Strategies of Making Suggestions by Jordanian and American Undergraduate University Students *

Ms. Rana Saeed Mohamad Mohammad**

Prof. Aqlah Mahmoud Alsamadi***

The results revealed the variations in almost most of the suggestion types.

ملخص:

تهدف هذه الدراسة إلى مقارنة الإستراتيجيات التي يستعملها الطلبة الأردنيون والأمريكيون في مرحلة الدراسة الجامعية لإعطاء الإقتراحات والرد عليها. كما تسعى هذه الدراسة إلى معرفة أكثر الإستراتيجيات التي يستعملها الطلبة الأردنيون والأمريكيون في مرحلة الدراسة الجامعية لإعطاء الإقتراحات و الرد عليها شيوعا.

تتكون عينة الدراسة من 60 طالبا جامعيا: 30 طالبا أردنيا من جامعة فيلادلفيا و 30 طالبا أمريكيا من جامعة نيويورك، و قد تم جمع البيانات بواسطة استبانة تحوي على 8 مواقف لإعطاء الاقتراح و 8 مواقف للرد على الاقتراح، و قد تم تصنيف 960 إجابة و تحليلها تباعا.

أظهرت نتائج الدراسة أن الطلبة الأردنيون و الأمريكيون يميلون إلى إستعمال إستراتيجيات مختلفة لتقديم الإقتراح، بينما يميل الطلبة إلى إستخدام إستراتيجيات متشابهة عند الرد على الإقتراح.

الكلمات المفتاحية: استراتيجيات، الطلبة الأردنيون والأمريكيون، مرحلة الدراسة الجامعية.

Abstract:

The purpose of this contrastive pragmatic study is to investigate the similarities and differences between the strategies used by Jordanian and American undergraduate university students when making and responding to suggestions. Furthermore, this study aims at investigating the most frequent suggestion strategies used by Jordanian and American undergraduate university students for making and responding to suggestions. To this end, sixty undergraduate university students, thirty undergraduate Jordanian university students of various majors studying at Philadelphia University, and thirty undergraduate American university students of various majors studying at The State University of New York were asked to complete a Discourse Completion Task (DCT) consisting of sixteen situations in which their suggestion act was explored. The research data were analyzed descriptively using frequencies and percentages.

Introduction

In intercultural communication, FL speakers must in addition to accruing grammatical rules to achieve linguistic accuracy, internalize sociolinguistic rules that can assist them to choose the appropriate form. For example, Gumperz, (1978) states that the interpretation of communicative intent is not predictable on the basis of referential meaning alone. Matters of context, social presuppositions, knowledge of the world, and individual background all play a crucial role in interpretation. Some researchers like Wolfson (1981) also demonstrate that a situation that could elicit a certain speech act in one culture may fail to do so in another culture. Furthermore, Saleh (2013, p. 1) demonstrates that "communicating effectively in a language requires that the speaker should properly master the linguistic, sociolinguistic and socio-cultural and pragmatic rules of that language, which will enable him/her to use the right language in the right context for the right purpose". Successful communication between human beings, either within a culture or between cultures, requires that the message and meaning intended by the speaker is correctly received and interpreted by the listener. However, most FL learners may encounter difficulties due to lack of sociolinguistic awareness.

Therefore, communicating with speakers of other languages requires both linguistic and pragmatic competence. Fraser (2010, p.1) states that "pragmatic competence has been defined as the ability to communicate the intended message with all its nuances in any socio-cultural context and to interpret the message of the interlocutor as it was intended". Pragmatic competence is the key to effective communication in a second language. While communicative competence and grammatical competence are explicitly taught and developed in the EFL classroom, developing pragmatic competence is often overlooked. However, it is actually the skill which native

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speakers subconsciously use to define a non-native speaker as a successful communicator and, hence, as someone they would like to talk to, help, be friends with and even hire (Taguchi, 2009).

For years, teachers of EFL often chose not to focus on pragmatic knowledge in their classroom. Instead, they focused on linguistic knowledge. This resulted in pragmatic failure when EFL students actually communicate with other students from other cultures. The only solution to minimize pragmatic failure between native and non-native speakers is through acquiring pragmatic competence which refers to the ability to use the language in an effective way in order to understand language in context. Therefore, a great deal of studies have been conducted across different languages to hypothesize the universalities and variations in regard to different speech acts such as request (Belza, 2008), Apology (Fahey, 2005), complaint (Salmani Nodoushan, 2007), compliment (Wolfson, 1981), refusal (Felix-Brasdefer, 2008), among which suggestion speech act has received scant attention.

Suggestions are types of speech acts that differ considerably from one language to another. Native speakers of English, for example, might consider the way Arabic speaker produce or respond to suggestions strange because they understand the words and the linguistic forms without linking them to their cultural rules which govern them, and vice-versa. Pishghadam and Sharafadini (2011) state that Suggestions are frequently produced whether in our daily interactions such as receiving suggestions from others, or in academic settings such as a class in which students receive teachers' hints. Generally, a suggestion is a directive type of speech act stated as a possibility by the speaker which is believed to be desirable for the hearer to perform a future course of action (Sum-Hung Li, 2010). Regarding the intricate complexities of this speech act in different cultures, it seems essential to investigate suggestion expressions in different languages' discourse patterns. Therefore, this study adopts the contrastive analysis approach to investigate the differences between American English and Jordanian Arabic, and find patterns of suggestion act in the two cultures.

Problem of the Study

In the field of EFL, there have been some efforts to study and investigate the strategies of suggestions which are used in different socio-cultural contexts (Martínez-Flor, 2005; Li, 2009; Bu, 2011, among others). All these studies point out that EFL learners have problems regarding the use of suggestion strategies in different cultural contexts, and they call for paying more attention to sociolinguistic and pragmatic competences in EFL classrooms. Being instructors of English, the researchers have taught various EFL learners from different Arab countries and noticed that they face difficulties in using the speech acts, which they learn, properly in various social contexts. Moreover, it was noticed that most EFL textbooks rarely stress presenting the necessary strategies which are needed by EFL students to express different forms of speech acts in real life situations.

Questions of the Study

This study aims at pointing out the different strategies of suggestion used by Jordanian and American undergraduate students through answering the following questions:

1. What are the most frequent strategies used by Jordanian and American undergraduate university students for making and responding to suggestions?

2. What are the similarities and differences between the strategies used by Jordanian and American undergraduate university students for making and responding to suggestions?

Significance of the Study

The importance of this study stems from its attempt to investigate
the cultural norms which govern both the Jordanian and American societies when making and responding to suggestions, and may reveal some of the difficulties they face in this are. EFL instructors and students as well as textbook designers may benefit from such work. Moreover, to the researcher›s knowledge, no previous study has investigated the speech act of suggestion in the Jordanian Arabic context.

Definition of Terms

The following terms will have the following meanings in the study:

Linguistic Competence: Chomsky (1965) defines linguistic competence as the innate linguistic knowledge that allows a person to match sounds and meanings. In Aspects of the Theory of Syntax, Chomsky wrote, "We thus make a fundamental distinction between competence (the speaker-hearer's knowledge of his language) and performance (the actual use of language in concrete situations)."

Semi Modals: are verbs that sometimes behave like modal auxiliary verbs, such as Dare, need, used to, and ought to.

Speech Act: Austin (1962), Searle (1969), (1979), Bach and Harnish (1979) and Allan (1994) define speech acts as acts of speaking or writing when someone (the speaker) says or writes something to someone else (the hearer) at a certain time in a certain place-often as part of a longer discourse. This study adopts this definition all through the paper.

Pragmatics: To Crystal (1997, p. 301), pragmatics is "the study of language from the point of view of users, especially of the choices they make, the constraints they encounter in using language in social interaction and the effects their use of language has on other participants in the act of communication". In this paper, pragmatics covers only the strategies of giving and responding to suggestions in Jordanian Arabic and English by EFL and native speakers of English.

Pragmatic Competence: Canale (1988, p. 90) defines pragmatic competence as the "illocutionary competence, or the knowledge of the pragmatic conventions for performing acceptable language functions, and sociolinguistic competence, or knowledge of the sociolinguistic conventions for performing language functions appropriately in a given context". In this study, pragmatic competence is measured by the Discourse Completion Test (DCT) prepared by the researcher, which tests the participants' use of the strategies of suggestions.

Suggestion: Rintell (1979, p.99) defines of suggestion which is "a state in which the speaker asks the hearer to take some action which the speaker believes will benefit the hearer, even one that the speaker should desire". In this study, such state is represented by the various suggestion strategies included in the DCT.

In this study, the speech act of suggestion is studied through a Discourse Completion Test (DCT) which includes a number of proper situations that demand the respondents to write down the responses to such situations.

Strategy: It is the words and expressions which language users use when suggesting something or responding to a suggestion. This content is determined by the suggestion strategy used.

Explicit Instruction: Rosenshine, (1987, p.34) defines explicit instruction as "a systematic method of teaching with emphasis on proceeding in small steps, checking for student understanding, and achieving active and successful participation for all students".

Implicit Instruction: Ellis (1994) defines implicit instruction as the "acquisition of knowledge about the underlying structure of a complex stimulus environment by a process which takes place naturally, simply and without conscious operations".

Related Studies

In the field of EFL, there have been some efforts to study and investigate speech acts in general and the speech act of suggestion and its strategies in specific (Bu ,2011; Cohen, 1996; Gahrouei, 2013, Martínez-Flor ,2005; Martínez-Flor and Soler ,2007 and others). All these researchers point out the importance of developing the pragmatic competence of EFL learners in order to communicate properly.

Martínez Flor and Fukuyab (2005) studied the effects of using various types of instruction, explicit and implicit, on the acquisition of pragmatic competence in the classroom setting, and specifically in the English as a Foreign Language (EFL) classroom. The researchers examined the effects of instruction on learners' pragmatic

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development of the speech act of suggestions. The aim of this study was to determine which type of instruction was more effective in developing learners' pragmatic competence regarding their production, awareness and confidence when judging the appropriateness of suggestions in different situations. The results of the investigation showed that, in comparison with the control group, both the explicit and implicit groups improved their pragmatic competence regarding their production, awareness and confidence when judging the appropriateness of suggestions in different situations. Moreover, when comparing the explicit and implicit groups' performance in the post-test no statistical differences were observed between the two instructional treatments, which illustrates the effects of both explicit and implicit instruction to develop learners' pragmatic competence in the EFL classroom.

Martínez Flor and Guerra (2006) investigated the role of foreign language classroom instruction and the effectiveness of an explicit teaching of pragmatic aspects, such as the speech act of suggesting, to improve learners' grammatical accuracy and pragmatic appropriateness. The study had two objectives: (1) to analyze the amount and type of suggestions used by EFL learners, as well as the grammatical mistakes they make; and (2) to ascertain whether learners receiving some sort of formal instruction on appropriate speech act forms or structures will improve their linguistic and pragmatic competence. The results of the study showed that learners receiving explicit instruction tend to use more correct strategies when suggesting.

Martínez Flor and Soler (2007) studied the role of operationalized explicit and implicit instruction on developing learners' pragmatic awareness of suggestions in both second and foreign language contexts. The participants of the study consisted of learners of English as a foreign language (EFL) distributed into three classes. Pre and post-tests were designed to measure the effects of instruction on participants' awareness of suggestions. Results showed the positive effects of instruction on learners' pragmatic awareness of suggestions, and stressed that both explicit and implicit instructional approaches are needed to develop learners' pragmatic awareness in the EFL classroom.

Li (2009) studied the syntactic forms and pragmatic strategies used by Cantonese students in making suggestions using English language. The participants of the study were Australian and Cantonese students. The findings of the study showed, in terms of syntactic forms, that Cantonese students tended to use fewer syntactic types in making suggestions. In addition, they did not use complex sentences to express suggestions. In terms of pragmatic strategies, Cantonese and Australian students used similar strategies to express perspective, directness and politeness in general. However, they showed significant differences in their choices of suggestion strategies due to the differences between the two languages.

Bu (2011) studied the suggestion strategies used by Chinese learners of English. The participants of the study were university students divided into three groups: ten native English speakers, ten Chinese learners of English and ten native Chinese speakers. The researcher used a Discourse Completion Test (DCT) to collect the data. The results of this study revealed that although all three groups used opting out suggestion strategies, the Chinese learner of English group displayed direct suggestion strategies and hedged suggestion strategies more frequently than the native English group.

Pishghadam and Sharafadini (2011) contrasted English and Persian with regard to suggestion speech act. The participants of the study were Iranian university students who were asked to complete a DCT which consisted of six situations in which their suggestion act was explored. The results showed a variation in the types of suggestion used by the participants. Furthermore, gender proved to be statistically significant. Finally, the researchers stressed the need of presenting pedagogical implications in the context of second language learning.

Salemi, Rabiee and Ketabi (2012) compared the effects of implicit versus explicit instruction and feedback in the development of pragmatic competence of Iranian EFL learners of English in terms of the speech act of suggestion. The participants of this study consisted of 100 intermediate EFL learners of English who were

randomly assigned to four experimental groups and a control group. Each experimental group participated in two twenty-minute successive sessions. Data were collected using an immediate post-test as well as a delayed post-test which was administered a month after the post-test. Results of the study showed that the explicit methods of instruction has a much better influence on Persian EFL learners.

Gahrouei (2013) examined the strategies used in performing the speech act of suggestion by Persian EFL learners in order to see whether Persian suggestions are formulaic in pragmatic structure as in English suggestions. The study had two context-external variables: social distance and social dominance. To fulfill the objectives of this study, the researcher used a DCT to collect the data. The findings indicated that Persian suggestions are as formulaic in pragmatic structures as English. Also, the two context-external variables may be found to have significant effect on the frequency of the intensifier in different situations.

Heidari (2013) investigated the pragmatic strategies used by Iranian EFL learners in making suggestions in their L2. Their suggestions were compared with 30 American and another 30 Iranian students who made suggestions in their first language. A DCT and open role-plays were used to collect the data, which were analyzed based on three aspects of making suggestions at macro level (perspective, directness and politeness) and a number of micro strategies. The results showed a general tendency towards making suggestions using almost direct language actions. Moreover, gender, relationship between interlocutors and the topic on which suggestions were made, also appeared to be statistically significant. The findings of the study were discussed in the light of cross-cultural differences and its pedagogical implications were elaborated on.

Aminifard, Safaei and Askari (2014) investigated how Iranian EFL learners employ the speech act of suggestion. For this aim, 105 Iranian EFL learners participated in this study. A DCT was used to collect the data related to the suggestion forms used by the participants. The findings revealed similarities and differences between English natives and Iranian EFL learners in terms of suggestion forms produced. They also

showed that language proficiency levels were not significant in terms of producing the speech act of suggestion. However, participants› gender was statistically significant. It was also found that Iranian EFL learners transferred their L1 structures in using suggestion forms.

Moreover Farnia, Sohrabie and Abdul Sattar (2014) investigated the production and comprehension of the speech act of suggestion by Iranian native speakers of Farsi. To this end, seventeen Iranian university students at Payame Noor University participated in the study. To collect the data, the researcher used an oral DCT and a follow-up post-structured interview form. The questionnaire was adopted from Bu (2011) and the responses were then transcribed and analyzed based on Martinez-Flor's (2005) coding scheme of speech act of suggestion. The findings showed that the participants tended to use more directive strategies than indirect strategies. Moreover, the data revealed the frequent use of mitigating devices to redress the face-threatening act.

Gu (2014) investigated how Chinese EFL learners make suggestions in English, through comparing the linguistic features of suggestion speech act as well as suggestion strategies used by Chinese EFL learners and native speakers of English. The results showed that Chinese learners used significantly more modal verbs, explicit performatives and conditional structures than native English speakers, whereas native English speakers used more Wh-questions and Let's structures than Chinese learners. The results also showed that the Chinese EFL learners resembled native English speakers in the use of direct suggestion strategies, but the Chinese EFL learners used significantly more conventionalized indirect suggestion strategies than native English speakers.

It is noticed that there have been a number of studies focusing on the speech act of suggestion, and the major strategies used to perform it. On the other hand, no study has been conducted on the speech act of suggestion in Jordanian Arabic. Therefore, this study is intended to investigate its realizations through American English and Jordanian Arabic language in order to detect the intercultural similarities and variations.

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Sample of the Study

The sample of the study was chosen from two universities: Philadelphia Private University Jordan and The State University of New York, The United States of America. The students were registered in the first semester of the academic year 2015/2016. The chosen sample was distributed as follows:

Thirty undergraduate Jordanian university students of various majors studying at Philadelphia University, and thirty undergraduate American university students of various majors from The State University of New York. The Jordanian students were selected purposefully from one section of the undergraduate students in the language center which was taught by the researcher herself. The American students were those who agreed to participate in the study.

Instrumentation and Data Collection

To achieve the purpose of this study, the researchers used a Discourse Completion Task (DCT) to measure students' progress in suggestion strategies. This Task consists of situations that present a number of different social relations, specifying the setting and the social distance followed by incomplete dialogues. The subjects were asked to provide the speech act for a given context (See Appendix A for this DCT and Appendix B for its translation into Arabic).

Data Analysis

The data were analyzed quantitatively and qualitatively. The responses of the students were coded and calculated to investigate the most frequently used strategy by each group. The data included 960 responses, 480 responses for making suggestion and 480 responses for responding to suggestion. After analyzing the responses, they were compared and contrasted together to find out the similarities and differences between the two groups regarding the strategies they used.

A suggestion taxonomy by Abolfathiasl (2013) was utilized to analyze the suggestion strategies, and also their frequency and percentage were calculated.

Findings of the Study

This study aims to compare and contrast the use of the speech act of suggestion by Jordanian and American undergraduate university students.

Results of the First Question and their Discussion

The first question of this study is related to the most frequent strategies used by Jordanian and American undergraduate university students for making and responding to suggestions. To answer this question, the researchers calculated the students' responses on the DCT.

Making Suggestions Strategies

To answer this part of the first question, a close examination of the data reveals that Jordanian and American undergraduate students employed a number of varied strategies when performing or responding to suggestions with different percentages. Table 1 presents the frequencies and percentages of expressing suggestion strategies used by Jordanian and American undergraduate students.

Table 1:

Frequencies and Percentages of Making Suggestion Strategies Used by Jordanian and American Undergraduate Students

Suggestion Strategy	Linguistic Structure	Jordanian		American	
		Frequency	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage
	Performative Verb and Noun of Suggestion	4	1.66	21	8.75
Direct	Imperatives and Negative Imperatives	100	41.6	30	12.5
	Let›s	25	10.41	20	8.33

Suggestion Strategy	Linguistic Structure	Jordanian		American	
		Frequency	**Percentage**	**Frequency**	**Percentage**
Non-Conventionally Indirect	Psudo-Cleft Structure (Impersonal)	0	0	2	.833
	Extra-Posed to-clauses (Impersonal)	1	.416	2	.833
	Hints	0	0	7	2.91
Conventionally Indirect	Modals and Semi Modals	59	24.58	67	27.91
	Conditionals	27	11.25	24	10
	Wh-Questions (Interrogative)	11	4.58	46	19.1
	Yes-No Questions (Interrogative)	13	5.41	21	8.75
	Total	240	100	240	100

As presented in Table 1, despite the fact that both groups of students used some similar strategies to make suggestions, they differed in many. Imperatives and negative imperatives (41.6) was the most frequently used strategy by Jordanian undergraduate students to make suggestions, followed by Modals and Semi modals (24.58), Conditionals (11.25) and Let's (10.41), whereas Yes-No questions (5.41), Wh questions (4.58), Performative verbs (1.66) and Extra-Posed to-clauses (Impersonal) (.416) were the least used strategies. As for the strategies used by American undergraduate students, we found that Modals and Semi modals (27.91) were the most frequently used strategy by American undergraduate students to express suggestions, followed by

Wh-questions (19.1), Imperatives and negative imperatives (12.5), Conditionals (10), Yes-No questions and performative verbs (8.75) and Let's (8.33), while the least frequently used strategies to express suggestions used by American undergraduate students were Hints (2.91) and Pseudo-cleft structure (Impersonal) and Extra-posed to clauses (Impersonal) (.833).

Discussion

Noticing the utterances for expressing suggestions, it was clear that both the Jordanian and the American participants used varied strategies to express suggestions and show their points of view. For the American participants, using modals and semi modals was the most frequent strategy to make suggestions, unlike the

Jordanian participants who most used positive and negative imperatives to express suggestions. This difference between the two groups is shown clearly in their responses to the DCT.

Generally, several noticeable areas of variations can be observed between American English and Jordanian Arabic such as let's, modal, conditional,

yes/no question, WH question and imperative strategies. Thus, it can be concluded that English language and Arabic language demonstrate totally different patterns in using suggestion strategies. The following extracts from the Jordanian and American participants' responses illustrate the strategy of imperatives and negative imperatives used to express suggestions. ***For example, a Jordanian student suggested in situation 1 about how to use the printer in the right way:***

- edghat 3ala kabset print 3shan te3raf tetba3.

- (Press the print button so you can print).

- Another Jordanian student expressed his suggestion in situation 8 about borrowing a novel from the library by saying:

- sebak menha. fe rewayat a7san menha. khalini awarjeek.

- (Leave it. There are better novels. Let me show you).

An American participant responded to situation 1 which was about using the printer in the right way by saying:

- - Click the button before printing.

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- Another American participant responded to the same situation by saying:

- Don't do that again. Follow the right way.

The strategy of modals and semi modals was the most frequent strategy used by the American participants, with a percentage of (27.91). The following examples show how both Jordanian and American participants responded to the different situations using the modals and semi modals strategy. In situation 1, *for example, an American participant made a suggestion about using the printer by saying:*

- You have to click this button to print.-

- A Jordanian participant responded to situation 3 about forgetting to remove the price tag by saying:

- 3afwan, bas lazem tsheel waraget-s-se3er 3an elgamees. Mesh manthar heak

- (Excuse me, but you have to remove the price tag of your shirt. This is not appropriate.)

The strategy of conditionals also occurred frequently by both groups of participants. Many responses of the American and Jordanian students tended to use conditionals as a way to make and offer their suggestions in different situations *as shown in the following examples from the American and Jordanian data:*

- If you like, I can show you how to remove the USB safely.

- elmaktabeh eshi bekhzi. shooflak makan thani etha nawi tedros jad.

- (The library is in a horrible condition. Find another place if you really want to study).

Other common strategies were using Wh and Yes/No questions strategies. The Wh question strategy was more frequently used by the American participants, while the Jordanian participants tended to use the Yes/NO question strategy more, as a way to present their suggestions in the different situations. The following examples show the use of Wh and Yes/No questions strategies by both American and Jordanian participants.

- Excuse me. Have you noticed the ink stain on your shirt?

- What about reading this novel instead?

- leash mkhalli-s-se3er? menshan te7keelna enak ma3ak masaree webteshtari awa3i jdeedeh?

- (Why did you keep the price tag? To tell us that you have money and you can buy new clothes?)

- ka2anak nasi tsheel 3alamet-s-se3er. bet7eb ashellak yaha?

- (It seems that you have forgotten to remove the price tag. Would you like me to take it off?)

Let is also a common strategy used by both Jordanian and American participants to make suggestions. *The responses of the Jordanian participants show that they tended to use Let more than the American participants as in the following examples:*

- Excuse me. I think you still have the tag on your shirt. Let me take it off .

- khalleena nedros bemakan tani. fi ez3aaj hon.

- (Let's study in another place. It is noisy in here).

Performative verb and noun of suggestion strategy *was also used by both groups of participants to make suggestions, as n the following examples:*

- I suggest you go somewhere else because the reading room is so busy.

- baqtare7 enak temshi 7asabel khuttah.

- (I suggest that you follow the plan).

However, Hints, Psudo-Cleft Structure (Impersonal) and Extra-Posed to-clauses (Impersonal) were the least used strategies by both groups of participants: Jordanians and Americans. Here are some examples of utterances produced by some American and Jordanian participants.

Hints

- I've heard that the reading room is undergoing repairs. Find another place to study.

Psudo-Cleft Structure (Impersonal)

- All what you have to do is asking for help.

Extra-Posed to-clauses (Impersonal)

- daroori enak te3raf enoh fi seyaneh hunak.

- (It's important for you to know that there are some repairs there).

Although in this study both groups utilized modals and imperatives as the most preferable strategies when making suggestions, they differed in their frequencies. Regarding modals, American undergraduate university students used them more frequently. In English, undergraduate university students may use modals such as must, have to, need to, should, etc, whereas Arabic undergraduate university students have fewer types of modals including: can, should, and might. Thus, it seems logical that Jordanian undergraduate university students use them less frequently while suggesting. Regarding the imperatives, Jordanian participants tended to use imperatives. This might be, according to Shang-chao (2008), a result of the Western culture which appreciates egalitarianism and assertiveness in contrast to non-egalitarian eastern cultures who value hierarchical structure and group harmony. Based on this, Jordanian culture is considered as a hierarchal one, whereas American culture works on the basis of a deference politeness system. The American society believes that people share the equal social level and should have equal rights. On the other hand, the hierarchy in eastern societies is related to the concept of "e7teram", the Arabic word for "Respect". Koutlaki (2002, p.1742) defines e7teram as a term used to "establish the positions and statuses of the interactants with respect to one another and is shown through the adherence to the established norms of behavior according to the addressee's position, age, status and interlocutors' relationship (Goffman, 1967, p. 9). e7teram is shown among others through the use of appropriate address terms. Jordanians tend to use imperatives when suggesting, and they are regarded as suitable suggestions strategies and are employed quite frequently in their suggestions. The variations also were observed in some other suggestion expressions namely Let's, Conditionals, Modals and Semi modals, Yes-No questions, and Wh questions. English natives preferred Modals and Semi modals structure and Wh questions. Based on the studies conducted by BlumKulka (1982) and Liu and Zhao (2007), who point that Let's may be respected as a more direct strategy, whereas conditionals, to-clauses and yes-no questions can be applied as indirect suggestion expressions. Therefore, the findings of this study confirm Li (2009) and Bu (2011) findings which reported more direct strategies among local group and more indirect strategies in the speech of international participants.

Table 2:

Frequencies and Percentages of Responding Strategies to Suggestion Used by Jordanian and American Undergraduate Students

Suggestion Strategy	Linguistic Structure	Jordanian		American	
		Frequency	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage
Direct	Performative Verb and Noun of Suggestion	0	0	0	0
	Imperatives and Negative Imperatives	10	4.16	3	1.25
	Let›s	28	11.66	13	5.41
Non-Conventionally Indirect	Psudo-Cleft Structure (Impersonal)	0	0	0	0
	Extra-Posed to-clauses (Impersonal)	0	0	0	0
	Hints	0	0	0	0
Conventionally Indirect	Modals and Semi Modals	145	60.41	154	64.16
	Conditionals	17	7.08	27	11.25
	Wh-Questions (Interrogative)	18	7.5	21	8.75
	Yes-No Questions (Interrogative)	22	9.16	22	9.16
Total		240	100	240	100

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Responding to Suggestions Strategies

The second part of the first question is related to the strategies used by Jordanian and American undergraduate university students for responding to suggestions. To fulfill this part, the researcher analyzed the participants' responses to the DCT in order to compare and contrast the suggestion strategies used by the two groups and to come out with the similarities and differences between the performances of the two groups.

It is clear that both groups of students tended to use similar strategies to respond to suggestions. The results showed that the most frequent strategy used by both Jordanian and American participants was using the Modals and Semi modals strategy, with (60.41%) for the Jordanian participants and (64.61%) for the American participants. This might be justified in terms of politeness. Using modals and semi modals makes your speech and writing more polite.

For example, in situation 3, a Jordanian participant responded to her sister's suggestion concerning completing her job tomorrow by saying:

- sa3eb aroo7 hala2. lazem akamel elyom. bokrah 3endi alf shaghleh.

- (It's difficult to leave now. I have to finish today. I have a lot of things to do tomorrow).

An American participant responded to a little girl's suggestion in situation 1, which was about not buying a certain type of candy by saying:

- okay. I will look for something else.

The second most frequent strategy used by the Jordanian participants was let's with a percentage of (11.66), followed by Yes/No questions (9.16), Wh questions (7.5), conditionals (7.08) and Imperatives (4.16). As for the American participants, it was noticed that the second most frequent strategy used by them was conditionals with a percentage of (11.25), followed by Yes/No questions (9.16), Wh questions (8.25), let's(5.41) and Imperatives (1.25). However, the results of analyzing the responses of the participants of the two groups showed that none of the Jordanian and American participants responded to any given situation by using performative verbs

and nouns of suggestion, hints, Pseudo-Cleft Structure (Impersonal) and Extra-posed to-clause (Impersonal).

Noticing the responses of both groups of participants, the Jordanian and the American undergraduate university students, it was clear that both groups tended to politely agree on the given suggestions. Both groups expressed their approval on the given suggestions by using certain strategies such as Modals and Semi modals, Let's, Conditionals etc. and avoiding other strategies like performative verbs and nouns of suggestion, hints, etc.

Here are some examples of utterances produced by some American and Jordanian participants.

Let's
- Thanks man. Let me tell the shop keeper.
- yalla nzoorha. ma fi moshkeleh.
- (Let's visit it. No problem).

Conditionals
- If you are so worried, I can go tomorrow. Just relax.
- etha bte3raf keef, ballahi 3allemmni.
- (If you know how, please teach me).

Wh Questions
- What do you have in mind to visit?
- wean? khalas delni 3ala-l-makan 3ashan ashtari lektab.
- (Where? Show me the place so I can buy the book).

Yes/No Questions
- Do you remember what store it was?
- enti do2ti-l 7alaweyyat? lhaddarajeh say2a?
- (Did you taste the candy? Is it really so terrible?)

Imperatives
- Tell me more about it.
- tayyeb khodni laneshtareh aw a3teni-l-3enwan.

- (Okay. Take me there so I can buy it or give me the address).

Results of the Second Question and their Discussion

The second question deals with the similarities and differences between the strategies used by Jordanian and American undergraduate university students for making and responding to suggestions. The results show that both groups of participants tended to use different strategies when making suggestions and similar strategies when responding to suggestions. Regarding the use of different strategies when making suggestions, this can be explained according to the social and cultural aspects of both societies. Jordanian participants tended more to use Positive and Negative Imperatives when making suggestions. This can be attributed to the Jordanian culture in which individuals' relations are hieratical and based on "e7teram", unlike the American society which believes in equality, so Positive and Negative Imperatives is not a common strategy in the American society to make suggestions.

As for using similar strategies, such as Modals and Semi modals and Let's, when responding to suggestions, this is due to cultural politeness dimensions. Both participants tended to agree on the given suggestions, as a sign of respect.

Conclusions

This study is intended to investigate the similarities and differences between American English and Jordanian Arabic in regard to suggestion speech act. Regarding this goal, American English and Jordanian Arabic speakers revealed some variations in their suggestion strategies. Therefore, this study results confirm previous findings; (e.g. Bu 2011; Martínez Flor and Fukuyab 2005; Martínez Flor and Guerra 2006; Li 2009) in which some variations were detected regarding the two cultures.

Based on the results of the study, foreign language learners must be taught the cultural similarities and variations in regard to their L1 and L2. In other words, as Wei (2005) mentions, integrating learners' home culture in EFL context is of great significance. Consequently, learners may be more aware of cultural differences between two cultures, and on the other hand, maintain their home cultural identity.

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Ms. Rana Saeed Mohamad Mohammad
Prof. Aqlah Mahmoud Alsamadi

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