, morals, law, customs, and any other capabilities and habits acquired by man as a member of a society" (as cited in Atamna, 2008, P.16). In other words, culture involves various components that are not innate, but

rather people gradually acquire them in their society. In addition to that, Moran (2001) claimed that " culture is the great achievement of people as reflected in their history, social institutions, works of art, architecture, music and literature" (p.4). Culture is divided into two types; big 'C' culture and small 'c' culture. While big 'C' culture refers to history, achievements, and artistic productions of a particular society to the world. Small 'c' culture refers to beliefs, behaviours, and values. (as cited in Atamna, 2008, p.15).

Different from the above definitions which focuses on concrete elements, recent definitions of culture pay greater attention to its abstract elements. Thompson (1990), for instance, viewed culture as " the pattern of meaning embodied in symbolic forms, including actions, utterances, and meaningful objects of various kinds, by virtue of which individuals communicate with one another and share their experiences, conceptions and beliefs" (p.49).

All things considered, one can understand that culture is a complex concept which is difficult to define. Also, it can be understood from the above definitions of culture that language is a part of culture because it is learned and shared by people as members of their society. Thus, there is a strong relation between culture and language.

1.6. The Relationship between Culture and Language

Pragmatics sheds light on the inextricable connection between language and cultural norms. According to Kramsh (1998) culture and language are strongly connected in three ways. First, language embodies cultural reality. In other words, by using words, people express ideas and facts and at the same time they reflect their attitudes. Second, language represents cultural reality. In other words, through communication people give meanings to their experience. Third, language symbolizes cultural reality, which means people see their language as a symbol of their social identity.

Additionally, Brown (1994) asserted that "a language is a part of a culture, and a culture is part of a language; the two are intricately interwoven that some cannot separate the two without losing the significance of either language and or culture" (p.165). In other words, there is a strong interconnection between culture and language which is impossible to be separated.

Furthermore, Hinkel (1999) stated that in order for learners to become proficient in English, both of language proficiency and sociocultural competence are required. For instance, knowing how to say thank you does not necessary confer the knowledge of how to say thank you, when to say thank you, how often to say thank you, and if any other additional action or gesture is required. Also, politeness is seen as universal feature of language use. However, its pragmatic, linguistic, social, and intentional interpretations differ across different languages and cultures. Therefore, learning culture is an integral part of language learning. Without understanding of the target language cultural and socio pragmatic norms, the communicative competence of learners cannot be developed.

As mentioned previously by Hymes, successful communication requires both of the linguistic competence and the knowledge of how the language is performed. This idea has been reflected in the concept of speech act.

1.7. Speech Act Theory

"*How to do things with words"* is the title of Austin's book. It involves a series of lectures which are known as the William James lectures. One of the main contributions of Austin through this book is presenting a new image of analyzing meaning with regard to linguistic rules associated with words or sentences, the context where the speaker says or utters something to the hearer, and related intentions of the speaker. Austin (1962) claimed that the idea that meaning exists within these relations is shown by the notion of acts. That

is, when uttering a sentence which is the use of linguistic rules, the speaker intentionally performs a linguistic act to the hearer. Also, Austin asserted that an utterance can have three kinds of meanings. That is, the locutioanary which is the literal meaning; the illocutionary which refers to the intended meaning; and the perlocutionary meaning which produces certain consequent effects upon the actions of the listener or speaker.

It is worthy of note that for Austin (1962) "the old assumption in philosophy that to say something, is always and simply to state something. This assumption is no doubt unconscious. No doubt is wrong" (p.12). And he gave the example of marrying. He said that in the course of a wedding ceremony, when uttering (take this women to be my lawful wedded wife) these words implies that something is done which is 'marrying' and not reported. That is, we are marrying.

1.7.1. Performative Utterances

Bach and Harnish (1979) stated that "there are certain things one can do just by saying that one is doing them. One can apologize by saying "I apologize", promise by saying "I promise", and thank someone by saying "thank you" (p, 148). This means that our actions are done through our words. When saying "I promise" this means that an action is done.They said that the above statements are examples of explicit performative utterances. He argued that performatives refer to utterances that enable us to make clear what we are doing.

In this light, Yule (1996) argued that "in attempting to express themselves, people do not only produce utterances containing grammatical structures and words, they perform actions via those words" (p.57). Yule clarified the above statement by maintaining that if you are working in a context where a head has more power, the head utterance of "you're

fired" is not an expression. It can be used to perform the act of ending your occupation. (p. 47).

Influenced by Austin's work, Searle (1969) attempted a refined version of Austin's speech acts. He classified speech acts into five categories:

1) Representatives: it includes asserting, concluding, etc.

2) Directives: like requesting and questioning.

3) Commisives: like promising, threatening, and offering.

4) Expressive: like thanking, apologizing, welcoming, and congratulating.

5) Declaration: like excommunication, declaring war, and firing from employment.

To meet the aim of this study, interest lies on the speech act of disagreement which belongs to commisives.

1.7.2. The Speech Act of Disagreement

According to Koczogh (2013) English is a polite language. Even when you think that someone is wrong about something, it is rude to directly contradict that person. The speech act of disagreement has been captivating researchers in linguistics for several years. Its popularity is due to the fact that it is one of the most occurring speech acts in everyday interaction.

Sifianou (2012) pointed out that "disagreement is "an expression of view", however it is not opposite to, but rather simply different from "that expressed by another speaker" (p.155). In addition to that, Sifianou (2012) argued that Brown and Levinson (1987) regarded disagreement as acts that threaten the interlocutor negative face when "a speaker is imposing his will on the hearer" (p, 65).

In order to avoid the threat of the face threatening aspect of disagreement, Brown and Levinson (1987) introduced two politeness strategies. The first strategy is looking for agreement which can be attained by engaging in protected topics. The second strategy for Brown and Levinson (1987) is avoiding disagreement, for instance, by using hedging.

Add to this, Brown and Levinson pointed out that direct strategies of disagreement are better than less direct situations in the following situations:

- When there is less social distance between the speaker and addressee
- When the speaker has greater power than the addressee
- When the disagreement is less harsh.

It is worth noting that from Searle's (1969) five categories of speech acts; refusal, apology, and are speech acts which can be considered as either face threatening acts or face saving acts.

To start with, according to Hassani, Mardani, and Hossein (2011) a refusal is a kind of speech act that is planned as a response to another persons' suggestion, invitation, request, or offer. This implies that it is not speaker initiative. In addition to that, the speech act of refusal is regarded as discourteous. Thus, acting incorrect refusal strategies may damage the participant's relationship.

Hassani et al. (2011) added that since refusal is considered as a face threatening act to the hearer, the use of indirect strategies is the best way to avoid appearing rude or impolite. "Saying no" is an expression that needs special skills .Thus, speaker must know how to use this form depending on his interlocutor linguistic and cultural value.

Apology is another type of speech acts that belongs to expressives. They are used for human's need to express their regret over aggressive acts. According to Holmes (1990) an

apology is a speech act that is used to cure the offense that is committed by the apologizer, and therefore rebalance social relations between participants. In addition, Fraster (1981) stated that apologizing is taking responsibility for the violation and expressing regret for the committed offense.

Conclusion

The main focus of this chapter was the notion of pragmatics. The latter gained interest of many scholars in the field of second language teaching and learning due to its importance in developing student's communicative competence. The analyses of the key pragmatic concepts lead to the conclusion that they are strongly related. Speech acts theory emphasizes the idea that saying words means doing actions. And all the previously discussed elements are used to develop learner's pragmatic competence.

Chapter Two: Politeness in Language Use

Introduction

The present chapter deals with politeness as a pragmatic notion, and sheds light on its related elements. The first point to be discussed is politeness as a social behaviour. The next element is entitled as polite language in use under which the two famous models of Leech and of Brown and Levinson are presented. Indeed, the focus is on Brown and Levinson's theory and its suggested strategies of politeness. Then, discussing the concept of impoliteness, before moving to present some related social variables. Finally, the chapter explores the relation between the two pragmatic notions: politeness and disagreement.

2.1. Politeness as a Social Behaviour

The phenomenon of politeness captivated researchers for a long time; this is due to the popularity of the concept. In this regard, Watts (2003) asserted that people are generally aware of the signification of the term "politeness" when used to describe certain behaviour. However, he stated that people, indeed, disagree when it comes to asking them about the way they view politeness. In this respect, Watts (2003) said:

> Some people feel that polite behaviour is equivalent to socially correct or appropriate Behaviour; others consider it to be the hall mark of the cultivated man or woman. Some might characterize a polite person as always being considerate towards other people, others might suggest that a polite person is self-effacing. (p.1)

In other words, people perceive the polite social behaviour according to their believes and personalities; they do not have one view. Yet, the variety of opinions can work in collaboration to give a general evaluation of polite behaviour. On the other hand, Watts

(2003) claimed that a polite behaviour can be seen as negative by some people. They may relate it to such terms as standoffish, haughty, and insincere. One can say that a polite behaviour is perceived as a trial to treat others as strangers. In addition, exaggerating in being polite may affect the social image of the person.

All in all, although people do not share the same view concerning social polite behaviour yet, most of them consider it a norm. But, still there are opinions in society that treat it as a negative phenomenon. Speaking about politeness, it is worth mentioning that the concern of pragmatics is not politeness as a social behaviour, rather, it is politeness in relation to choices made in language use.

2.2. Polite Language in Use

Politeness is a sub-discipline of pragmatics. The latter is interested in the language used to show politeness. In order to study the notion, many theories and models were developed in the field. The most influential ones are those of Leech (1983), and more importantly of Brown and Levinson (1987).

2.2.1. Leech's (1983) Model of Politeness

Leech (1983) viewed politeness as a solution for avoiding conflicts between interlocutors in a conversation. In this model, the main focus is the 'Politeness Principle' (P.P); the latter works as a reason for explaining the flouting of the Cooperative Principle maxims. It is stated that the Politeness Principle consists of six maxims (Tact maxim, generosity maxim, approbation maxim, modesty maxim, agreement maxim, and sympathy maxim). For example, generosity maxim implies that the speaker must minimize benefit to self at the same time maximize cost to self. Hence, these maxims are invested to minimize (mitigate) the effects of impolite utterances; and to maximize the politeness of polite speech acts. To illustrate, Leech (1983) gave the example of someone saying: "We'll all

miss Bill and Agatha, won't we" (p.80). In the same situation another person adds: "Well, we'll all miss Bill" (p.80). In the previous example, not mentioning 'Agatha' is saying indirectly that she is not missed. In other words, the maxim of quantity is violated for the purpose of being polite. In fact, Leech (1983) insisted on the importance of the Politeness Principle for the Gricean theory; in this respect he said:

> However, it must be admitted that the CP is in a week position if apparent exceptions to it cannot be satisfactorily explained. It is for this reason that the PP can be seen not just as another principle to be added to the CP, but as a necessary complement, which rescues the CP from serious trouble.(p.80)

It is clear that the Politeness Principle is an important factor for the task of explaining the violation of the Cooperative Principle maxims. Also, sometimes it is necessary to give politeness a higher rating than cooperation in specific situations. That is, in some cases the Politeness Principle must be obeyed rather than being maximally efficient.

Leech (1983) distinguished between two types of politeness. First, the 'Relative Politeness'; it refers to politeness in certain situations. Second, 'Absolute Politeness' which refers to the degree of politeness inherently associated with specific speaker performed speech acts. As a result, some speech acts are always polite, while others are impolite (e. g: offers and orders). The view considers politeness an abstract property residing in expressions, lexical items, or morphemes, without taking into consideration circumstances that govern their use.

2. 2.1.1. The Criticism of Leech's (1983) Model of Politeness

Indeed, Leech's model of politeness was criticized for many reasons. In this regard, Mey (2001) asserted that not mentioning the name of 'Agatha' (in the previous example) is a lot less nice than mentioning her in a bad way. Moreover, the idea of absolute politeness isolates politeness from its contextual factors which have a significant role in deciding on what is polite or not polite in a given situation. This criticism is supported with two arguments. First, politeness values of an 'order' may differentiate when it is associated with the position of the speaker. To illustrate, the order of the priest for someone to say 'Hail Mary' (p.80) after hearing his confession is neither polite nor impolite. Second, Mey (2001) asserted that an order can be polite if it has a positive effect on the addressee. For instance, "Have another sandwich" (p.80) is an order that people usually like hearing it.

On the hole, it must be said that Leech's model of politeness has its remarkable collaboration with the Cooperative Principle theory in the sense that it works as an excuse for the flouting of maxims. However, one can say that it is not clear that the PP is able to rescue the CP theory; at least this is what the example given by Leech indicates.

2.2.2. Brown and Levinson's Theory of Politeness (1987)

The politeness theory postulated by Brown and Levinson (1987) provides a model for speakers' motivated usage of politeness strategies in spoken interaction. The theory is based on the concept of 'face'. In this respect, Brown and Levinson (1987) said: "all competent adult members of a society have face" (p.61). That is, face is a notion known for all adults in society without exception. And they define face as "the public self image that every member wants to claim for himself" (p.61). Thus, face is of crucial importance for people because, it represents the way they are viewed in society. Brown and Levinson (1987) divided face into two types identified as negative face and positive face.

To start with, negative face refers to the basic claim of a member of society to personal freedom of action and to personal space that are not to be invaded by others. Second, positive face is the will to have a positive self-image in front of society. In other words, people in society want to be perceived as positive in the eyes of other members; in addition to giving their approval. For Brown and Levinson (1987) the rules and norms that direct how members of society interact are created by the claim for negative and positive face.

Brown and Levinson (1987) stated that people do not only claim of having a face, but, they also consider it a basic want that needs to be satisfied. That is to say, they want to keep up negative and positive face in direct interaction. For this reason, Brown and Levinson (1987) restated their definition of face. They defined negative face as the want of a member that his actions be unimpeded by others. And they related it to the notion of formal politeness; in other words, the politeness of imposition. On the other hand, positive face is the want of a member that his wants be desirable to some others. Brown and Levinson added that it is the want to get positive, admiring, or approving reaction from others. Indeed, they suggested that the main arena in which those face wants are satisfied is the speaking behaviour. They also maintained that during a conversation, speakers strive to obtain satisfaction of their positive and negative face. Moreover, they must take care to not impede the face wants of their addressees. However, there are cases in which the speaker is obliged to perform acts that threaten their addressees'' faces. These acts are called 'face threatening acts' (FTAs).

According to Brown and Levinson (1987), FTAs happen consciously and can threaten the negative or positive face of a person. They asserted that the negative face is threatened if it is clear "that the speaker does not intend to avoid impeding H's freedom of action" (p.65). For instance, orders, requests, threats, disagreements...etc are face threatening acts that threaten the negative face of a person. On the other hand, FTAs threatening positive

face are acts "indicating that the speaker does not care about the addressee's feelings" (p.66). For example, expressions of disapproval, contempt, or ridicule are used to threaten the positive face. It is worth mentioning that Brown and Levinson claimed that FTAs can also threat the face of the speaker. To illustrate, thanking someone can threaten the speaker's negative face because, he admitted debt towards the hearer. As a matter of fact, FTAs are a necessary part of communication. Yet, the threat must be minimized through using certain strategies. The latter is the next element to be discussed.

2.2.2.1. Brown and Levinson's (1987) Model of Politeness Strategies

As mentioned earlier, Brown and Levinson (1987) stated that everyone has a face. That is, the public self image that he wants to maintain. It is divided into two types positive face and negative face; While the former indicates the need to be independent and not imposed on by others. The latter is the want to be likeable. Brown and Levinson (1987) argued that during interaction, the interlocutors want to maintain each other's face. However, for a reason or another, the speaker is forced to committe FTAs to get what he wishes. Therefore, he has to minimize FTAs by using different politeness strategies.

In this respect, Brown and Levinson (1987) asserted that at the beginning, the speaker has to choose whether or not to do the FTA. If he decided to do the FTA he can do it off record. In other words, his intentions are not directly shown. In addition to that, off record strategy is related to implicature, an important term in pragmatics, which indicates that in a given expression, the meaning is more than what words mean, but rather there is an additional conveyed meaning. To illustrate, Brown and Levinson provided the following example: "Dumn, I'm out of cash, I forgot to go to the bank today" (p.69). This expression can be interpreted as a request for money, but the speaker is making it indirectly. Alternatively, the speaker can choose to do the FTA baldly; which means using bald on

record strategy without any redressive action. That is, the speaker is completely direct, clear, and unambiguous when doing the FTA. This is usually done by using the imperative form as in the following example: “Lend me some money” (ibid).

Additionally, Brown and Levinson (1987) claimed that if the speaker decides to use a redressive action. That is, he shows in his utterances that he does not want to threaten the addressee’s face; he has to choose whether to appeal to addressees negative or positive face where he employs either negative or positive politeness strategies as represented in the following figure:

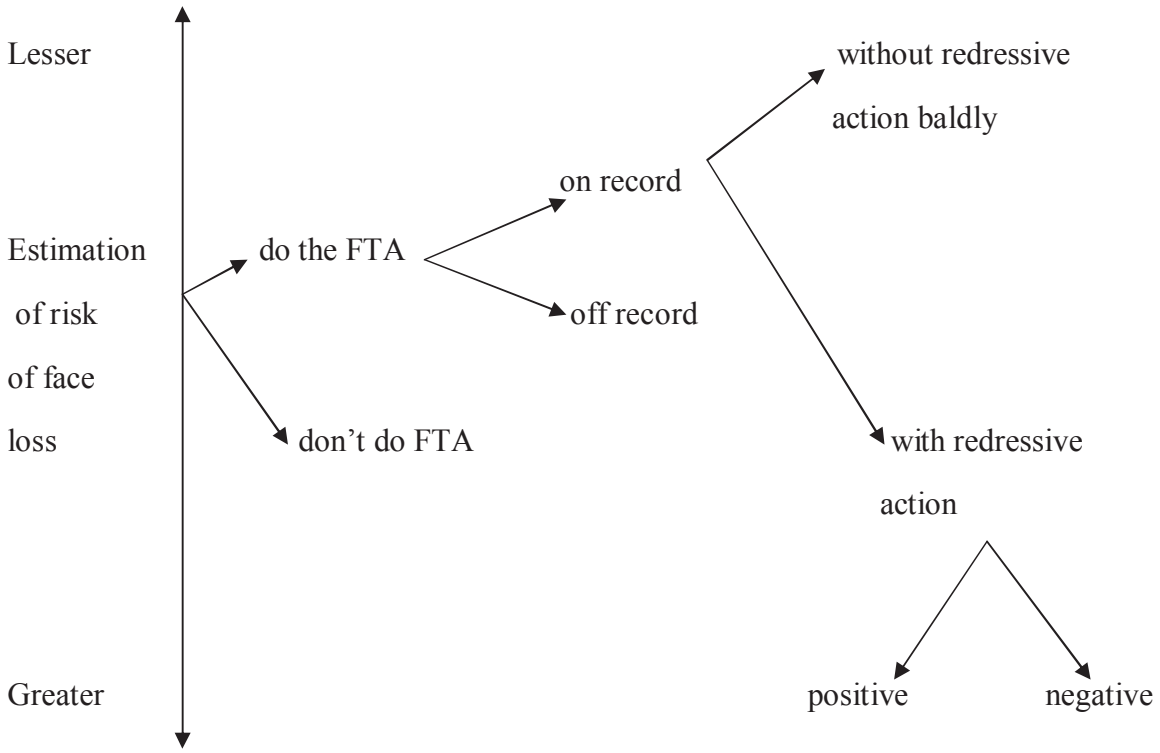

Figure 1: Brown and Levinson (1987) model of politeness strategies

Adopted from Brown and Levinson (1987, p. 60)

To start with, positive politeness for Brown and Levinson (1987) is oriented towards the addressee's positive face. That is, the need to maintain that one's values and interests are desirable and wanted by others. Therefore, this strategy functions as a redress for received harm; and it conveys that speaker's needs are similar to those of the hearer so that speaker can satisfy his desires. In this respect, Brown and Levinson (1987) stated that:

> The linguistic realizations of positive politeness are in many respects simply representative of the normal linguistic behaviour between intimates, where interest and approval of each other's personality, presupposition indicating shared wants and shared knowledge, implicit claims to reciprocity of obligations or to reflexivity of wants, etc. are routinely exchanged.(p.3).

In other words, the positive politeness strategy indicates that the speaker should recognize that the hearer has some desires that should be respected. It also shows that both of the speaker and hearer should interact with each other in a friendly atmosphere where they help and respect each other.

Additionally, Brown and Levinson (1987) asserted that positive politeness strategies are characterized by the use of intimate and metaphorical language which gives positive politeness strategies its redressive force. They illustrate this idea with the following example: "how absolutely marvelous! I simply can't imagine how you manage to keep your roses so exquisite Mrs B!"(p.93). Also, Brown and Levinson (1987) claimed that positive politeness involves three broad mechanisms, namely claim common ground, convey that S and H are cooperative, and fulfill H's wants. The first group which is claim common ground indicates that both of the speaker and hearer share specific values and

goals. For making this, the speaker may claim that some interests or goals are interesting for him too. It is worth noting that this first mechanism involves eight strategies.

Strategy One:

This strategy involves notice and attends to hearer's interests, needs, wants, and goods. In this respect, Brown and Levinson (1987) pointed out that "S should take notice of aspects of H's conditions, noticeable changes, remarkable possessions, anything which looks as though H would want S to notice and approve of it" (p.103).To illustrate, Brown and Levinson gave the following example: "you must be hungry, it's long time since breakfast .How about some lunch?"(ibid).

Strategy Two:

The main idea behind this strategy is exaggerate interest, approval, sympathy with the hearer. According to Brown and Levinson (1987) positive politeness includes exaggerated stress, intonation, and intensifying modifiers. They clarified this idea in the following examples "what a fantastic garden you have!" and "I will be done in one second". The exaggeration in these examples can soften FTA by showing good intentions.

Strategy Three:

This strategy is all about intensifying interest to hearer. As Brown and Levinson (1987) put it, the speaker can make a good story in which he uses the present simple as in the following example: "I come down the stairs, and what do you think I see? A huge mess all over the place, the phone's off the hook and clothes are scattered all over…" (p.106). In addition to that, the uses of quoted direct speech and tag questions are other aspects of this strategy such as ' you know' and 'isn't it'.

Strategy Four:

This strategy involves the use of in-group identity markers. That is, the use of address forms, in-group language or dialect, and the use of jargon or slang. First, address forms such as dear, honey, brother, sister, etc. can be used as a way of respecting other people as well as reducing FTA .Second, for Brown and Levinson (1987) the use of in-group language is all about code switching. They argued that the switch usually occurs between two varieties or dialects of a given language ; one is regarded high while the other is low, and they gave the example of the switch from nick name to full name as it is shown in this example " first call: come here Johnny. Second call: John Henry Smith, you come here right away" (p.110).In this example, it is clear that the switch from nick name to full name creates a sort of politeness between the interlocutors. Third, Brown and Levinson (1987) stated that using slang when referring to an object, both of the speaker and hearer will elicit the shared attitudes that they have towards that object.

Strategy Five:

This strategy is entitled seek for agreement. For Brown and Levinson (1987) this strategy can be employed through safe topics and repetition. While the former enables the speaker to satisfy the hearer's need to be right and to be supported in his ideas such as speaking about weather and the beauty of gardens; the latter includes repeating what the speaker has said before. This strategy is used to emphasize interest or surprise of listner with speaker utterances. To illustrate, Brown and Levinson (1987) provided the following example: "A: John went to London this weekend

B: to London!" (p.113).

Strategy Six:

This strategy involves avoiding disagreement. By employing token agreement which indicates the need to agree or seem to agree with the hearer, the listener can hide his disagreement by responding with 'yes' instead of 'no'. To make it clear, Brown and Levinson (1987) gave the following example "A: that's where you live, Florida? B: that's where I was born" (p.115). In addition to that, this strategy includes the use of pseudo-agreement which indicates the use of 'then' and 'so'. According to Brown and Levinson the main role of them is that "S is drawing conclusion to a line of reasoning carried out cooperatively with the addressee" (ibid). Exemplifying this idea is the task of the following example "I will meet you in front of the theatre just before 8.0, then". (ibid). Furthermore, the employment of white lies and hedging opinions are other processes of this strategy. The latter indicates the use of expressions such as 'kind of', 'sort of', and 'in away' so that the speaker can safely express his opinions.

Strategy Seven:

This strategy indicates presuppose, raise, and assert common ground. Brown and Levinson (1987) claimed that this strategy is used to soften requests. They added that this strategy involves some techniques that are used to reduce the distance between speaker's and hearer's points of views such as time and place switch. Finally, strategy eight involves the use of jokes as way of stressing shared values or background knowledge. In this respect, Brown and Levinson (1987) said that "joking is a technique for putting H at ease" (p.124).

To sum up, sharing common values, goals, and interests is the heart of the above strategies. They are included in the first broad mechanism of positive politeness which is claim common ground. The latter creates a friendly atmosphere of shared knowledge

where interlocutors exchange mutual interest, values, and most importantly exchange respect.

As mentioned above, the second basic structure of positive politeness for Brown and Levinson is conveying that speaker and hearer are cooperative. According to Brown and Levinson (1987) this structure is made through six strategies. First, assert or presuppose speaker's knowledge of and concern for hearer's wants is one strategy which is based on making the hearer cooperative with the speaker. This can be done through asserting his willingness to fit his wants with those of the hearer as mentioned in the following example: "I know you can't bear parties, but this one will really be good. Do come!). (Brown & Levinson,1987, p.124). Second, indicating that the speaker is ready to satisfy hearer's positive face wants by using offers and promises even if they are not true. Third, be optimistic is another strategy given by Brown and Levinson (1987). The outcome of this strategy is to be able to use optimistic expressions that can minimize FTAs. Forth, including both of the speaker and hearer in the activity by using inclusive we form. This will show cooperation and FTAs minimization. Fifth, the speaker has to look for indirect suggestions that express demand rather than provide reasons. To illustrate, the following example is worth mentioning: "we will shut the door, ma'am. The wind's coming" (Brown & Levinson,1987, p.127). Sixth, assume or assert reciprocity is the last strategy in the second basic structure of positive politeness which is convening that speaker and hearer are cooperative. Finally, fulfill hearer's want for some x is the last main structure of positive politeness. It involves one strategy which is giving gifts to hearer .That is, goods, sympathy, understanding, and cooperation.

To sum up, positive politeness strategy has been acknowledged precisely by Brown and Levinson (1987); shedding light on its three main structures, and clarifying different strategies of those structures. But, positive politeness strategy is not the only politeness

strategy; negative politeness strategy is another supper strategy which is going to be discussed next.

Negative politeness for Brown and Levinson (1987) is a sort of redressive action which is directed to the addressee's negative face. In addition to that, Brown and Levinson insisted on the idea that negative politeness is the core of respective behaviour. They added that this strategy is used whenever a speaker wants to make a social distance and it is founded whenever a speaker wants to put a social brake during interaction. Like positive politeness, negative politeness includes the following strategies. First, be direct; which means perform the FTA on record .Do not coerce the addressee which means give him the option not to act, and be pessimistic. Second, minimize threat by giving defense. Third, communicate that your desire is not to harm the addressee by providing apologies. Fourth, state the FTA as a general rule and avoid 'I 'and 'you'.

It is worth saying that this model of politeness strategies, Brown and Levinson (1987) stressed the differences between positive and negative politeness. Those differences are summarized below:

- Negative politeness is the heart of respective behavior, while positive politeness is the core of familiar and joking behavior.
- Unlike positive politeness which is free ranging, negative politeness corresponds to the rituals of avoidance.
- Negative politeness is a type of politeness which is used between strangers while positive politeness is used between friends.
- Positive politeness is used as a social accelerator. However, negative politeness is used as a social brake.

2.2.2.2. The Criticism of Brown and Levinson's (1987) Model of Politeness Strategies

Although Brown and Levinson's (1987) model of politeness strategies is considered as one of the most influential and powerful theories on politeness; yet it has received a lot of criticism from different scholars.

To start with, Penman (1990) claimed that the model focuses only on politeness and it ignores impoliteness. In addition to that, face saving and face threatening strategies can also used for impoliteness. Furthermore, he argued that Brown and Levinson's model of politeness strategies oversteps self-directed strategies and focuses only on interaction between interlocutors.

In the same vein, Watts (2003) argued that the politeness strategies that Brown and Levinson (1987) have presented should not be called as such, but rather they should be called face work strategies. He added that this model does not take into consideration the knowledge of social situations the interlocutors have and what is regarded polite during interaction. Like Penman, Watts (2003) maintained also that the model focuses only on politeness and ignores impoliteness.

On the whole, there is no conflict free conversation where interlocutors attempt to satisfy each other's needs and interests. It is obvious that during communication, each part seeks to be likeable, understandable, and has things in common with the other part. However, it happens sometimes that interlocutors surprised by some breakdowns in communication such as hearing undesirable topics and using rude expressions. In such cases, the employment of the above strategies is the best solution for reducing FTAs and establishing a harmonious communicative atmosphere.

2.3. Impoliteness

Generally speaking, people during their interaction tend to threaten others' faces purposefully. In other words, the intention to attack others' faces leads to the avoidance of using the known politeness strategies. In this respect, Bousfield (2008) viewed impoliteness as those face threatening acts which are unmitigated in context in which mitigation is needed; and/or face threatening acts maximized in order to heighten the face damage.(as cited in O'keeffe, Clancy, & Adolphs, 2011, p.71)

In parallel with Brown and Levinson (1987), Culpeper(1996) suggested five impoliteness strategies; which are bold on record impoliteness, positive impoliteness (e.g. ignoring the others, being disinterested, and unsympathetic, seeking disagreement, etc), negative impoliteness(e.g. emphasizing own power, being contemptuous, not taking the hearer seriously, invading the others' space, associating the hearer with a negative aspect, etc), off record impoliteness(e.g. sarcasm) and with hold politeness.(as cited in O'keeffe et al, 2011, p.72)

The literature on impoliteness suggests two distinguished types of impoliteness; mock impoliteness and inherent or genuine impoliteness. According to Culpeper (1996), mock impoliteness happens when the impolite act remains on the surface; that is, the intention is not causing an offence. To illustrate, using an impoliteness strategy (e.g. the negative politeness strategy invading others' space) followed by laughter from the participants in the conversation, is considered as surface impoliteness. Thus, context may soften the impolite act. On the other hand, Culpeper(1996) asserted that inherent impoliteness occurs when a certain speech act such as request cannot be softened neither by a politeness strategy nor by the context.(as cited in O'Keeffe et al, 2011,p.72-73)

It is worth mentioning that Bousfield (2008) considered intention as the key aspect in the distinction between polite and impolite acts. He argued that those acts through which the speaker is rude unintentionally are not considered impolite. For instance, cross-cultural pragmatic failure may lead to an unintentional impoliteness.(as cited in O'Keeffe et al, 2011,p.71-72)

On the whole, impoliteness is a strategic way of speaking; that is, speakers being impolite aim at expressing themselves without taking into account the others faces. In fact, impoliteness is not about what you say, but, it is about the way you say it. However, being polite or impolite is controlled by some social factors.

2.4. Politeness and the Notion of Social Variables

Using polite linguistic expressions is determined and controlled by some social factors. The latter serves as a guide for the way in which things should be said during the conversation. Among these factors there are social distance and social power.

Brown and Levinson (1987) introduced the notion of social distance as a variable that has its impact on the use of polite or impolite language. They asserted that there are socio-cultural factors which indicate a perceived distance between speaker and hearer. Certain elements such as age, gender, role, education, class, ethnicity, and so forth, contribute to the creation of a degree of familiarity between interlocutors. Brown and Levinson (1987) considered that whenever there is a high familiarity, the level of politeness strategies use is low. On the other hand, whenever there is less familiarity, the use of politeness strategies increases. One can say that the distance originated from the mentioned socio-cultural factors directs the choice of the language used.

The next element is power which is significant in the field of social sciences. In this respect Russel (1938) said "the fundamental concept in social science is power, in the same

sense in which Energy is the fundamental concept in physics" (as cited in Locher, 2004, p .1). It can be said that power as a variable greatly influences the studies of researchers. In fact, this is due to its popularity; since the phenomenon is encountered every day in life. In addition, members of society, unconsciously, tend to respect more powerful people; that is why, it greatly influences the results of research. For Brown and Levinson (1987) 'power difference' is associated with those who have the authoritative role in the conversation. That is, when the speaker has the less dominant role, he must use a high level of politeness strategies like negative politeness (and vice versa).

It is worth of mentioning that Yule (1996) had its own division of the social factors controlling the choice of being polite or not. He started with what he called 'the external factors' under which he listed elements such as age and power. Then, he mentioned 'the internal factors' like the degree of friendliness; which is internal to the interaction. To illustrate, while the process of the conversation is ongoing, the speaker may change from the use of last name to the use of first name only as a result of a change in the social distance during the interaction.

All in all, social distance and social power are two significant factors which specify for interlocutors the unwritten rules that are supposed to be followed. The aim is to communicate effectively according to the principle of the native culture. In this regard, Brown and Levinson (1987) asserted that the evaluation of polite language use is calculated through considering how threatening a particular speech act is perceived in a specific culture.

2.5. Politeness and Disagreement as a Face Threatening Act

Disagreement is regarded as a face threatening act; thus, it is important for the speaker to minimize that threat through using politeness strategies. This idea entails the relation between the two concepts.

2.5.1. Definition of Disagreement as a Speech Act

As mentioned earlier in chapter one, one of the important aspects of pragmatic competence is the ability to produce and understand speech acts that occur in a given situation. Disagreement is one example of speech acts.

Actually, disagreement is selected to be the main concern of this study due to its common occurrence in everyday human interaction, and disagreement by its nature is a face threatening act that jeopardizes the solidarity between speaker and hearer and demands the employment of politeness strategies. Generally speaking, utterances of disagreements are seen as undesired and disprefered reactions and they may cause a discomfort feeling. According to Jacobs and Jackson (1981) disagreement is a speech activity in which the interlocutors attempt to keep their positions by opposing each other. However, Sifianou (2012) stated that the act of disagreement is an expression of view which is not the opposite of that expressed by another person, but rather a different view.

Speaking about disagreement within speech acts, Lui (2004) stated that in Searle's taxonomy of speech acts, the act of disagreement is not directive or commisive, but rather, it is a reactive act which requires a prior utterance from an interlocutor. For him, the act of disagreement occurs when a speaker assumes that some propositions uttered by an addressee are not true. He argued also that unlike how other speech acts have been studied, it is important to study the act of disagreement in the context of discourse in which it is uttered. This is mainly due to the fact that it relies on prior utterances. That implies for

Miller (2000) that the addressee has already uttered some propositions, and the speaker has the intent of asserting his disagreement by using “NOT P”.

2.5.2. Types of Disagreement

According to Muntigl and Turinbull (1998) there are four main types of disagreement, namely irrelevancy claims (IC), challenges (CH), contradictions (CT), and counterclaims. First, irrelevancy claims indicates that a previous claim expressed by a speaker is not relevant to the current topic. “It is nothing to do with it”, “you‘re straying of the topic”, and “it does not matter” are examples of this type. Second, challenges implicates that the addressee is not able to provide an evidence for his claim. Third, contradictions indicate that the speaker expresses his negated idea. In his contradiction, a speaker often uses negative particles such as ‘no’ or ‘not’ like ‘no, I don’t’. Finally, counterclaims tend to be preceded by mitigating devices, pauses, and prefaces. Hence, speakers give an alternative claim which is not directly contradicting other’s claim.

2.5.3. Research Studies on Disagreement

There have been many studies of disagreement in conversation such as Schegloff et al. (1977), Pomerantz (1984), and Sacks (1987). In his work “the preference for agreement and contiguity sequence in conversation” Sacks (1987) insisted on the idea that “there is a strong preference for contiguity between question and answer and for agreement between question and answer” (p.58). In this respect, he argued that answers are forced to make their turns in a way that agreeing answers come early in their turns “and thereby contiguous with their question” (p.65). He added that disagreement utterances get pushed back into the turn and it can be marked by features of delay (hehh, uhm), giving a reason, and mitigation.

Concerning disagreement in discussion, Lui (2004) pointed out that it has been studied by some reaserchers such as Trimboli and Walker (1984), Morgan and Krueger (1993), and Myers (1998). Trimboli and Walker (1984) founded that disagreement in discussions is characterized by increased number of turns, high rate of verbalization, and frequent interruptions. For Myers (1998), participants when expressing disagreement use markers of disprefered turn, hedges, which means to avoid giving a direct answer to question and just saying "yes" or "no". Concessions, and attributions which means to assert that something is the result of something. He observed also that disagreement is founded within a shared view, namely by agreeing with one element of the previous turn using repetition or repair.

2.5.4. Politeness and Disagreement

Lui (2004) stated that some speech acts form a threat to the addressee's negative or positive face, and disagreement can be considered as one of those face threatening acts. He argued that "argumentativeness in some ethnic communities shows interest and involvement in an interlocutor's topic of conversation and is hence a means by which solidarity is established. Disagreement poses a threat to the addressee's negative face" (p. 33).

In the same vein, Brown and Levinson (1987) asserted that disagreement is considered as a face threatening act because it reveals that the speaker does not share the addressee his wants, beliefs, and interests. Additionally, they claimed that "the act of disagreement may also pose a threat to the speaker's positive face if the speaker cannot support or defend his position and is thus shown up as ignorant" (p.68).that is, the speaker will feel ignorant because his point of view is not taken into consideration by the speaker. Thus, Brown and Levinson (1987) stated that if a speaker wants to assert (NOT P) which means I disagree with you when he contradicts an adreessee's assertion of (P) which means his point of

view; he must do so in a way that social harmony is preserved. This can be done by the employment of different strategies. That is, to avoid performing disagreement. Another strategy is using colloquial language, partial agreement, and the first person plural. In addition to that, the use of interrogatives instead of declaratives, indirect forms, and hedges can soften the threat of disagreement.

Conclusion

In conclusion, politeness and disagreement are the main concern of this chapter. The first highlighted element is politeness as a social behaviour. After that, Leech's model of politeness is presented. Then, the politeness theory of Brown and Levinson was introduced along with the suggested strategies; in addition to presenting the related social variables to the term politeness. This chapter ends with the exploration of the relationship between politeness and the speech act of disagreement.

Chapter Three: Methodology, Data Analysis, and Results

Section One: Methodology

Introduction

The previous two chapters presented a review about pragmatics, politeness, and disagreement. This section, however, represents the practical side of this research work. It takes as its major aim explaining the data collection instrument (DCT) used in this study; in addition to the main reasons for its employment with regard to the aim of this research work. Then, there is a detailed description of the DCT. Next, the chapter shades light on how the DCT was administered, as well as presenting the population and how it is selected. The coming element is the analysis producer. This chapter ends with the limitations of this study.

3.1. Research Instruments

3.1.1. Discourse Completion Task (DCT)

In this study a Written Discourse Completion Task (WDCT) is used to elicit data from participants. Known(2004) asserted that the DCT is the most appropriate data collection instrument when the aim of the investigation is " to inform the speakers' pragmalinguistic knowledge of the strategies and linguistic forms by which communicative acts can be implemented and about their sociopragmatic of the context factors under which particular strategies and linguistic choices are appropriate" (p.342). In other words, when the purpose of the study is to shed light on the participants' us of politeness strategies in given situations in relation to the sociopragmatic factors (social distance and power difference), DCTs are an effective tool to be used. In addition, Kasper and Dahl (1991) stated that the DCT is the major data collection tool in the field of pragmatics research. They defined it as

a written questionnaire consisting of a short description of a particular situation in order to reveal the pattern of the studied speech act (disagreement in this study) (as cited in Nurani, 2009, p. 671).

According to Cohen (1996) DCTs are divided into two types. First, closed DCTs, which include rejoinder after the participant' reply as in the following example of House and Kasper (1989):

"Walter and Leslie live in the same neighborhood but they only know each other by sight. One day they both attend a meeting hold on the other side of town. Walter does not have a care but he knows Leslie has come in her car.

Walter: ……

Leslie: I'm sorry but I'm not going home right away."(as cited in Nurani, 2009, p.668)

Second, open-ended DCTs; in this type participants are free to respond without any limitations from an interlocutor rejoinder. The coming example for Hudson, Detmer, and Brown (1995) explains:

You are the president of the local chapter of a national hiking club. Every month the club goes on a hiking trip and you are responsible for organizing it. You are on this month's trip and have borrowed another member's hiking book. You are hiking by the river and stop to look at the book. The book slips from your hand, falls in river and washes away. You hike on the rest stop where you meet up with the owner of the book.

You:

…….(as cited in Nurani, 2009, p. 668)

In the present study an open-ended WDCT is used; this is because it does not limit the responses of the participants as Cohen (1996) stated. Taking into consideration that this study is about testing students' of English as a foreign language pragmatic competence in using politeness when expressing disagreement depending on some sociopragmatic factors, the open-ended type of DCTs is the most convenient tool. Hence, the participants are given the freedom to answer the way they want so that they can help a lot in obtaining the needed data.

3.1.1.1. Advantages and Disadvantages of the DCT

Because of the role of data collecting instruments in determining whether the gathered data are reliable or not, the DCT instrument was exhaustively evaluated. It is founded that it has its advantages as well as disadvantages.

Many scholars admitted the advantages of DCTs in pragmatic research. Beebe and Cumming (1996) asserted that the DCT allows gathering a large amount of data in a relatively short time. In addition, they claimed that it provides model responses that usually accurse in natural speeches (as cited in Nurani, 2009, p. 670). According to Known (2004), DCT is a controlled elicitation data method that allows the research to obtain varied responses. Moreover, since the social variables are embedded in the situation, the participants can recognize which strategy to be used when interlocutors have lower, equal, or higher status. Known (2004) added that the DCT leads respondents to provide the prototype responses that occur in actual speech (as cited in Nurani,2009. P.671).

However, DCT has its disadvantages. In this respect Brown and Levinson (1987) pointed out that the hypothetical nature of the situations changes the reality of the interaction; because it simplifies the complexity of the real conversation. In addition, peoples' responses are not necessarily what they actually say in the real situation. Havlig

and Hartford (1993) argued that the absence of interaction between interlocutors is the reason behind the absence of the extended negotiation which commonly occurs in authentic discourse. (as cited in Nurani, 2009, p. 672)

In conclusion, despite the limitations of the DCT, this tool can be used effectively to assess learners' pragmatic competence; through how they use the language in the real life communicative context based on sociopragmatic variables.

3.2. Description of the DCT

The DCT used in this study consists of ten situations, in which participants are requested to perform the speech act of disagreement. This DCT started with a small introduction which explains the aim of the study. Then the DCT is divided into two parts. In the first part, the participants are asked to provide information on their level in order to make a comparison between the two levels. The second part comprises ten situations. The latter consists of various variables, namely social distance (age and gender), and power differences (equal and less dominant role). It is worth mentioning that there are other variables in the situations which are the subject of conversation and the place in which the conversation is conducted.

As far as the situations are concerned, in the first situation there is a high level of familiarity and equal authoritative role between the two close friends. One friend praises his father as a teacher and the other friend is supposed to disagree with him.

In the second situation, there is a less level of familiarity and equal authoritative role between two classmates who are discussing the topic of modern technology in a seminar class. One classmate is against modern technology; and the other one is asked to contradict with him.

In the third situation, two brothers are talking to each other; one of them praises a neighbor who is a classmate of the other brother. However, the latter does not have the same opinion. In this situation, there is a high level of familiarity and equal authoritative role.

In the forth situation, there is a less level of familiarity (the age) and less dominant role for the grocery seller when talking to an aged man. The latter is not satisfied with the quality of the oranges. But the seller does not agree with him.

There is a less dominant role and a low level of familiarity in situation five; because the interlocutors are a boss who decides to fire one of the employees who works under the supervision of the participant. The latter does not agree with his boss.

In the sixth situation, there is an equal authoritative role as well as a high level of familiarity. A husband disagrees with his wife who believes that Dinasors have never existed before. In situation seven, the interlocutors are friends talking about working women and expressing their refusal for the idea. On the other hand, one friend whose mother works does not share with them the same point of view. In this situation, there is a high level of familiarity and equal authoritative role.

In situation eight, there is a less level of familiarity, but an equal authoritative role between two classmates. One of theme criticizes the addressee's essay; but, the addresser does not agree with him. In situation nine, a brother is against the idea of celebrating his sister's birthday. However, the sister does not agree with him. In this situation there is a high level of familiarity and an equal authoritative role.

In the last situation, a sister and her brother are watching the movie Titanic. When the first mate decides to save women and children first, the sister shouts out claiming that this makes women look week (while this is not the truth for her). The brother does not agree

with her. The situation implies that there is a high level of familiarity and an equal authoritative role.

3.3. DCT Administration

This DCT was administered to learners of English at the University of Mohammad Saddik Ben Yahia. There were two groups of participants; second year LMD students of English and first year master students. Concerning second year students, they were 50 students and they were given the DCT during their session of linguistics by their teacher who was aware of the aim and directions of the DCT. The latter was answered in the same day by the majority of students. The rest of students were given enough time to fill the DCT. Thus, all of the copies were collected the next day. For first year master students, the group involved 50 students. It was administered by the researchers themselves during their methodology course. The participants were given the necessary instructions and directions on the DCT, and it was collected in the same day.

3.4. Population and Sampling

In order to have a clear investigation of using politeness when expressing disagreement in the university classes, two groups of populations were involved in this study. The first group was second year LMD students who were 224 students, and the second group was first year master student whose number was 96 student. As it was not possible to work with the whole population, fifty students were selected randomly from each level. It is worth noting that the participants of this study had been selected randomly in order to ensure reliability and objectivity and to reduce the risks of bias. In addition to that, the two levels (first year master and second year LMD students) were chosen in order to meet the purposes of this study. In other words, to make a comparison between them in terms of their pragmatic competence and politeness strategies.

3.5. Analyses Procedure

In order to investigate the relationship between social variables and politeness strategies in the realization of disagreement, the participants in the two levels were given a DCT which specified power difference and social distance between the interlocutors. The taxonomy of Muntigl and Turnbull (1998) was applied when identifying the utterances of disagreement. According to Muntigl and Turnbull (1998) there are four types of disagreements namely, irrelevancy claims, challenges, contradictions, counterclaims, and contradictions followed by counterclaims. They ranked the disagreement types from the most to the least face aggravating, irrelevancy claims is considered as the most face threatening disagreement. In this respect, Muntigl and Turnbull (1998) stated that "irrelevancy claims are meta-dispute-acts that comment on the conversational interaction" (p.39). One example of irrelevancy claims is the following situation wherein the addresser criticized the addressee's essay:

A: I think you supply more data to support your ideas

B: "So do you think my conclusion is weak?

The second disagreement type is challenges. In this type, the speaker demands that the addressee provides evidence for his claim as illustrated in the following example:

A: I think you should supply more data on your thesis.

B: why do you question my thesis without having any knowledge about it?

The third disagreement type for Muntigl and Turnbull is contradictions; they asserted that in contradictions "a speaker contradicts by uttering the negated proposition expressed by the previous claim" (p.42). This type is less face threatening than challenges and

irrelevancy claims because it does not decrease the capability of the other interlocutor. One example of this type of disagreement is the following:

A: “I think you should supply more data to support your ideas”

B: “I don’t agree with all what you have said”

The forth and the least face threatening act is counterclaims where the speaker does not contradict directly by using, for instance, reasons for his disagreement, for instance:

A: “I think you should supply more data to support your ideas”

B: “Any extras information will take us out of the topic, and I have chosen some aspects

That I stick to them”

Muntigl and Turnbull proposed that there exists a fifth disagreement type which is a combination of contradictions followed by counterclaims, as in the following example:

A: “I think you should supply more data to support your ideas”

B: “I don’t agree with you, because I did enough data that support my ideas”

The other data analyses procedure in this study follows Brown and Levinson’s model of politeness strategies. The latter are used in relation to some social variables in order to measure student’s use of politeness strategies when performing the speech act of disagreement.

It is worth mentioning that the above procedures are concerned with both qualitative and quantitative data analyses. Qualitative analyses for Flick and Steinke (2004) is used to describe realities from the participant’s point of view; and it seeks for a better understanding of social realities. In addition to that, qualitative analysis with its precise and

thick descriptions does not only depict reality, but also it opens further possibilities and expectations. In this study, the qualitative analysis is used to examine the subjects' pragmatic competence. On the other hand, quantitative analyses is a type of research which aims at explaining phenomena by collecting numerical data that are analyzed using mathematically based methods. Quantitative analysis is used to generate general results about student's pragmatic competence.

3.6. Limitations of the study

When carrying out this study the researchers detected few limitations which should be noted. It must be admitted that the WDCT may result in non naturalistic data. Students from both levels did not fully understand situation ten, hence, a further explanation was provided by the researchers and the teacher who helped in distributing the DCT. Moreover, some replies were obviously irrelevant and did not help the researchers. Nonetheless, findings of this study provide useful information.

Conclusion

This previous chapter clarified the research instrument used to collect data in this study, namely the discourse completion task. After that, it gave a comprehensive description of the DCT and how it is administered along with the explanation of the sampling process. This chapter ended with a brief description of the analyses procedure.

Section Two: Data Analysis and Results

Introduction

In this section data elicited by the research instrument are scrutinized. First, a quantitative analysis of the disagreement types used in each situation is provided; followed by the discussion of the obtained results. Then, the politeness strategies used are analyzed qualitatively before, moving to discussing the findings.

3.1. Quantitative Analysis of the Disagreement types

Situation 1

Table 1

The Frequency of the Disagreement Types Used by Participants from both Levels in Situation One

disagreement types	Level	Subjects	Percentage %
Irrelevancy claims	Second year	0	0%
	Master	0	0%
Challenges	Second year	14	26%
	Master	8	16%
Contradictions	Second year	16	32%
	Master	8	16%
Counterclaims	Second year	17	34%
	Master	31	62%
Contradictions	Second year	3	6%
counterclaims	Master	3	6%
Neutral	Second year	1	2%
	Master	0	0%

Under this situation, students were asked to disagree with their closest friend who praised his father who is their ex- teacher. As illustrated in table 1, no student from second year level used irrelevancy claims. Interestingly, (34%) of participants employed counterclaims. Additionally, (32%) of the respondents used challenges, and some of them (16%) applied contradictions. However, the rest of students (2%) did not use any of the five disagreement types. That is, they were neutral.

Concerning first year master student, more than half of the respondents (62%), expressed disagreement using counterclaims. However, (16%) used challenges and the same percentage for contradictions, and few participants (6%) employed contradictions followed by counterclaims.

Situation 2

Table 2: *The Frequency of the Disagreement Types Used by Participants from Both Levels in Situation Two*

Disagreement types	Level	Subjects	Percentage
Irrelevancy claims	Second year	0	0%
	Master	0	0%
challenges	Second year	3	6%
	Master	0	0%
contradictions	Second year	24	48%
	Master	27	54%
counterclaims	Second year	21	42%
	Master	23	46%
Contradictions followed by counterclaims	Second year	0	4%
	Master	0	0%
Neutral	Second year	2	4%
	Master	0	0%

In this situation, students were asked to disagree with their classmate in a seminar class. As it is clearly displayed in the table, more than half of master students (54%) expressed disagreement using contradictions, and nearly half of them (46%) used counterclaims, while the rest of participants did not use irrelevancy claims as well as contradictions followed by counterclaims.

Concerning second year level, nearly half of student (48%) used contradictions when disagreeing, (42%) employed counterclaims. Interestingly, (6%) of students used challenges. Additionally, few students (4%) were neutral.

Situation 3

Table 03

The Frequency of the Disagreement types Used by Participants from Both Levels in Situation Three

Disagreement Types	Levels	Number	Percentage
Irrelevancy claims	Second year	0	0%
	First year master	0	0%
Challenges	Second year	5	10%
	First year master	6	12%
Contradictions	Second year	33	66%
	First year master	25	59%
Counterclaims	Second year	10	20%
	First year master	17	34%
Contradictions followed by counterclaims	Second year	0	0%
	First year master	0	0%
Neutral	Second year	2	4%
	First year master	0	0%

In so far this situation is concerned, students were asked to disagree with their brother about 'Adam' who is one of their neighbors. Clearly displayed in the above table, the majority of second year student (66%) utilized contradictions and (20%) of them used counterclaims. Nevertheless, some students (10%) used challenges and few students (4%)

were neutral. For master students, half of the participants (50%) applied contradictions. A considerable percentage (34%) of them employed counterclaims. However, (10%) used challenges, and a small number (6%) used contradictions followed by counterclaims.

Situation 4

Table 04

The Frequency of the Disagreement types Used by Participants from Both Levels in Situation Four

Disagreement types	Levels	Subjects	Percentage
Irrelevancy claims	Second year	0	0%
	First year master	0	0%
Challenges	Second year	4	4%
	First year master	6	12%
Contradictions	Second year	19	39%
	First year master	14	28%
Counterclaims	Second year	15	30%
	First year master	30	
Contradictions Followed by Counterclaims	Second year	2	4%
	First year master	0	0%
Neutral	Second year	9	18%
	First year master	1	2%

In this situation, students were asked to disagree with the grocery seller about the quality of his oranges. Results illustrated in the above table shows that (39%) of second year students employed contradictions and (30%) of them used counterclaims. Yet, (19%) of the participants did not use any of the five types of disagreement. That is, they were neutral. Additionally, a small percentage of students (8%) applied challenges. The rest of them (4%) used contradictions followed by counterclaims. Concerning first year master students, the majority of them (60%) used counterclaims, and (28%) applied contradictions. In contrast, (12%) of the participants used challenges.

Situation 5

Table 05

The Frequency of the Disagreement types Used by Participants from Both Levels in Situation Five

Disagreement types	Level	Subjects	Percentage
Irrelevancy claims	Second year	0	0%
	First year master	0	0%
Challenges	Second year	2	4%
	First year master	1	2%
Contradictions	Second year	8	16%
	First year master	9	18%
Counterclaims	Second year	22	44%
	First year master	27	54%
Contradictions Followed by Counterclaims	Second year	3	6%
	First year master	5	10%
Neutral	Second year	14	28%
	First year master	8	16%

In so far this situation is concerned, the participants were asked to express their disagreement to their boss who decided to fire one of his employees. As illustrated above, more than half of master students (54%) used counterclaims, and some of them (18%) used contradictions. Interestingly, (16%) were neutral. For second year students, nearly half of them (44%) used counterclaims, (16%) of them employed contradictions, and (10%)

applied contradictions followed by counterclaims. Surprisingly, (28%) of the participants did not use any of the five types of disagreement .i.e. they were neutral.

Situation 6

Table 06

The Frequency of the Disagreement Types Used by Participants from Both Levels in Situation Six

Disagreement types	Levels	Subjects	Percentage
Irrelevancy claims	Second year	0	0%
	First year master	0	0%
Challenges	Second year	7	14%
	First year master	7	14%
Contradictions	Second year	23	46%
	First year master	18	36%
Counterclaims	Second year	14	26%
	First year master	16	32%
Contradictions Followed by counterclaims	Second year	4	8%
	First year master	6	12%
Neutral	Second year	2	4%
	First year master	1	2%

As indicated in the above table, nearly half of second year students (46%) employed contradictions, while (26%) of them used counterclaims, and (14%) used challenges.

Nevertheless, few participants (8%) applied contradictions followed by counterclaims. Additionally, (6%) of them were neutral.

Concerning first year master students, a considerable percentage of them (36%) employed contradictions, (32%) of them used counterclaims, while (14%) used challenges. Additionally, only (6%) did not use any of the five disagreement types. In other words, they were neutral.

Situation 7

Table 07

The Frequency of the Disagreement Types Used by Participants from Both Levels in Situation Seven

Disagreement types	Levels	Subjects	Percentage
Irrelevancy claims	Second year	0	0%
	First year master	0	0%
Challenges	Second year	1	2%
	First year master	2	4%
Contradictions	Second year	4	8%
	First year master	6	12%
counterclaims	Second year	28	56%
	First year master	29	58%
Contradictions Followed by counterclaims	Second year	15	30%
	First year master	12	24%
Neutral	Second year	2	4%
	First year master	1	2%

As it is displayed in the above table, the majority of master students (58%) employed counterclaims, while (24%) of them employed contradictions followed by counterclaims. However, few participants (12%) applied contradictions, and only (4%) used challenges. The rest of them (2%) were neutral. Concerning second year students, more than half of them (56%) utilized counterclaims, while (30%) used contradictions followed by

counterclaims. However, few respondents (4%) applied contradictions, and surprisingly, only (2%) of them employed challenges.

Situation 8

Table 08

The Frequency of the Disagreement Types Used by Participants from Both Levels in Situation Eight

Disagreement types	Levels	Subjects	Percentage
Irrelevancy claims	Second year	0	0%
	First year master	0	0%
Challenges	Second year	7	14%
	First year master	4	8%
Contradictions	Second year	5	10%
	First year master	7	14%
Counterclaims	Second year	29	58%
	First year master	28	56%
Contradictions Followed by Counterclaims	Second year	9	18%
	First year master	11	22%
Neutral	Second year	0	0%
	First year master	0	0%

As indicated in the above table, more than half of second year students (56%) used counterclaims, and some of them (18%) used contradictions and counterclaims. However,

few respondents (14%) employed challenges, and interestingly, only (10%) of them applied contradictions. Concerning master students, more than half of them (56%) employed counterclaims and some of them (22%) used contradictions followed by counterclaims. Nevertheless, few students (10%) applied contradictions as well as challenges with the frequency of (8%).

Situation 9

Table 09

The Frequency of the Disagreement Types Used by Participant from Both Levels in Situation Nine

Disagreement types	Levels	Subjects	Percentage
Irrelevancy claims	Second year	0	0%
	First year master	0	0%
Challenges	Second year	8	16%
	First year master	8	16%
Contradictions	Second year	3	6%
	First year	2	4%
Counterclaims	Second year	29	58%
	First year master	32	64%
Contradictions Followed by Counterclaims	Second year	10	20%
	First year master	8	16%
Neutral	Second year	0	0%
	First year master	0	0%

As illustrated in the above table, the majority of master students (64%) employed counterclaims, and some of them (16%) used counterclaims. In contrast, few students (4%) used contradictions. For second year students, more than half of them (58%) used counterclaims, (16%) applied challenges. However, few of them (6%) employed contradictions.

Situation 10

Table 10

The Frequency of the Disagreement Types Used by Participants from Both Levels in Situation Ten

Disagreement types	Levels	Subjects	Percentage
Irrelevancy claims	Second year	0	0%
	First year master	0	0%
Challenges	Second year	8	16%
	First year master	8	16%
Contradictions	Second year	2	4%
	First year master	2	4%
Counterclaims	Second year	29	58%
	First year master	32	64%
Contradictions Followed by counterclaims	Second year	10	20%
	First year	8	16%
Neutral	Second year	0	0%
	First year	0	0%

As indicated in the above table, a considerable number of second year students (38%) used counterclaims, while (30%) of them employed contradictions followed by counterclaims, and (26%) of them utilized contradictions. The rest of student did not use any of the five disagreement types. That is, they were neutral. Concerning first year master, the majority of students (60%) employed contradictions, while (24%) of them used contradictions followed by counterclaims. Nevertheless, (16%) of the respondents employed counterclaims.

Table 11

The Average Percentage of the Used Disagreement Types in the Ten Situations

Disagreement types	Second year	First year master
Irrelevancy claims	0%	0%
Challenges	8.4%	10.2%
Contradictions	29.2%	29.6%
Counterclaims	48.5%	40.6%
Contradictions Followed by counterclaims	10.8%	12.2%
Neutral	2.4%	6.8%

As shown in table (11) there is a slight difference between the two levels in the use of disagreement types. Both levels did not employ irrelevancy claims when disagreeing. In addition to that, challenges are used with the frequency of (8.4%) by second year students, while (10.2%) of master one student utilized this type of disagreement. Moreover, there is an equal employment of contradictions by both levels with the frequency of (29%).

Furthermore, first year master students used counterclaims more frequently (48%) than second year students (40%), and (12%) of second year students used contradictions followed by counterclaims, while (10%) of master one students applied this type of disagreement. Finally, (6%) of second year students were neutral. However, only (2%) of master one students were neutral.

3.1.1. Discussion of the Results

The findings of students' use of disagreement types revealed that the use of counterclaims is the most frequently used type by master one students (48.5%) as well as second year students with the frequency of (40.6%). When both levels used counterclaims, they propose another claim that does not directly contradict or challenge others claim. The second remarkable disagreement type used by both levels with nearly the same percentage (29%) is contradictions, and since counterclaims are considered for Muntigl and Turnbull (1995) as the least face threatening act, and contradictions as less face threatening acts than challenges and irrelevancy claims; one intriguing conclusion that can be drawn in this context is that both levels were not sever when they expressed disagreement. That is, they express less face threatening disagreement.

It can be noticed also that a small number (8%) of master one students and (10%) of second year students employed challenges. The latter is considered as one of the most face threatening acts. More importantly, irrelevancy claims was the least favored way of disagreement by the two levels since no student from both levels applied them, and since the irrelevancy claims were classified according to Muntigl and Turnbul (1998) as the most face threatening disagreement, this can strongly confirm the above results. In other words, both levels were not severe in performing the speech act of disagreement.

Another finding of students' use of disagreement types is that (6.8%) of second year students and (2.4%) of master one students did not express their disagreement using the five types namely, irrelevancy claims, challenges, contradictions, counterclaims, and contradictions followed by counterclaims. But rather, they supplied neutral responses namely, other speech acts and irrelevant responses.

To start with, some of second year students performed the speech act of refusal, such as "I refuse this decision, you cannot make a decision of any worker who is under my supervision, I am the only one who can decide because this is my job". Others performed the speech act of suggestion, as in the following example "if you went to fire someone you can fire a subordinate worker". And some others applied agreement "Adam's a good student, he work hard and he has a big ambition and I agree with him". Concerning master one students, they also employed other speech acts rather than disagreement such as order such as "Don't fire him. Let him stay working with me", and "Don't be such ignorant please!"

Second, both second year and master one students employed some irrelevant responses instead of expressing disagreement as it can be noticed in some of second year student replies " my father is the inspiration for me" and " I think you should mind your own business. Some for master students were neutral "I did not study with him to tell you if he was good or not".

In the light of these findings, it can be inferred that there is a higher percentage (6%) of second year students who did not use any of the five disagreement types than master one students (6%). This slight difference implies that as learning progress, EFL learners will acquire more pragmatic knowledge.

The last finding of the use of disagreement types is concerning the variety of their use. Generally speaking, (48%) of master students used counterclaims wherein they do not directly contradict or challenge other's claim by giving reasons for their disagreement. This can be noticed in the following reply: "Despite the negative side of modern technology, there is also a positive side for instance it makes our lives easy". (29%) used contradictions by using 'NO' such as "No, it is, check it again". (10.8%) employed contradictions followed by counterclaims wherein they contradict and gave counterclaims such as "I do not share with you the same idea because women have the right to work" and "the topic does not need very much details because if you do so, it will be boring and out of the topic", and (8.4%) applied challenges by using why and how like in "Oh! Really! Then how can you explain that bones, were found and that pictures were taken by scientist?" and "stop it already, who are you to judge, what do you know about others needs that push them to go and work". The rest of master one students were neutral such as "my father is the inspiration for me".

Concerning second year students, (40.6%) of them used counterclaims "on my opinion, modern technology lots of advantages in our life. It facilitates it and it helps in the different fields of our life". Here they gave reasons for their disagreement, and "yes I think that your father is a good teacher but, for me there were many teachers better than him». It can be noticed also that (29%) of second year students used contradictions by using 'NOT' as illustrated in the following examples "really! I don't think so I believe that Dinasors still exist and I have already red about them" and "NO, everyone know that Dinasors have existed in the very far past". In addition to that, (12.2%) used contradictions followed by counterclaims as illustrated in the following example "I don't agree with you, it's better for women to work, in order to help other women who are in need of help specially the job of "Doctors", and "honestly speaking, for me, he is not, since I could not recognize his way of

presenting information. I am so sorry». Moreover, (10.2%) employed challenges in their semantic formula “why? You do not see well, it is fresh and so delicious”. The rest of students (2%) were neutral as indicated in the following example “well, I have never studied with him to tell you whether he is the best or not”.

All in all, from the above discussions it can be said that master one students were more pragmatically appropriate in expressing disagreement. This implies that the higher proficiency EFL learners have, the more likely they acquire pragmatic knowledge.

With regard to the frequency of the disagreement types used, it is obvious that counterclaims are founded to be used noticeably by both levels of proficiency followed by contradictions. Add to this, both levels prefer not to use irrelevancy claims while disagreeing and they are more inclined to the use of contradictions followed by counterclaims as well as challenges.

3.2. Qualitative Analyses of the Politeness Strategies

Situation One:

In situation one, students were asked to disagree with one of their closest friends who claimed that his father was one of the best teachers in their high school. This implies that there is an equal authoritative role and a high level of familiarity.

In this situation it is noticed that more than quarter of second year students chose to do the FTA directly; through stating that the father is not the best teacher in different ways. To illustrate, “Actually your father wasn’t the best teacher in our high school.”, and “He is not good sometimes I do not get his point”. In the previous examples the participants were direct in their disagreement mainly because they considered it not necessary to soften the reply. More than half of the students used various politeness strategies. Indeed, the highest

frequency was for the use of partial disagreement strategy through which participants agree with the speaker about a part of what he said, at the same time disagreeing about a specific point using a contrasting conjunction. To exemplify, “For me your father was a really a good but I think there was other good teachers”. The second utilized strategy which is lower in the frequency of use is the employment of apology expressions. For instance, one of the participants wrote “Sorry I’m not agree with you”. The other strategy with a less frequency in use than the previous one is called avoiding disagreement strategy. The latter is employed through dealing with the same topic but avoiding contradicting about the subject (the father). For example, one of the students gave this reply “I think that all teachers are good but some of them have a great experience than the other that is what make a teacher better than the other”. The last strategy used is the statement of the FTA as a general rule. This can be noticed in the following example “we cannot say that someone is better than the other or this person is the best one. No one is perfect”. The previous strategies were used to soften the FTA, however, it is worth mentioning that very few students were obviously rude as illustrated in this example “ Talk about yourself what you achieve not your father”.

Concerning first year master students, the on record strategy, surprisingly, is represented by half of the frequency of using the strategy by second year students. Being direct is clearly stated in the following reply: “I do not think so”. Indeed, the majority of master students employed politeness strategies in this situation; and the most used one is apologizing strategy as when saying: “Excuse me, but your father was not the best teacher”. The next less frequent strategy is partial disagreement; as it is illustrated in the coming example: “He was a good teacher, but I prefer that teacher of science”. Using agreement is the next used strategy where students expressed their total agreement, for example: “Emm he was”. It can be noticed here that agreeing represents the highest level

of politeness in this situation. On the other hand, there are very few students who were rude as in the following example: “He is your father that is why you say that”.

In fact, in both levels of proficiency a number of students used the FTA directly without any mitigation. However, second year students outnumbered master students in being direct. It is worth mentioning that the use of agreement strategy by master students entails that they found it very harsh to express their disagreement. One can say that master students were more polite in their replies.

Situation Two

In this situation two classmates in a seminar class are discussing the effects of modern technology. The speaker claims that technology is endangering the environment. The participants are asked to express their disagreement taking into consideration that there is an equal authoritative role and a less level of familiarity.

On record strategy was used by second year students and it occupies the highest percentage. To illustrate, one of the participants replied with “I do not share with you the same idea”. The politeness strategies used are just two. The first one is partial disagreement which took the lion’s share. For example: “I think so too, however I’m sure that there are advantages”. Second, avoid performing disagreement strategy was used by smaller number of students “Modern technology gave us a lot of benefits”.

Directness is the most used strategy in the responses of first year master students in situation two. Many of them gave replies from the sort of the following examples: “Well I totally disagree”, “I think that modern technology pays much attention and care to the environment”. Regarding expressing disagreement indirectly, the rest of students were divided into three groups. The first and the largest group preferred partial disagreement. For instance, “It is true that there is a negative side of modern technology, however, there

is a positive side too". The second group consists of a smaller number of participants. They used apologizing as the following response shows: "Sorry, I do not agree with you". For the last group they avoided performing the disagreement through speaking about the same topic but, different aspect. For instance, "Technology facilitates life".

In fact, the frequency of employing on record strategy by second year students was high; yet, it was higher for master students. Hence, it can be said that a lot of students in both levels were direct. The rest of participants from second year used only two strategies while master students used three.

Situation three

Being equal in the authoritative role and having a high level of familiarity is what is embedded in situation three. The participants are supposed to play the role of a brother who performs the act of disagreement against his brother who praises one of the first brother's hard working classmates.

Indeed, second year students used the FTA directly as the most frequent strategy. Almost the same number of students resorted to partial disagreement as it is illustrated in the coming example: "Yeas he is a hard working classmate but he make noise in the class". The next utilized strategy with a large difference in the number of users when comparing it to the former is, avoid performing disagreement strategy "I think it is not a good habit to praise someone this may affect on him and turn him from a hard working to lazy one". Finally, second year students in situation three used address forms to soften the threat as in saying " My brother, he is not hard working".

In situation three master students employed five politeness strategies when they expressed their disagreement. The strategy that had the highest number of users was avoid performing disagreement strategy. To exemplify, the coming example was written: "Not

all what glitters is gold". The second most frequently used strategy is partial disagreement; as one participant replied: "He is a hard working but he makes a lot of noise". After that, there is apology employment "Pardon, I have an opposite idea". Address forms were used by few students "Brother I'm not sure about what you are saying". The last strategy is the use of colloquial language. For instance, "Adam! Cmmon". However, there is a good number of students who decided to do the FTA directly "No, You are wrong".

The remarkable similarity between participants in the two levels is that they had exactly the same frequency of using direct disagreement. But, it must be mentioned that they differ in the number of the strategies utilized. That is, master students varied their responses unlike, in the second level.

Situation Four

In situation four, an aged man in a grocery shop claims that the oranges are not fresh. The presence of the aged man entails that there is a low level of familiarity and a less dominant role for the grocery seller.

Concerning doing the FTA, Half of second year students applied it directly "I do not agree with your", "No you are wrong". Surprisingly, the next highest percentage is for those who were rude. In other words, they did not only do the FTA directly, but they made it harmful. This can be noticed in the following example: "It is better to keep comments to yourselfe". However, the rest of the participants invested many politeness strategies. In this situation, apologizing and using address forms strategies were used together and represents the most frequently used form. To illustrate, "Excuse me sir it is fresh". The next applied strategies with an equal number of users are, avoid performing disagreement, using address forms, and giving offers. To exemplify three students wrote: "Never judge a book by its cover", "Sir it is fresh", and "you can taste one if you want". After that second year

students used apologizing “Sorry it is good”. The last employed strategy is interrogatives use as in “But whey”.

Concerning master one students, the results states that a lot of them resorted to being direct in their replies. This is clearly shown in saying: “No, it is fresh”. The most indirect replies were performed through using address forms. For instance, “Sir I believe the oranges are fresh”. The next most utilized strategy is apologizing which in many responses appeared in the form of ‘Sorry’ or ‘Excuse me’, plus the expressed FTA. It is remarkable that master students used the two last mentioned strategies together with a frequency equal to that of using apologizing. For example, “Sorry uncle I guess it is”. Moreover, the participants tried to avoid performing disagreement through saying for instance: “These oranges are from my field I picked them this morning”. With the similar very small percentage agreeing and giving offers were expressed as in the two following examples:”Yeah it seems not fresh”, “You can try it”. Indeed, students used rude expressions with a frequency just a little bit above that of each of the two last strategies. One student replied with: “This is what is available take it or leave it”.

Students’ use of directness in both levels was high in the frequency. Yet, second year students were obviously more impolite because, half of them did not mitigate their responses and a good number were rude. In addition, in both levels participants were identical concerning the variety in strategies.

Situation Five

In situation five, a boss of a company decided to fire one of the employees who is supposed to work under the super vision of the participant. The latter is asked to disagree. The level of familiarity is low and the boss has the authoritative role.

Almost quarter of second year students expressed disagreement directly through ordering and refusing like those who wrote “No, do not fir him”. The FTA was mitigated by using address forms and defense strategies with equal frequency and which are illustrated in these replies: “Sir, but he is good”, “He is a very hard working person and also very serious in his work”. After that, a less frequent combination of apologizing and using address form strategies was employed. For instance, “Excuse me boss but this employee was a good one”. Then, students used apologizing as in: “Excuse me but do not do this”. The strategy of suggesting to express demand is represented by half of the frequency of use of the previous strategy. It is clearly stated in saying: “I think you may find another solution”. The same number of students used partial disagreement and cooperation strategy. Two respondents wrote: “He is wrong, but he deserve a chance”, and “I know what made you take such a decision but he need a chance”. It is worth mentioning that when talking to their supposed boss few participants were rude. For instance, “You do not have the right”.

For master students, on record strategy was used by some of them “I do not agree with you”. Defense strategy was applied by a number of students equal to the number of those who were direct. An example from their replies is: “I noticed that he is a hard worker and he loves his work”. The Highest frequency of use was occupied by the combination of the too politeness strategies, apologizing and using address forms. This mixture of strategies is best represented in the following example: “Excuse me sir! I think he is a good worker”. The other two employed strategies that are less frequent than all the previously mentioned ones are apologizing and using address forms. The two were found in replies such as, “Sorry I think it is not a good decision”, and “Sir, I do not agree with you”. In fact, being pessimistic, cooperative, in addition to suggesting to express demand are the least three used strategies by master students in situation five. As examples: “if you fire him you will

loose a hard worker and this will make the company in a hard state", "I know that the decision is yours but give him another chance", and "There are some employees that deserve another chance". It is worth mentioning that very few students chose to be rude. For instance, one participant used an order in saying "Don't fire him".

Many of second year students were direct when expressing their disagreement. However, only some master students preferred to do the FTA without any mitigation. Hence, there must be a difference in insights. Interestingly, the same number of strategies was found in the two levels.

Situation Six

In this situation a wife tells her husband that she does not believe in the existence of Dianasors. The husband (the participant) does not agree with her. This implies that there is an equal authoritative role and a high level of familiarity.

With regard to the responses of second year students, nearly three quarters of them were direct "No, this is scientifically proved". The next highest frequency was fore the use of address forms. The following reply is an example "No dear they existed". A less number of students utilized interrogatives, like in the coming response: "what about documentaries that we always watch on TV".

For master students the majority of them preferred to do the FTA directly. For instance, one participant replied: "No, I think that they have existed". The rest of students used mitigating strategies. The first one with the highest frequency is the use of address forms such as 'dear' and 'honey'. The next strategy is apologizing "Sorry I believe the opposite". Finally, interrogatives were employed by very few students "How can you explain that bones founded by scientists".

The remarkable point concerning the responses of students from both levels of proficiency is that most of them were direct. This implies that the majority considered it the most suitable verbal behaviour in such a situation.

Situation Seven

The seventh situation implies that there is an equal authoritative role and a high level of familiarity. The interlocutors are friends who are talking about working women. The participants are asked to disagree with their friends who believe that women should stay home.

In this situation more than three quarters of second year students were direct. They provided replies such as “I think you are wrong”. The rest of the participants utilized avoid performing disagreement strategy which is the most used. To exemplify, “Many women work outside”. In addition to the appearance of partial disagreement which was used by some students “It is good to stay home, but, there is no problem with women who work”.

The majority of master students did not mitigate their responses in situation seven. They wrote replies as: “I do not agree with you women have the right to work”. However, there is a variety of the used politeness strategies. The most used strategy is apologizing through writing ‘Sorry’ or ‘Excuse me’. Avoid performing disagreement is the next less frequently used strategy. For example, “Actually the situation differ according the needs of each one”. Then, colloquial language strategy was less frequently employed than the former strategy. The use is illustrated in the following reply: “Cmmon! be open minded”. Using interrogatives and being cooperative has the same number of users. To illustrate, “If all women stay at home then who would take care of orphan children?” and, “I know that you mean that women have responsibilities at home”. Finally, first year master students in this situation mitigated the FTA through employing address forms “Friends, I’m not with you”.

Indeed, most of master students performed the FTA in a direct way yet, the frequency of use was less than that of second year students. It is worth mentioning that in contrast with second year students, first year master students applied a variety of mitigating strategies.

Situation Eight

Having an equal authoritative role but, a less level of familiarity are the entailed variables in situation eight. A classmate criticizes his fellow's essay on the bases that more data are needed to support the ideas. The participants are supposed to disagree.

In situation eight most of second year students did not mitigate their responses as in the following example: "I have supplied enough data in my essay". The rest of the participants applied some politeness strategies to soften the threat. To start with, avoid performing disagreement is the most frequently used strategy "Everyone has his style of writing". Then, students utilized apologizing. After that interrogatives were used as in the following example: "Is that what you see".

More than three quarters of master students were direct "I'm satisfied with what I have done". Hence, only few of them used some politeness strategies. First, Apologizing as in "Excuse me, I supplied it with enough data". After that, interrogatives were used by very few students whose one of their replies was "Why you are saying that". The coming example clarifies the way in which jocks were used to soften disagreement "Supplying more data is like putting too much makeup".

In both levels of proficiency the majority of participants were direct. This implies that they considered it unnecessary to save the other face in such a situation. In addition, they employed the same number of strategies.

Situation Nine

In this situation a brother surprises her sister with a present in the occasion of her birth day. The sister expresses her wish to celebrate it. However, the brother asserts that only children celebrate birth days. The participants are supposed to play the role of the sister and disagree with the brother. There is an equal authoritative role and a high level of familiarity.

The majority of second year students chose to do the FTA directly; to illustrate, one participant replied: “No, I’m not a child and I will celebrate as my peers”. The rest of students preferred to soften their responses. Address forms were founded in most of students’ semantic formulas of situation nine “Brother, but I want to”. The next two strategies were used with equal frequency. The First one is avoid performing disagreement strategy through which answers from the sort of the following example were used: All I want is to enjoy this special day”. The second strategy is, the use of interrogatives “Why I can’t”. After that, few students apologized when they performed the FTA. In addition to the strategy of partial disagreement through which a student responded with: “Yeah, I am not a child but I want”. Then, stating the FTA as a general rule is the least used strategy. For example: “Each one like to enjoy his life and birth day”.

As far as master students are concerned, more than half of them were direct in expressing their disagreement. Semantic formulas from the sort of the following were used: “Celibrating birth days is not related to age”. Address forms were the next most frequently employed expressions to mitigate the responses “Brother that is not true”. After that, apologizing is the succeeding strategy with a lower frequency in use, followed by avoiding the performance of the FTA strategy “What is important is that you have

remembered". At the bottom of the list, interrogatives were utilized by very few students "Why only children celebrate their birth day?".

In both levels of proficiency, a lot of students employed on record strategy in their replies. However, second year students' collection of strategies was larger than that of first year master students.

Situation Ten

In situation ten, a sister and her brother are watching the movie '*Titanic'*. When the first mate decides to save women and children first before the boot sinks, the sister claims that this makes women look week, while it is not the truth for her. The participants are supposed to play the role of the brother who is in contrast with his sister's point of view. The situation implies that there is an equal authoritative role and a high level of familiarity.

In this situation it was founded that nearly three quarter of second year students decided to do the FTA directly "Women have less power than men". The rest of them utilized address forms and partial disagreement to reduce the threat. To illustrate, "Sister you are wrong" and, and "Women are strong but not as men".

In the tenth situation, more than three quarters of master students preferred to be direct as in the coming example: "Women are week". The other biggest number of participants mitigated their replies through addressing the interlocutor by certain forms "Dear, you are wrong". Then, a smaller number favored apologizing as in the following example: "Excuse me, you are totally wrong". At the end, partial disagreement was employed as in the coming reply: "It is true that you are not week, yet, we are stronger".

In fact, in both levels of proficiency directness was the choice. But, master students outnumbered second year students in the number of the strategies uesd.

3.2.1. Discussion of the Results

The use of certain politeness strategies when expressing disagreement varied in both levels according to the situation. Moreover, the number of users differentiated from one level to the other and from one situation to another. The inequality was due to some factors.

In situation one, master students were more polite than second year students, also they employed agreement strategy unlike in the other group of participants. However, it must be admitted that most of the respondents from both levels mitigated their responses despite the fact that there were of an equal authoritative roles and a high level of familiarity (closest friends). Indeed, this is not the case for situation seven in which there is the same equal authoritative role and the high level of familiarity, that is, the majority of students from both levels were direct. This implies that the subject being discussed in situation one is the reason behind the employment of the mitigating strategies. In other words, the act of disagreeing in situation one was harmful for the friend whose father is the subject. Yet, the priority in the number of politeness strategies users is for master students.

Concerning situation two, many students from both levels of proficiency were direct in their disagreement. The rest of master students used three politeness strategies while second year students applied two. Surprisingly, the majority of students from the two levels mitigated the replies although they were classmates. On the other hand, in situation eight in which the interlocutors are classmates also, the vast majority of students were direct. One can say that the reason behind this is the place where the conversation was conducted. That is, being in a seminar class with the presence of teachers obliged the participants to mitigate the responses. From what was previously mentioned it can be said

that most students from both levels, with the superiority of master students, were pragmatically competent in dealing with the variable of place.

In situation three it is noticed that the majority of students in the two levels softened the FTA. The findings contradict with the fact that there is an equal authoritative role and a high level of familiarity. Undoubtedly, the native culture is the rationale behind preferring to be polite. That is, the norm is that brothers respect each other when speaking to each other. In contrast, a considerable part from both levels in situation ten was direct, taking into consideration that the interlocutors have equal authoritative role and they are familiar to each other just like in situation three. Certainly, the same reason that made participants polite in situation three led them to opt for directness. In the native culture when a brother(male) contradict with his sister(female) he would not give much attention to reducing the damage of the face; because this may lead to the loose of the brother's face himself. This assumption is confirmed in situation six where most of the students were direct. However, in situation nine where there is an equal authoritative role and a high level of familiarity the majority of students were direct.

In situation four where there is a low level of familiarity and a less dominant role, half of second year students were direct and some of them preferred to be rude. This denotes that the majority do not have the needed pragmatic competence to deal appropriately with such situations. With regard to master students, most of them employed mitigating strategies to save the aged man's face. Yet, still a good number of them were direct. Hence, they are more pragmatically appropriate in their replies than participants from the other level. In situation five, some of second year students were direct; the others utilized various strategies while expressing their disagreement. Concerning master students only few of them did the FTA without any mitigation. As a result, the majority of students from both levels did respect the position of the interlocutor.

With regard to the politeness strategies used, master students used fourteen strategy while second year students used eleven. Phrased differently, master students employed more strategies which implies that the period of pragmatic instruction helped in developing the mechanisms of reducing the threat of the FTAs through employing a variety of semantic formulas.

From the obtained results, it can be concluded that master students have more pragmatic knowledge than second year students concerning the use of the appropriate semantic formulas in relation to socio-pragmatic factors (situations four and five). However, the norms of the native culture, sometimes, substitutes the social variables (social power and social distance).

All in all, the findings of the current study reveals that with increasing proficiency level, learners use of directly on record way of disagreeing decreases, and indirect off record way of disagreeing increases. The examination of the fifth research question shows that factors namely, power difference, age, place, subject, and the cultural norms have an effect on EFL learners' use of politeness strategies when disagreeing. The investigation of the third question indicates that students from both levels use almost the same politeness strategies, but with different frequencies. However, Master students use more variety of strategies. Actually, first year master students have better awareness about the face wants of their interlocutors; and, they are more appropriate than second year students in dealing with some situation (situation four). The hypothesis of the present study which assumes that more EFL learners are exposed to pragmatic knowledge, the more their pragmatic competence is developed, and they will be able to use various politeness strategies when expressing disagreement is confirmed. However, the degree of development is not significant. Hence, the teachers are asked to give more importance to providing the needed pragmatic knowledge so that students will be able to reach effective communication.

Conclusion

This section presented and scrutinized the results yielded by the research instrument used in the current study. Taking into consideration the designed aims of the research, both quantitative and qualitative analysis of data were employed. The findings were discussed and, however, partially confirm the hypothesis which this study revolves around.

General Conclusion

Indubitably, pragmatic knowledge is of crucial importance in the field of second language learning. In fact, disagreement as a FTA is expressed by all the speakers of the community in their daily interaction. However, the threat of the performed act can be reduced through employing mitigating strategies, the use of which is conditioned to certain factors (social distance, power difference, place, and cultural norms). This dissertation is a step in the direction of discovering whether students' pragmatic competence in terms of using politeness strategies when expressing disagreement is well developed after a period of pragmatic instruction, or not. To reach the goals of the present study, a comparison was made between two levels of proficiency namely, second year students and master one students.

This research work comprises three chapters. The first two chapters mirrored a review of the related literature. The third chapter, however, took as its major concern the field investigation, and it is divided into two sections. The first section was devoted to expounding on the methodology deployed in the present research work. The second section dealt with the analysis and discussion of the obtained results. According to the findings of the DCT, first year master students are more pragmatically competent in terms of using politeness strategies when encountering situations which embed certain variables (power difference, subject, etc). However, the difference between the two levels is not significant. Therefore, the hypothesis of this study is confirmed, but, partially.

Recommendations for Further Research

Some recommendations are highlighted as a result of this study. The findings show that there is no significant progress in the use of politeness strategies when encountering situations in which specific social variables are embedded. Hence, it is highly recommended to investigate the reasons behind this problem. Furtheremore, the research was conducted to make a comparison between two levels of EFL learners at the University of Mohammed Seddik Ben Yahia/ Jijel. However, the target culture must be taken into consideration. In other words, investigating whether the semantic formulas used by EFL learners are loaded by expressions of the native culture or not. With regard to the pedagogical recommendations, more time must be devoted to the teaching of the module 'pragmatics'. In addition, practicing the theoretical pragmatic instructions is of crucial importance to make sure that those rules are fully acquired by students.

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