"May Allah Not Let You Experience Another Sorrow": Condolence Strategies Used by Lecturers Who Are Native Speakers of Arabic L1 toward Their Colleague Who Is Native Speaker of Hebrew in Hebrew L2

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Abstract—This research attempts to investigate the condolence strategies used by Arab native speakers (L1) towards a Hebrew (L2) native speaker in Hebrew (L2). Analysis of these strategies was almost based on strategies developed by a number of researchers (Olshtain and Cohen 1983; Elwood, 2004 and Yahia, 2010). The participants in this study were 85 Arab lectures who responded to a college condolence announcement which was addressed to a Hebrew native-speaker colleague who lost his daughter by e-mail. Frequencies and percentages were considered. The findings of the study revealed that the main condolence strategy used by the respondents was 'religion expressions' (39.8%). This is attributed to the fact that the respondents transfer this strategy from L1 to L2. This strategy is affected by religion (Yahia, 2011). Other strategies such as acknowledgement of death, expression of sympathy, offer of assistance, future-oriented remarks, expression of concern, appreciation of the dead, direct condolence and others were less frequently used. The findings also showed that the females initiated more condolence utterances in the same response than males, however, the gender did not play an important role in the frequencies of the condolence strategies.

Index Terms—pragmatics, speech act, condolence strategies, L1 and L2, semantic formula

I. INTRODUCTION

Condolences are speech acts. Searle (1969) states the speech act of condolence is categorized as 'expressive'. Lotfollahi and Rasekh (2011) claim that this speech act is used to express the speaker's sorrow at the news of someone's death. On the hand, Yahia (2010) claims that formulas of condolence has not been fully explored, fortunately, most speakers are not called upon to express sympathy at someone's death. In fact, languages ca not be meaningfully studied in isolation from the context and culture. According to Lakoff (1973) "it is futile to set linguistic behavior apart from other forms of human behavior P. 303. As other speech acts condolence is also culturally different (Elwood, 2004). Many researchers have investigated the speech act of condolence and its cross-cultural differences (Elwood, 2004; Reza and Mostafa, 2012; Bernan, 2008; and others). The focus of these studies is on comparing the speech act of condolences between English and other languages. The aim of the recent study is to investigate the condolence strategies used by lectures Who are Arabic native speakers toward their colleague who is native speaker of Hebrew on the net as a response to the college announcement of the death of his in Hebrew.

II. REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

Speech Acts And Speech Act Of Giving Condolences

Johnston (2008) States that "knowing a language means not just knowing its grammar and vocabulary but also knowing how to structure paragraphs and arguments and participate in a conversation the way the speakers of the language do” (P.7). According to Yule (1996), speech acts are speech functions that are realized by way of words. Speech acts include a wide range of functional units such as apologies, complements, requests, condolences, invitations and so on. Yule claims that being able to say the right thing to the right person at the right time would be great social accomplishment. Richard and Schmidt (2002) define pragmatics as "the study of the use of language in communication, particularly between sentences and the contexts and situations in which they are used” (P.412).

The knowledge of pragmatics plays a meaningful function in interlocutions between participants because pragmatics is the relation between language and its users. Levinson (1983: 284) asserts "conversation may be taken to that familiar predominant kind of talk in which two or more participants freely alternate in speaking, which generally occurs outside specific institutional setting like religious services, law courts, classroom and the like”.

Bach and Harnish (1969) claim that speech acts are acts of communication. To communicate is to express a certain attitude, and the type of speech act being performed corresponds to the type of attitude being expressed. For example, a
In conclusion, it is essential to understand the cultural and linguistic aspects of providing condolences. Different cultures have different norms and religious beliefs that influence how condolences are expressed. For instance, in Islamic culture, condolences should include references to religious beliefs. Learners from different cultural backgrounds may transfer these cultural norms and religious beliefs to their second language, even when they are not aware of it. It is crucial for language learners to be aware of these cultural differences and to adapt their language use accordingly. By doing so, they can avoid errors and embarrassment while maintaining respectful and appropriate responses to condolences.

Furthermore, it is important for language teachers to incorporate cultural aspects into their teaching, especially when teaching second languages. By doing so, learners can develop a deeper understanding of the language and culture, which can help them to communicate more effectively. Teachers should also be mindful of the emotional and social aspects of providing condolences, as these can have a significant impact on the receiver's feelings and attitudes.

In summary, providing condolences is a communication act that requires cultural awareness and sensitivity. By understanding the cultural and linguistic aspects of this act, learners and teachers can develop more appropriate and effective communication strategies. This can help to promote cultural competence and mutual respect in cross-cultural interactions.
Although many studies on the speech act of condolences have been conducted during the recent years, few of them focused on expressing condolences of native speakers of one language L1 to another speakers of other language L2 in the later language L2. That means, the condolences were made by the use of L2. The aim of the recent study is to investigate how Arab native speakers who live in Israel express their condolences to Hebrew native speakers in Hebrew through the net. In other words what condolences strategies are used by Arab native speakers in Hebrew.

III. METHODOLOGY

Subjects
The participants of the current study are 95 Israeli lecturers who teach at Sakhnin College for Teacher Education (TE) in Lower Galilee, in Northern Israel. The majority of lecturers are Arabic native speakers and some are Hebrew native speakers, but the students are Arabic native speakers, however, they speak Hebrew as L2 since Hebrew is the official language in Israel. The lecturers are teaching mathematics, English, special education, education and Arabic. They are holders of second and third degrees. The respondents are 10 lecturers who are Hebrew native speakers and 85 who are Arabic native speakers. The subjects are 53 males and 42 females. Their age is between 35-60. For the aim of this study, the researcher will collect the responses of Arab Lecturers, and ignore the responses of the lecturers who are Hebrew native speakers.

Instrument
The data of the current study was collected from responses to an e-mail message which was sent by the college management to a Hebrew native speaker colleague who lost his daughter in Hebrew. The translation of the electronic condolence message is "The college is participating in the sorrow of our colleague. We hope you will not experience another sorrow". The message was sent in Hebrew because the lecturer does not speak Arabic. 95 lecturers responded to this message to express their condolence to their mate. The responses were also in Hebrew and each lecture can see these responses in his email, because all of them clicked "Reply all". The researchers collected the responses of 85 (40 females and 45 males) Arab lecturers in order to analyze the condoling strategies used by Arab native speakers towards their colleague who is Hebrew native speaker, the language used was Hebrew which is considered as L2 for the respondents. 10 messages were ignored because they were written by lecturers who are Hebrew native speakers.

After taking the consent from the college management, the data was collected from 85 respondent to the condolence announcement in the college staff e-mails. All the respondents were lecturers at the College who are Arabic native speakers, but they used L2 (Hebrew) to express their condolence to their colleague who is a Hebrew native speaker and who lost his daughter.

The collected data was coded based on Olshtain and Cohen's (1983) with some modifications that were discussed with some experts in the field of pragmatics in the College to suit the current context. The unit of analysis was the responses produced by the respondents.

The data was categorized in nine categories as follow:

1. 'Acknowledgement of death' which includes interjections such as "אלאים" (oh), "לא קייר" (no darling), "אלוהים נתן לחיים" (God gave life), "אלוהים לקח מהחיים" (God took), "לא קייר" (no darling), "אלוהים נקבר" (God took).

2. 'Expression of sympathy' such as "אני מצטער" (I am sorry), "אני מצטער מידי" (I am sorry), "אני מצטער" (I am sorry to hear that).

3. 'Offer of assistance' which covers responses like "אני מצטער" (I am sorry), "אני מצטער" (I am sorry), "אני מצטער" (I am sorry), "אני מצטער" (I am sorry). (If you need to say anything, I am ready), "אני מצטער" (I am sorry), "אני מצטער" (I am sorry), "אני מצטער" (I am sorry). (if you want to talk with anybody I am ready).

4. 'Future-oriented remarks' like "אני מצטער" (I am sorry), "אני מצטער" (I am sorry), "אני מצטער" (I am sorry), "אני מצטער" (I am sorry). (We ask God to protect you and your family). (Life should continue).

5. 'Expressions of concern' which includes responses about the bereaved such as "אני מצטער" (I hope you are ok), "אני מצטער" (I hope you are ok), "אני מצטער" (I hope you are ok), "אני מצטער" (I hope you are ok).

6. 'Appreciation of the dead' such as "אני מצטער" (I hope you are ok), "אני מצטער" (I hope you are ok), "אני מצטער" (I hope you are ok), "אני מצטער" (I hope you are ok).

7. 'Religious expressions' like "אני מצטער" (I am sorry), "אני מצטער" (I am sorry), "אני מצטער" (I am sorry), "אני מצטער" (I am sorry).

8. 'Direct condolence' which includes expressions such as "אני מצטער" (I am sorry), "אני מצטער" (I am sorry), "אני מצטער" (I am sorry), "אני מצטער" (I am sorry).

9. others such as 'sharing similar experience', statement of lacking words, 'expression of surprise' and 'related questions'.

Data Collection and Data Analysis
The aim of the recent study is to examine the condolence strategies used by Arab College Lecturers towards their colleague who is Hebrew native speaker in Hebrew which is considered L2 for these lecturers. The strategies were written as a response to an e-mail announcement from the college to the Hebrew native-speaker who lost his daughter, and the lecturers responded to this announcement in the email by "Reply All". The respondents are 85 lecturers who are Arab native-speaker, 40 females and 45 males, their age ranges 35-60. The total number of the condolence strategies
made by the respondents is 153. This means that some respondents made more than one condolence utterance in the same response. The number of utterance per respondent by gender is shown in Table 1.

Table 1 shows the number of participants in the study. Moreover, it also shows the number of strategies made by each gender. The number of females is 40. Eight females initiated one condolence utterance, 14 made two utterances in the same response, while twelve female participants initiated 3 utterances in the same reply. The total number of the condolence utterances made by females is 84. On the other hand, the number of males are 45. 26 male respondents initiated one condolence utterance, while 14 made two utterances in the same response, 5 initiated three condolence utterance which consist of three different strategies according the semantic formula used in this study. The data shows that the occurrences of condolence utterances used by females are larger than their males counterparts. In other words the females initiated more condolence utterances than males.

### IV. RESULTS

After coding the data, The frequency and the percentage of semantic formulas used in this study were calculated. The Results are shown in Table 2. While Figure 1 shows the percentage of the strategies used by the respondents.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>strategies</th>
<th>frequencies</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Acknowledgement of the death</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>15.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Expression of sympathy</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Offer of assistance</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>4.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Future-Oriented remarks</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>6.55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Expression of concern</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>8.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Appreciation of the dead</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>3.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Religious expressions</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>39.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Direct condolence</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>3.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Others</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>5.87</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>153</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The researcher classified the condolence strategies into 9 categories. The categories are: (1) Acknowledgement of the death; (2) expression of sympathy; (3) Offer of assistance; (4) Future-oriented remarks; (5) Expression of concern; (6) appreciation of the dead; (7) Religious expression; (8) Direct condolence and (9) others which contains strategies such as ‘sharing similar experience’, statement of lacking words, ‘expression of surprise’ and ‘related questions. As shown in Table 2.

Table 2 shows that 153 condolence utterances were initiated by the respondents, males and females. The 'religion expression' is the most frequent strategy used by the participants. It occurs 61 times 30 by males and 31 by females. Its percentage is 39.8%. This strategy includes utterances such as "אני לא מאמין" (, No. I do not believe), " CONTRACTUAL EXPRESSIONS AND COMPLAINTS IN L2", "(I am sorry for your loss) and "I am sorry to hear that). This strategy occurs 23 times (15.3%).

The strategy “expression of sympathy” which consists of utterances like "My heart is with you) and "I am sorry for your loss) and "I am sorry to hear that). It occurs 20 times (13%). 9 frequencies were initiated by males while 11 frequencies were made by females. So the frequencies do not reveal meaningful differences between males and females concerning the two strategies. "Offer of assistance" which contains utterances such as "איך אני יכול לעז", (how can I help) occurs 7 times (4.6), while "appreciation of the dead" which includes utterances such as "איך אני יכול לעז", (she was nice). It occurs 5 times (3.2%). This strategy was less frequently used, because the participants, the researcher believes, do not know the dead
or they do not want to talk about the dead for the sake of the addressee who lost his daughter. By using this strategy they were afraid they will increase his sorrow.

"Direct condolence" which contains utterances such as "תנחומי" (my condolences) is also less frequently used. It occurs 5 times (3.2%). The researcher attributes the low frequency of this strategy to the fact that Arab native speakers who live in Israel are emotional, therefore, one utterance is insufficient for them to express their emotion towards the bereaved. Moreover, Performing the speech act of condolence in Arabic needs a sentence and not only a single word. The other strategies are: 'sharing similar experience', statement of lacking words, 'expression of surprise' and 'related questions. They occur 9 times. Figure 1 clarifies the percentage of the strategies used by the respondents of this study.

The frequencies do not reveal differences in the distribution of condolence strategies used by males and females as shown in the following table.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strategy</th>
<th>Gender</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Males</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Acknowledgement of the death</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Expression of sympathy</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Offer of assistance</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Future-Oriented remarks</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Expression of concern</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Appreciation of the dead</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Religious expressions</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Direct condolence</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Others</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>69</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 3 reveals that the males initiated 69 condolence utterances while females made 84 utterances, although the number of the male participants was bigger than the males. The frequencies in this table do not show meaningful differences by gender except in the 'others' strategy which occurs only nine times. The occurrence of 'religious expressions" strategy is almost the same between males and females.

V. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This study attempts to investigate the speech act of condolence used by Arabic native speakers lecturers, who live in Israel and work in an Arab college for teacher education, towards their colleague, who is a Hebrew native speaker and lives in Israel and works in the same college, in Hebrew. That means the participants are using L2 in expressing the speech act of condolence.

The findings show that the most frequent strategy used by the respondents is "religious expression" (39.8%). This may be explained that the Arab condolence strategies may contain religious reference (Bentahila and Davis, 1989). In other words, the findings reveals that The Arab who live in Israel are celestial and collectivists rather than terrestrial and individualistic.

Moreover, the age of the respondents may have an effect on the frequency of this strategy. The age of the respondents ranges between 35 and 60. Arab cole at this age are usually mature and religious.

Moreover, The level of education of the respondents may also have an effect on the frequency of the strategies used in this research. The respondents' level of education is very high since they are all holders of second and third degree The responses were almost formal.
The next frequent strategy used by the participants is "Acknowledgement of the dead" (15.3%). Whereas, "appreciation of the dead" and "direct condolence" were the least frequent strategies used by the participants.

The findings also reveal that the participants transfer strategies from Arabic which is considered L1 to Hebrew which is considered L2. The religious expressions used by the respondents are frequently used in performing Arabic speech act of condolence.

Another important finding is that the gender does play an important role in the frequency of the condolence strategies. Males and females almost performed the same number of utterances in the same strategy. The age of the participants has an important role in the distribution of the strategies. The participants' age is 35-60. Therefore, it is recommended to conduct another study with participants who are younger. Moreover, it is recommended to conduct another study to compare between the condolence strategies used by Hebrew and Arabic native speakers. Finally, it is also recommended to conduct a study to examine the participants' condolence strategies in Arabic (L1).

REFERENCES


Tareq Mitaib Murad has been teaching English as a foreign language in high schools since 1990, and he has been teaching linguistic courses in Sakhnin College, Academic College for Teacher Education since 2001. Recently, he holds a position in the College: The Practicum General coordinator. Courses: Intro to linguistics, Second language acquisition, Morphology and Syntax, Semantics and pragmatics.

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The author has many publications in local and international Journals, the most recent of them are:

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