

## A cross-cultural analysis of disagreement strategies in Algerian and Jordanian Arabic

*Nour El Houda Benyakoub, Sharif Alghazo, Abdel Rahman Mitib Altakhaine and Ghaleb Rabab'ah*

This study aims to explore the use of disagreement strategies in two Arabic dialects: Jordanian and Algerian Arabic. It also investigates the effect of social status on the choice of disagreement strategies adopting Muntigl and Turnbull's (1998) taxonomy. To achieve these objectives, 40 participants (20 Jordanians and 20 Algerians) were randomly recruited to respond to a discourse completion task (DCT). The participants were requested to read six situations and to react to them by making disagreements with people of higher, equal and lower statuses. A mixed-method approach was used to analyse the data. The results showed that the participants in the two study groups share similar preferences in the use of two main disagreement strategies that scored the highest in High to Low, Low to High, and in Equal statuses. The findings are discussed in the light of (im)politeness and provide implications for socio-pragmatic research in Arabic linguistics.

**Keywords:** disagreement strategies, Speech Act Theory, (im)politeness

### 1. Introduction

Competency in language requires that the speaker is communicatively competent in using appropriate linguistic forms in various social settings without causing any confusion or breakdowns in communication. Hymes (1972) devised the concept of communicative competence (i.e., the ability of the language user to function communicatively in social settings) in response to earlier theories of formalism (Chomsky, 1965) which emphasised linguistic competence at the expense of functional (i.e., communicative) competence. Hymes' (1972) proposition does not, by any means, undermine the individual's linguistic competence—which refers to knowledge of the rules of constructing language—rather, it adds the need for the language user to be competent at the sociolinguistic and discourse levels (i.e., the appropriate use of language in communicative situations).

In order for a language user to achieve communicative competence and successfully communicate with others, s/he needs to be competent in the use of speech acts and to be aware of politeness strategies. Speech acts such as greeting, apologizing, complimenting among others are culture-specific (see Alghazo, Bekaddour, Jarrah and Hammouri 2021; Alghazo, Zemmour, Al Salem and Alrashdan

2021). Therefore, research in intercultural pragmatics has emphasized the need to explore the realization of speech acts in different languages and cultures and to compare and contrast the use of speech acts among both typologically-distant and typologically-close languages. This study responds to such calls and aims to investigate disagreement strategies in two typologically-related languages (Jordanian and Algerian Arabic). When people exchange ideas and beliefs, they may (dis)agree with each other. Disagreement—which is defined as the “expression of a view that differs from that expressed by another speaker” (Sifianou 2012: 1554)—may sometimes cause conflicts between interactants.

Disagreement was investigated in different languages and from different perspectives. In this study, disagreement is investigated cross-culturally by exploring Algerian and Jordanian Arabic speakers’ use of disagreement strategies. The analysis is rooted in Muntigl’s and Turnbull’s (1998) classification of strategies. The data were collected by means of a discourse completion task (DCT) which contains six situations of high, low, and equal statuses. The participants were 30 Jordanian and 30 Algerian Arabic speakers who were selected randomly and asked to use their own Arabic dialect when responding to the situations. The study seeks answers to the following research questions:

1. What are the disagreement strategies used by Algerian Arabic and Jordanian Arabic speakers?
2. What are the similarities and/or differences between the two groups in the use of strategies?
3. To what extent does social status affect the choice of strategies?

## 2. Theoretical framework and literature review

### 2.1. Speech Act Theory

In pragmatics, as argued by Austin (1962), a speech act allows a speaker to perform an act via uttering words; thus, words are used to perform actions. A group of verbs, then, are referred to as performative verbs as they enable the speaker to perform a particular action, e.g. promising in ‘I promise that I will be there on time.’ A speaker can also produce an utterance that does not explicitly contain a performative, yet such an utterance has an implicit act, e.g. ‘I will pick you up after school’ (Austin 1962). Each speech act, according to Austin (1962) consists of three levels: a locutionary act, an illocutionary act and perlocutionary act. The locutionary act is the utterance itself which conveys a meaningful linguistic expression. The illocutionary act is the function or the intended meaning of an utterance, while the perlocutionary act is the effect the utterance has on the addressee. An illustrative example of these three levels is a teacher saying to his students: ‘If you do not complete this task, I will not let you out early’. The locutionary act is the utterance produced by the teacher and its literal meaning. The illocutionary act is an order, and the perlocutionary act is the students completing the

task and the teacher allowing them to leave early. Austin (1962) classified illocutionary acts into five categories, namely, verdictives, exercitives, commissives, behabitives, and expositives. However, these categories were revised by Searle (1976) and a new classification was proposed by him including: representatives, directives, commissives, expressives and declaratives. Representatives are speech acts that allow the speaker to state his/her beliefs, to draw conclusions, to assert a certain viewpoint, and to describe a certain state of affairs, e.g. 'the weather is lovely today'. Directives are speech acts where the speaker attempts to get someone to do something for him/her, e.g. questioning, requesting, and ordering. Commissives commit the speaker to a future course of action, e.g. threatening, promising and offering. Expressives allow the speaker to express his/her feelings, e.g. happiness, sadness, and love among others. Lastly, declaratives are institutionalised speech acts that change the world and are uttered by specific individuals, e.g. pronouncing a man and woman husband and wife, and declaring war on a country among others. Studies that adopted the Speech Act Theory (SAT) as its theoretical framework mainly analysed the type of speech act performed in a certain situation by certain speakers (e.g., Kakava 2002; Al-Raba'a 2009; Parvaresh and Eslami Rasekh 2009; Al-Shorman 2016; Hassouneh and Zibin 2021; Remache and Altakhaineh 2021 among others).

In the course of investigating the notion of disagreement, it appears that there is an ongoing debate regarding its definition. For example, it was defined as the communication of an opinion or belief which is contradictory to the view expressed by the other interlocutor (Edstrom 2004). Sifianou (2012), on the other hand, suggested that disagreement is an expression of a viewpoint which is not contrary to that of the other interlocutor but simply different from it. From the viewpoint of the SAT, disagreement is an act which is produced in reaction to an act that precedes it, which suggests that it requires a prior utterance from another speaker (Soring 1977). Based on the above, it is clear that the performance of disagreement as a speech act is an important part of people's communicative behaviour, and thus, it is worthy of examination. This study adopts the SAT in addition to other theories introduced in the following sections as its theoretical framework.

## 2.2. Disagreement and (im)politeness

Disagreement is seen as the opposite of agreement. That is, if agreement is perceived as the desirable and preferred option (Pomerantz 1984), disagreement is regarded as the undesirable counterpart. According to Wierzbicka (1991), disagreement reflects a dual meaning: The speaker indicates "what the hearer thinks" and shows "that the hearer doesn't think the same as the speaker" (Wierzbicka (1991: 128). Rees-Miller (2000: 1088) defines disagreement as follows: "[a] speaker (S) disagrees when s/he considers untrue some proposition (P) uttered or presumed to be espoused by an addressee (A), and

reacts with a verbal or paralinguistic response, the propositional content or implicature of which is not P.” An essential feature of the speech act of disagreement is that it is a response move rather than an initiation move (see Sinclair and Coulthard 1975). However, other speech acts such as requesting and offering represent an initiation move. Indeed, disagreement occurs in contexts where there is no compliance with ideas, dissatisfaction or opposition. For this reason, (im)politeness is highly relevant to the study of the speech act of disagreement because it is necessary for speakers to save face in interaction (see Culpeper 2011).

In their everyday interactions, people usually engage in situations which threaten their face. These acts are called by Brown and Levinson (1987) Face Threatening Acts (FTAs) which directly relate to studies of speech acts. Brown and Levinson (1987: 65) define FTAs according to two basic parameters: “(1) Whose face is being threatened (the speaker’s or the addressee’s), and (2) Which type of face is being threatened (positive- or negative- face).” Goffman (1967: 5) defines face as “the positive social value a person effectively claims for himself and image of self-delineated in terms of approved social attributes.” Therefore, saving face and considering others’ face help people to maintain their own face and the face of others and preserve social relationships (Goffman 1967). Therefore, politeness—which is defined by Green (1989: 145) as “consideration for one’s addressee’s feelings (or face), regardless of the social distance between the speaker and addressee”—is a variable which reflects the degree of the impact of the speech act on the face of both speakers and hearers. Speakers usually calculate the effect of their speech acts when expressing disagreement based on three social variables: the perceived social distance between the hearer and the speaker, the perceived power difference between them, and the cultural ranking of the speech act (Brown and Levinson 1987: 112-113).

### 2.3. Muntigl’s and Turnbull’s (1998) classification

Researchers suggested different classifications of disagreement strategies based on the various contexts of communication. The use of these strategies heavily relies on cultural differences and other social factors such as gender, age and status of the interlocutors. For example, Muntigl’s and Turnbull’s (1998) taxonomy includes five types of disagreement: Irrelevancy Claims (IC), Challenges (CH), Contradictions (CT), Counterclaims (CC) and Act Combinations (AC). These types are explained as follows:

1. *Irrelevancy Claims* (IRs) which occur immediately after, or as an overlap with, Speaker A’s initiation. IRs may begin with discourse markers (e.g., *so*). By using an IR, “a speaker asserts that the previous claim is not relevant to the discussion at hand” (Muntigl and Turnbull 1998: 229).

2. *Challenges* (CHs) usually begin with a reluctance marker that indicates disagreement with Speaker A's claim. Typically, CHs come in the form of an interrogative. They show "that the addressee cannot, in fact, provide evidence for his/her claim" (p. 230). By using CHs, speakers disagree with the previous claim and challenge Speaker A to provide evidence in support of his/her claim.
3. *Contradictions* (CTs) occur when a speaker disagrees "by uttering the negated proposition expressed by the previous claim; ... CTs often occur with a negative particle such as *no* or *not* ... or positive contradiction markers, such as *yes* or *yeah*" (Muntigl and Turnbull 1998: 230).
4. *Counterclaims* (CCs) are usually preceded by a pause, preface, or a mitigating device. By using CCs, "speakers propose an alternative claim that does not directly contradict nor challenge other's claim" (Muntigl and Turnbull 1998: 230).
5. *Act Combinations* refer to the use of a combination of the previous strategies.

### 2.3. Previous studies on disagreement

The literature on speech acts abounds with studies on (dis)agreement strategies in various languages. For example, Rees-Miller (2000) explored the use of linguistic features used to either soften or strengthen disagreement in English academic discourse, particularly in university courses and academic conversations. The use of disagreement was examined in relation to power, severity and context. The findings showed that university teachers use more markers of positive politeness when disagreeing with their students and less markers of positive politeness when disagreeing with peers. The results also revealed that the context—more than power and severity—plays the greatest role in the use of disagreement and the way disagreement is expressed in academic discourse.

In a study on disagreement in Persian, Masoumeh *et al.* (2012) explored how Persian male and female speakers produce the speech act of disagreement. The study tested the role of gender and formality of the context on the use of disagreement. To this end, the researchers used a triangulation of tools to collect data: a DCT, observations, and audio-visual conversations among Persian speakers. The study adopted the SAT as a framework and analysed the use of disagreement in the light of the Face Theory. The findings showed that there exists a positive correlation between the type of disagreement used and the formality of the context. The results also revealed that gender was a determinant in the degree of formality of the context in which disagreement is used.

A similar study on disagreement in Persian was conducted by Bavarsad *et al.* (2015) who investigated the ways in which the speech act of disagreement is expressed by young male and female Persian speakers. The sample was 100 participants (50 males and 50 females) randomly selected from the University of Isfahan and Islamic Azad University. The participants were asked to read nine

situations and react to them by making disagreements. The researchers used Muntigl and Turnbull's (1998) taxonomy of disagreement strategies. The analysis of the data showed that females were more cautious and used different strategies compared to males. The results also indicated that second language (L2) learners make use of similar realisations of the speech act of disagreement as do native speakers although they differ in the strategies used.

In a comparative study between Iranian English as a foreign language (EFL) learners and native English speakers, Sadrameli and Haghverdi (2016) examined the use of disagreement strategies, with the aim of finding similarities and/or differences between Iranian EFL learners and English native speakers with regard to the use of disagreement strategies taking into account power and social status. A DCT was distributed to 90 participants: 30 Iranian university students majoring in teaching English as a foreign language (TEFL), 30 native English speakers, and 30 native speakers of Persian with no English proficiency. The findings demonstrated that while the Persian native speakers used direct contradictions more than the EFL learners and native English speakers, the native English speakers used counterclaims, contradictions, and counterclaims more than their EFL and native Persian counterparts. The results also showed that the only significant difference was found with respect to disagreement with people of equal status.

The speech act of disagreement was also studied in the Arabic language. For example, Hamdan (2021) explored disagreement strategy use by Jordanian Arabic speakers and the role of gender and social status in the linguistic realisations of disagreement by the participants. The researcher analysed 28 students' interactions by means of an oral DCT which included six situations and requested the participants to disagree with two colleagues, two high-status interactants, and two low-status interlocutors. The results showed that the topic greatly influenced the choice of strategies by both males and females and that gender and status were not highly influential on the use of disagreement by the respondents.

Based on the foregoing, it is clear that despite the plethora of research on speech acts in various languages and in each of the languages under study (see, for example, Hamdan 2021 for Jordanian Arabic; Harb 2021 for Arabic; and Dendenne 2021 for Algerian Arabic), no contrastive study was conducted on the speech act of disagreement by Algerian and Jordanian Arabic speakers. Therefore, the current contrastive research seeks to investigate similarities and/or differences in the use of disagreement strategies between Algerians and Jordanians. In the few studies conducted on the expressions of disagreement, there has been no serious attempt to investigate and compare the expressions of disagreement and its strategies in two different cultures within the same language.

Therefore, the present study aims to explore how Jordanians and Algerians express disagreement in their dialects.

### 3. Methodology

#### 3.1. Participants

Forty participants (20 native speakers of Jordanian Arabic and 20 native speakers of Algerian Arabic) were randomly recruited from the University of Jordan. The Algerian participants were studying at the University of Jordan at the time of data collection. The age of the participants ranged from 24 to 30.

#### 3.2. Instrument

A DCT was designed by the researchers and was validated by five PhD students from the University of Jordan. The DCT is a questionnaire which includes naturally-occurring situations to which the respondents are asked to react by making disagreement. The DCT included instructions for the participants to respond by using their Arabic dialect (Jordanian or Algerian Arabic).

#### 3.3. Data collection procedure

This study focused on the role of social distance or status in the choice of strategies when uttering the speech act of disagreement. The researchers were available during the administration process to answer any possible questions. Regarding the structure of the DCT, six scenarios were developed according to various degrees of power among interlocutors including high power status (two scenarios involving a father and a boss), equal power status (two scenarios including friends), and lower power status (two scenarios including a student and a son). The participants were asked to write their natural responses for each situation. Once the utterances of disagreement were identified from the responses, the taxonomy of Muntigl and Turnbull (1998) was applied for analysis.

### 4. Results and discussion

This section reports the findings of the analysis of the data. It begins by showing the frequency of use of the various disagreement strategies by Jordanian Arabic speakers and moves to reporting the strategies used by the Algerian speakers. Table 1. shows the frequency and percentage of disagreement strategies based on status (i.e., High, Low, or Equal) among the Jordanian speakers.

Strategies	High-Low Status		Low-Hight Status		Equal Status	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
<i>Irrelevancy</i>	06	15%	05	12.5%	0	/
<i>Challenge</i>	03	7.5%	05	12.5%	05	12.5%
<i>Contradiction</i>	13	32.5%	14	35%	16	40%
<i>Counterclaim</i>	18	45%	16	40%	10	25%
<i>Reference to Religion</i>	/	/	/	/	05	12.5%
<i>Sayings</i>	/	/	/	/	04	10%
Total	40	100%	40	100%	40	100%

Table 1. Frequency and percentage of disagreement strategies used by Jordanians

Table 1. illustrates the frequency and percentage of the Jordanian participants’ use of disagreement strategies according to the social status of the interlocutor. The findings show that all disagreement strategies proposed by Muntigl and Turnbull (1998) were utilized. In addition, two other new strategies were found to be used by the participants. Here, we present and discuss examples which show how each strategy was used.

#### 4.1. Strategies used by a high-status speaker

Based on the table above and the disagreement strategies used by the Jordanian participants, it is clear that disagreeing with someone who is lower in status (High-Low Status) was realised by means of *Irrelevancy*, *Challenge*, *Contradiction*, and *Counterclaim*. Example 1 below is from Scenario One where one of the employees is accusing others of having high salaries even though they work less hours. The strategy used is *Counterclaim* which scored the highest frequency, with 45% of the strategies used.

1. *ʕadad ʔas-sa:ʕat miʕʔal-miʕja:r ʔal-asa:si li-r-ra:tib wa-ʔinama li-kwaliti miʕli-kwantiti*

‘The number of hours is not the main criterion for the salary; rather, it is the quality is not quantity.’

Thirteen participants used *Contradiction* as a strategy to disagree with a lower status individual, with 32.5%. In this example, the speaker proposed an alternative claim, i.e. the quality of the work is more important than the number of hours one works. This claim does not directly contradict with the claim of the other interlocutor; it is just another viewpoint. Another illustrative example is 2.:

2. *la: la: ʔana muʕrif ʕala haḏo:l li-mwaḏʔafi:n w-ʔana baʕatʔi ʔir-ra:tib ḥasab ʕuyul-hum*

‘No, no, I am the supervisor of these employees, and I give the salary according to their work.’

In 2., the speaker disagrees with the interlocutor through negating what was said by him\her and by producing a contradiction or counterclaim, saying that since he is the supervisor, he can decide whether the employees deserve their high salaries. In other words, this supervisor provides an alternative claim about who deserves to be paid for the work, and it does not necessarily entail long hours of working.

Challenge scored 7.5% of the strategies used. In the following example, the speaker challenges the addressee to come up with evidence to support the claim.

3. *wallah ?illi Sind-uh dali:l jgadmuh*

‘Wallah, whoever has evidence can provide it.’

In 3., the speaker uses wallah ‘swear by Allah’ as a starter to show disagreement. The use of this expression suggests that the speaker has doubts about the addressee’s claim. Then, the speaker challenges the addressee by asking them to provide evidence to support their claim. Asking the addressee to provide evidence is an FTA to their negative face because it threatens their desire to be left alone.

Irrelevancy claims were also present, with 15% in statements such as the following:

4. *kul faʿxis? min-hum Sind-uh fajl-ih jlabbi ha:dza:t-hum w jhib jigð?i ?il-waggit maʿ-hum*

‘Every person has a family to meet their needs, and s/he likes to spend time with them.’

In 4., the speaker asserts that the previous claim is irrelevant to the main discussion, i.e. receiving a high salary despite the low number of hours. That is, the speaker is saying that these employees are the same as everyone else, they need to support their families and spend time with them.

#### 4.2. Strategies used by a low-status speaker

Disagreeing with someone who is high in position (Low to High) was conducted by means of Counterclaims which scored the highest frequency with 40%. An example on Counterclaims would be Scenario Four in which the participant was requested to stick to the study of law and to disagree with someone who is higher in status (the father in this case) who prefers the scientific fields, as in the following example:

5. *wallah raj-ak Sala ra:s-i ja:bah bas b-afu:f nafs-i mirta:h-ah b-hajk taxas?us? w b-aħib ?aku:n ?insa:n b-iʿtamid Salaj-h ?in-na:s fi ?umu:r-hum*

‘Wallah, your opinion is on my head, but I see myself comfortable in such a speciality, and I like to be a person whom people can rely on in their affairs.’

In 5., the speaker proposed an alternative claim and used a mitigating device to lessen the impact of disagreement with the speaker's father. This counterclaim does not directly contradict the claim of the father, i.e., the speaker said: 'I respect your opinion, dad,' but my viewpoint is that I need to study a field in which I find myself; thus, the speaker is offering another viewpoint. This is an example of an FTA to the addressee's positive face because the speaker is disapproving with the father and does not share his desire. *Contradiction* was also used by the participants who are in a lower status. As an answer for Scenario Three in which the participants were asked to disagree with their professor about the inability of women to manage work inside their homes and outside, 14 participants used *Contradiction* as a strategy to disagree, with 35% of all strategies, as in Example 6 below:

6. *la: ʕa:di b-tiʔdar ʔil-mara ʔin-ha tiftayil w-tratib ʔumu:r ʔal-bajt w bizbut<sup>s</sup> tiftayil w hijih mitzawzih*

'No, it is normal; the woman can work and prepare the house affairs, and it is possible for her to work while she is married.'

In 6., the speaker uses *no* at the beginning to show disagreement. Specifically, the speaker uttered the negated proposition which is expressed by the previous claim, i.e. women are unable to manage their work inside and outside their homes. This is another example of an FTA to the hearer's positive face since the speaker is clearly showing disapproval.

*Challenges* and *Irrelevancy Claims* were equally used by the participants, with 12.5%. As for *Irrelevancy*, the Jordanian participants used a statement such as the following:

7. *ʔiða ma: ʕtayalit, ma: raħ taʕraf tgu:m bi-maha:m ʔil-bajt kama jazib hij:h za:jih min biiʔah basi:t<sup>s</sup>ah w ʔilli ħawa:laj-ha jidfaʕu:-ha la tku:n maʕzu:lih w yajr ga:dra ʕala ida:rat bajt-ha*

'If she does not work, she will not know how to do the duties at home as supposed; she comes from a simple environment, and those around her make her isolated and incapable of running her house.'

In 7., the speaker starts by using *if* to demonstrate that the previous claim is irrelevant to the main discussion, i.e. the inability of women to manage their work inside and outside their homes. The speaker is commenting on women's simple nature and the negative vibe they receive from the people with whom they interact.

The strategy of *Challenges* was used, as in Example 8:

8. *ħaj ħaja:t-i w ʔana ʔilli raħ ʔad-drus mij ʔinta*

'This is my life, and I am the one who is going to study; not you.'

In 8., the speaker challenges the previous claim by showing the addressee that they cannot know for sure whether their claim is correct or not since they have no evidence to support it. In particular, nobody can decide for you which field is suitable to your taste and your capabilities.

#### 4.3. Strategies used by equal-status speakers

Moreover, according to the analysis of the data, the Jordanian participants frequently resorted to *Contradictions* when disagreeing with equal status individuals (friends in this case), with 40%. An example on this strategy is the following:

9. *la: ?inta ?ala xat'a? wha:d ?il-m?ja:r ?abadan mu?saħ la?anu ?ildzama:l ma: raħ jinfa?ak ?iða ka:nat axla:?a zift w mumkin tsabib ma?a:kil kθi:rah*

'No, you are wrong; this criterion is absolutely not right because beauty will not benefit you if she does not have morals, and she may cause many problems.'

In 9., the speaker uses the negative particle *no* to show disagreement. Through producing the negated proposition which is expressed by the previous claim, i.e. beauty is the main feature a man should seek in a wife, the speaker is contradicting this claim by stating that beauty will not do a man any good if the girl's manners are bad.

Another example is the following:

10. *mumkin ħak-ak saħ, bas wallah ?ajb ?ala-jk tiħki mihna li-?an-ha fd'iħah li-f-faxs' ħajd'al mitsawwil t'u:l ħajat-u*

'You might be right, but wallah [by God] it is a shame to say a profession because it is a scandal for one to stay a beggar all his life.'

In addition, *Counterclaims* were used by the participants when disagreeing with a friend who believes that the appearance of the girl is the most important criterion when choosing a wife; the counterclaim recorded 25% of the strategies proposed as in the following examples:

11. *w-il-?adzmal min-u ?axla:q-haa w di:n-ha*

'What is more beautiful is her morals and religion.'

In 11., a counterclaim was used by the speaker which does not directly challenge the claim of the other speaker, i.e., the speaker agrees that beauty is important (the original claim) but what is more important in a wife is her manners and her religious behaviour.

Challenges were also used but recorded only 5% of the whole strategies, as in the following:

12. *ru:ħ ja: zalamah w fu: b-iddi fii-ha ħilwa w madznu:n-ih bidi: waħdah tifham ſatʿajir w niyħ-ih*

‘Go, you man! and why do I want her to be beautiful while crazy? I want a girl who understands me quickly and funny.’

There were no Irrelevancy Claims in the Jordanian participants’ responses. However, the researchers found two additional strategies to be used by the respondents when disagreeing with someone who is equal in status, but were not found in situations where the speaker is of either high or low status. The first strategy is Reference to Religion, with 12.5% as in the following examples:

13a. *?allah jku:n bſu:n ?in-na:s*

‘May God be with people.’

13b. *?allah ?aſlam bi-?awdʿa:f ?n-na:s*

‘God knows the conditions of people.’

13c. *?iſſa ja: ſabd-i w ?ana baſa maſ-ak*

‘Seek for living oh my servant and I will be with you.’

In 13a.-c., the speakers are clearly using religious references, i.e. prayer to God, referring to God as the only One Who truly knows people’s conditions, and citing God’s word to show disagreement. This strategy could be followed by a number of participants to avoid bad mouthing other people. Thus, referring to religion is expected to stop you from saying negative things about the person you disagree with. In the last instance, the piece of advice offered to the addressee could be regarded as an FTA to the addressee’s negative face because it threatens their desire to be left alone and predicts a future act by them.

The second new strategy was the use of Sayings, with 10% of the whole strategies, as in the following examples:

14a. *miſ kul ?asʿa:bſ-ak wa:ħad*

‘Your fingers are not the same.’

14b. *miſ kul muzah ſizzah*

‘Not every beautiful girl is of pride.’

In 14a.-b., the speakers are citing popular sayings in a way to show wisdom. In addition, these popular sayings are common and well known to other speakers; hence, the addressees will be able to get the message loud and clear.

Turning now to the Algerian participants, Table 2. below shows the frequency and percentage of the use of disagreement strategies by the participants.

Strategies	High-Low Status		Low-Hight status		Equal Status	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
<i>Irrelevancy Claims</i>	03	7.5%	03	7.5%	0	0%
<i>Challenges</i>	09	22.5%	07	17.5%	0	0%
<i>Contradictions</i>	11	27.5%	17	42.5%	12	30%
<i>Counterclaims</i>	14	35%	13	32.5%	21	52.5%
<i>Reference to religion</i>	/	2.5%	0	0	04	10%
<i>Sayings</i>	03	7.5%	0	0	03	7.5%
Total	40	100%	40	100%	40	100%

Table 2. Frequency and percentage of disagreement strategies used by Algerians

Table 2. shows that the Algerian participants differ in the use of disagreement strategies from the Jordanian ones based on the social status of the interlocutor. In other words, not all the disagreement strategies proposed by Muntigl and Turnbull (1998) were found in the Algerians' realizations of disagreement.

#### 4.4. Strategies used by a high-status speaker

The analysis shows that the most frequently used strategy is Counterclaims, with 35%. An instance on that would be the case when a child asks his father or mother to bring him a cat as a pet, and the answer was the following:

15. ?inta wild ma-jli:q-li-k-f gat<sup>s</sup>, duk nzi:b-l-ak zarð kbi:r

'You are a boy; there is no need for a cat. I will bring you a big puppet.'

In 15., the parents are providing their kid with an alternative claim that does not directly contradict the child's claim. That is, both cats and rats are animals but rats cannot obviously be called pets; it is the parents' way of disagreeing with their child and be funny at the same time.

As for *Contradictions*, the results show that they were used, with 27.5, as in the following:

16. *la: ma-ka:n-f*

'No, there is not'

The strategy of *Challenges* was present as a third strategy when disagreeing with someone who is of low status as in the case of an employee who is accusing others of getting paid more than they really deserve. This strategy scored 22.5%, and this is seen in an utterance such as the following:

17. *?anta wa:-f daxl-ak*

'You! that's none of your business.'

By uttering such a sentence, the speaker is posing a threat to the positive face of the interlocutor (the employee in this case). The other strategies were *Irrelevancy Claims* and *Sayings* that had the same frequency of occurrence, with 7.5% out of the whole strategies. *Irrelevancy Claims* can be detected when responding to an employee who is accusing the staff members of stealing. The situation is exemplified as follows:

18. *kli:tu: la-bla:d ja: sara:ki:n*

'You have stolen the entire country, you bunch of robbers.'

In 18., the speaker is disagreeing with the interlocutor's claim by referring to corruption which is caused by people's greed. Thus, the reference to corruption in this situation is not relevant to the discussion at hand.

As for the use of *Sayings*, it was evident in the following examples:

19. *ʕa:nad w-la taḥsad*

'Imitate and do not envy.'

20. *?azi:n f-dafla: w-lamru:rija fi:-ha*

'The beauty is in the oleander and bitter taste in it' (the oleander is a plant that looks beautiful but is toxic in all its parts)

Finally, as shown in Table 2. above, *Reference to Religion* was not used to disagree with someone of a low status.

#### 4.5. Strategies used by a low-status speaker

The analysis shows that when performing the act of disagreement with someone with a high status (a father or professor)—unlike high to low status—Counterclaims scored the highest strategy for the Algerians, with 42.5% as in disagreeing with a professor who doubt the ability of women in working inside their homes and outside it by saying:

21. *ka:jna li: qa:dra ʔlaʃqa:-ha*

‘She is that woman who is able of her misery.’

When responding to a professor’s claim that women cannot manage work inside and outside their homes, the participants favored the use of *Counterclaims*, with 32.5% as in the case of responding to a professor about the competence of women. One of the participants responded by the following:

22. *ʔl-mra li:-tawlad w-trabi: w-tnaqi: tnaʒam di:r kul-ʃi*

‘A woman who gives birth, raises children, and cleans can do anything.’

In 22., the speaker is providing a counterclaim to show disagreement. The discussion is about the ability of women to manage their work inside and outside their homes. Specifically, the speaker is saying that any woman who gives birth and raises her children is in fact capable of managing her work inside and outside her home because motherhood is the most difficult job in the world. Again disapproving is an FTA to the addressee’s positive face because they do not share the same wants and desires.

Challenges were also used, with 17.5% of the whole strategies. When disagreeing with their fathers’ preference for being specialized in the scientific branches, the participants provided utterances such as the following:

23. *naqra ʔali jsaʃad-ni:*

‘I study what helps me.’

Irrelevancy Claims represent the least frequently used strategy in this category, with 7.5% when disagreeing with a father as in:

24. *ʃi xa:tʔri: ngu:l yi:r ʔasana: dʔurk naqra: baza:f*

‘Inside of me, I say: just wait, I will study hard.’

#### 4.6. Strategies used by equal-status speakers

As for the equal status, Counterclaims scored the highest frequently used strategy, with 52.5%. An example on that strategy is the following:

25. *l-ḥaq l-ḥaq zi:n ta:ni mli:ḥ, basaḥ ?axla:q-ha: w tarbjit-ḥa hu:ma ?asaḥ*

‘Right, right, the beauty is nice but her morals and the way she was raised are better.’

Contradictions ranked second and favoured by equal-status individuals, with 30%. In the case of a speaker being requested to react negatively when a friend claims that the very first thing one should consider when getting married is the physical appearance of the wife, a participant contradicts the idea by saying:

26. *la: ra:-k ya:lat<sup>c</sup> zi:n wa:ḥad mn ?l-maṣaji:r*

‘No, you are wrong; the beauty is one of many other criteria.’

26. is an evident instance of contradiction, because the speaker starts with the negative particle *no* and produces the negated proposition made by the previous claim, i.e. beauty is not the only criterion; it is one of many others.

Unlike High to Low and Low to High statuses, no frequencies were found for the Irrelevancy Claims and Challenges. Four instances, with 10% of the whole strategies were used by the participants to show Reference to Religion, as follows:

27a. *rabi:jzi:b ?l-xi:r*

‘May God bring all good things.’

27b. *nta di:r ?l-xi:r w-rabi: rah jḥa:sab*

‘You do good, and God will judge.’

The least frequent strategy was the use of *Sayings*, with 7.5% as in the following:

28. *?il-zi:n ma jabni: da:r ma jwakal*

‘Beauty never builds nor feeds.’

As well as in 20., repeated here:

20. *?azi:n f-dafla: w-lamru:rija fi:-ha*

‘The beauty is in the oleander and bitter taste in it.’

## 5. Similarities and differences

This study aims to compare the use of disagreement strategies in Jordanian and Algerian Arabic. Based on the analysis above, to identify the similarities and differences between Algerian speakers of Arabic and Jordanian speakers of Arabic regarding disagreement strategies used for people of higher status, the researchers compared the responses of the two groups of participants to the scenarios manifested disagreement with people of higher status and it was revealed that the participants of the two study groups shared significantly similar preferences in using disagreement strategies. Nevertheless, the results of a more detailed descriptive analysis indicated that the Algerian participants used Challenges more than the Jordanian participants did; however, the two groups were quite similar in using of Counterclaims and Contradictions followed by Counterclaims as their primary and basic tool or strategy when making a disagreement with regard to the three statuses. That is, the native speakers of Arabic (both Jordanians and Algerians) who participated in the study were more concerned with saving their interlocutors' positive face as well as trying to be more indirect or be more polite in terms of social relationships while disagreeing with people of higher status. The findings can be justified partially by the fact that in terms of the influence of the social status, as far as Challenges is concerned, the Algerian participants displayed a kind of a threat to the positive face of the interlocutor, which in return might be considered as impolite as in saying:

29. *wa:ʃdaxl-ak*

'That's none of your business.'

30. *?arwa:h bajan ft'a:t-ak*

'Come on, show your cleverness.'

As for the additional strategies detected by the researchers, the use of *Reference to Religion* as a strategy to disagree was found only when disagreeing with equal status for the Jordanian participants and in high to low and equal statuses for the Algerian participants. This was explained, according to the researchers, in that both cultures make use of the religious formula to avoid any commitment to an idea that they either do not know or do not want to comment on such as:

31. *?ala:h ?aʃlam*

'God knows better.'

32. *xali: ?al-xalq li-l-xa:liq*

'Leave the creation to the Creator.'

In addition, this can be attributed to the shared historical and cultural values and to social norms as both groups share the same religious beliefs. Islam is the dominant religion in the two countries.

As for Sayings, on the other hand, as found by the researchers, they were detected in both groups. This demonstrates that both have such usage in their cultures (Jordanians and Algerians).

In closing and based on the findings reported in this study, the disagreement strategies proposed by Muntigel and Turnbull (1998) were all used by the Algerian and Jordanian participants with regard to the social status of the interlocutors. Moreover, the researchers detected during the analysis, new strategies preferred by the participants in the Algerian group and the Jordanian group, viz., reference to religion as in: 'God knows' and sayings as in: 'Not every beautiful girl is of pride'. We attribute this to the fact that both cultures use such formulae and this is used usually to avoid commenting. Moving to the most significant finding, counterclaims and contradictions were favored the most in the results by both groups. Such preference is claimed to be used by the participants in order to save the positive face of the interlocutors; in other words, both Algerians and Jordanians attempt to be more polite when facing such situations or scenarios. We conclude our discussion by claiming that differences between the Algerian participants and the Jordanian participants were expected more than similarities and this is because both groups are not the same in terms of language and cultures.

## 6. Conclusion

Following Muntigl and Turnbull's (1998) taxonomy of strategies of disagreement, the study has attempted to investigate the use of such strategies among Jordanians and Algerians. The results of the quantitative and qualitative analysis showed that the participants of the two study groups shared significantly similar preferences in using two main disagreement strategies that scored the highest percentage in High to Low status, Low to High status and in Equal status. The strategies are Counterclaims and Contradictions, this was justified by the concern of Jordanians and Algerians participated in the study who were more concerned with saving their interlocutors' positive face as well as trying to be more indirect or be more polite in terms of social relationships. Besides, the findings of the study implied that despite the variation between the two groups in terms of dialects and cultures groups of participants in terms of their preferences for using different disagreement strategies, a significant difference was found with respect to disagreement with people of high status. Regarding the use of the external strategies proposed by the researcher, both groups employed them when making a disagreement with equal status individuals. In conclusion, the findings of the present study answer the research questions and afford a general account of this speech act in the two languages.

Providing new and different evidence on the disagreement strategies that Algerian and Jordanian speakers tend to use when communicating in daily life.

Among the limitations of this research is that the number of the participants was small, hence no generalization can be made. Another limitation is the absence of the researcher when delivering the data for Algerians where some subjects provide the answers with the standard Arabic and this was not the request. For future studies, especially the ones dealing with dialects, the researcher might use recordings for more natural responses and for the study to be a valid one.

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## Appendix 1. DCT in Arabic

عزيزتي / عزيزي المشارك...

يقوم الباحث بإجراء دراسة حول استراتيجيات عدم التوافق 'Disagreement Strategies' حيث أن هذا الإستبيان يحتوي على مجموعة من المواقف وعلى القارئ ان يضع نفسه في هذه المواقف. يرجى التكرم بتعبئة الاستبانة المرفقة بدقة و موضوعية على ان تكون الإجابة باللهجة العامية.

نحيطكم علماً أن لإجاباتكم دور أساسي في نجاح هذه الدراسة و تستخدم لاغراض البحث العلمي فقط. الرجاء أن تكون الردود غير متوافقة (إعطاء رأي مخالف) مع الحالات المذكورة أدناه. شكراً على حسن تعاونكم.

أنت مدير شركة وكنت حاضراً في إحدى الاجتماعات لمناقشة بعض شؤون الشركة و سمعت أحد الموظفين يقول: بعض موظفي هذه الشركة يتقاضون رواتب عالية بالرغم من أنهم لا يعملون أكثر من 6 ساعات يومياً. أنت تخالفه الرأي فتقول:

أنت طالب جامعي وقتت بمناقشة بعض المواضيع التي تخص مجتمعكم مع بعض اساتذتك. الدكتور يرى بانه ليس باستطاعة المرأة الجمع بين العمل و مهام المنزل و أنت تخالفه الرأي بقولك:  
أنت تتحدث مع صديقك عن الزواج فيقول لك: أهم معيار يجب أخذه بعين الاعتبار عند الزواج هو أن تكون الزوجة جميلة (مزه) و أنت لا تتفق معه فتقول:

أنت نجحت في إمتحان الثانوية العامة و تريد أن تدرس تخصص الحقوق و والدك يخالفك الرأي و يقول: من الأفضل لك أن يكون توجهك للتخصصات العلمية و أنت مقتنع بمبولك فترد عليه قائلاً:  
كنت أنت و صديقك في السوق و لاحظتما متسولاً فقال معلقاً: أصبح التسول مهنة اليوم لكل الناس و أنت لا تتفق معه فيما قال فترد قائلاً:

أنت أب / أم و طلب إبنك أن يحضر قطلا ليربيه في البيت وأنت ترفض طلبه و ترد قائلاً:

## Appendix 2. DCT in English

Dear participant...

The researchers are conducting a study on disagreement strategies, where in this questionnaire a range of situations and the reader is kindly asked to put him/her self in these situations and write what would be said in Dialect. Please make sure to read the situation carefully before you respond. Please provide contrary opinion responses that are incompatible with the cases described below.

We inform you that your answers are essential to the success of this study and will be treated with complete confidentiality in which they will be used for scientific research purposes only. Thank you for your cooperation.

- 1) You are a company manager, and you were at a meeting to discuss some of the company's business, and you heard one of the employees saying, "Some of the employees of this company are paid a high salary even though they don't work more than 6 hours a day." You disagree and say:

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- 2) You are a college student and you have discussed some of the topics that concerns your community with some of your teachers. The Doctor claim that women can't manage work with household tasks, and you disagree with him by saying:

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- 3) You talk to your friend about marriage and he thinks that the most important criterion to consider in marriage is the looking (beauty) of woman and you disagree with him and say:

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- 4) You passed the high school exam and you want to study law, and your dad disagrees, and says: It's better for you to choose science, however, you are convinced of your choice and say:

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- 5) You and your friend were at the market and you two noticed a homeless (beggar). Your friend comments: begging has become a profession today for everyone, and you don't agree with him by saying:

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- 6) You are a father/ a mother and your son asks to bring up a cat to raise at home, and you reject his request and you say:

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Nour El Houda Benyakoub is a PhD candidate of Linguistics at the University of Jordan, Amman. She is working on the study of metadiscourse and can be reached at: [nounaben401@yahoo.fr](mailto:nounaben401@yahoo.fr)

Sharif Alghazo is an Associate Professor of Applied Linguistics in the Department of Foreign Languages at the University of Sharjah, UAE and in the Department of English Language and Literature at the University of Jordan, Jordan. His research has appeared in journals such as *System*, *Journal of Politeness Research*, *Heliyon*, *Sage Open*, *Ampersand*, *Interchange*, *Lingue e Linguaggio*, and *Open Linguistics*. He can be reached at: [s.alghazo@ju.edu.jo](mailto:s.alghazo@ju.edu.jo)

Abdel Rahman Mitib Altakhaine is an Assistant Professor of English language and linguistics at The University of Jordan, Amman. He obtained his PhD in linguistics from Newcastle University, UK. His research interests lie in the areas of morphology, lexical semantics, morphosyntax, and psycholinguistics. He has published research papers in several journals, including: *Studia Linguistica*, *Lingua*, *Acta Linguistica Hungarica*, *Topics in Linguistics*, *Metaphor and the Social World*, *Journal of Computer Assisted Learning*, *Research in Language*, *Applied Linguistics Review*, *Linguistics Vanguard*, *Quality in Higher Education* and *Sage Open*. He can be reached at: [a.altakhaine@ju.edu.jo](mailto:a.altakhaine@ju.edu.jo)

Ghaleb Rabab'ah is a Professor of Linguistics at the University of Jordan and the University of Sharjah. He has published many papers in discourse analysis, pragmatics, and translation in international journals, such as the *Journal of Pragmatics*, *Poznan Studies in Contemporary Linguistics*, *Journal of Psycholinguistic Research*, *Journal of Politeness Research*, and *Research in Language*. He supervised and examined many MA theses and Ph.D. dissertations. He can be reached at: [ghaleb.rababah@ju.edu.jo](mailto:ghaleb.rababah@ju.edu.jo) or [grababah@sharjah.ac.ae](mailto:grababah@sharjah.ac.ae)