Abstract


The purpose of this study is to compare and contrast the strategies used by Jordanian and American undergraduate university students for expressing and responding to indirect complaint and giving, soliciting and responding to advice. The study also aims at investigating the most frequent strategies used by the American and Jordanian students, the similarities and differences between the strategies used by the two groups of participants, the effect of gender and social distance on the choice of these strategies, and the cultural dimensions associated with them. It also attempts to provide guidelines for the teaching of these speech acts by designing a number of activities that can be used to enhance their learning.

The participants of the study are 30 undergraduate American students from Cornell University and 30 undergraduate Jordanian students from Philadelphia University. The data were collected using a Discourse Completion Task (DCT). The DCT included 20 situations for expressing and responding to indirect complaint, and 15 situations for giving, soliciting and responding to advice. A total of 1200 utterances were categorized and analysed.
The results of the study revealed that the Jordanian and American students tended to use a number of similar strategies but with different frequencies and percentages when performing the speech acts of complaint and advice. The data analysis also showed that gender and social distance correlate with the type of strategy adopted. The results were attributed to the different social and cultural backgrounds of the participants. The study also offered recommendations that might be useful for contrastive pragmatic studies and EFL teaching as well as a number of activities that were designed to facilitate the English language teaching and learning.

**Key words**: Complaint Strategies, Advice Strategies, Speech Act, Pragmatic study.