INVESTIGATING IRAQI EFL LEARNERS' USE OF THE SPEECH ACT OF AGREEMENT

تقصي استخدام المتعلمين العراقيين للغة الانجليـزية لغة اجنبية أسلوب الموافقة

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ABSTRACT

This study investigates Iraqi EFL university learners' use of the speech act of agreement at the pragmatic level. Additionally, the present study analyzes the productive level of the learners' use of agreement.The study basically aims at analysing the speech act of agreement at the pragmatic level. It also aims at investigating the most common strategies used by Iraqi EFL learners to issue communicative acts of agreement at the productive level.The study hypothesizes that (1) the students' performance of the direct strategies for showing agreement is better than the indirect ones at the productive level, and (2) the students' performance of the explicit performative strategies for showing agreement is better than the implicit ones. To achieve the aims of the study and verify or refute its hypotheses, a sample of twenty Iraqi EFL learners from fourth year-stage in the Department of English Language, College of Education, University of Al-Qadisiya during the academic year (2014-2015) is randomly chosen to answer a questionnaire which consists of twenty different interactional situations requiring from the subjects to respond with agreement.

The study verifies the hypotheses and yields that (1) a percentage of (92%) goes to the direct strategies for showing agreement ,whereas (8%) goes to the indirect ones, (2) a percentage of (67%) goes to the learners' use of explicit performatives for showing agreement ,whereas only (33%) goes to the learners' use of the implicit ones. So, the study concludes the poor use of indirect strategies and implicit performatives

for showing agreement compared to the direct strategies and the explicit performatives by the Iraqi EFL learners.

1. Introduction

Language is a divine gift endowed to humanity by which man communicates his feelings, thoughts, attitudes, opinions, ideas and transmits information. Hence, a successful communication requires pure linguistic and communicative competence based on social norms, values and relations between individuals.

The communicative act of agreement can be utilized verbally or non-verbally in interactions. For instance, participants may merely say 'I agree with you' or 'yes' for showing agreement. They may also say 'no' or 'I disagree' to mean agreement implicitly. Moreover, participants may utilize non-verbal contributions for showing the communicative act of agreement, such as (looking at the recipient with smile, head node, showing thump up, etc.).Hence, the act of agreement is contextually determined.

The communicative act of agreement is considered problematic because the native speakers of English may use certain strategies for showing agreement which are not well recognized by Iraqi EFL learners due to the differences in the mother tongues. Additionally, Iraqi EFL learners may always consider agreement as face- saving act neglecting or deprioritizing the role of context which determines the actual illocutionary force of the utterance performed.

The present study is limited to analysing the speech act of 'agreement' at the pragmatic level within the theoretical frameworks of the theories of speech acts and politeness. The scope of the research also covers the practical study conducted on fourth year university students.

The present research is put forward on two hypotheses which are (1) the students' performance of the direct strategies for showing agreement is better than the indirect ones at the productive level, and (2) the students' performance of the explicit performative strategies for showing agreement is better than the implicit ones.

Additionally, the present study aims at analysing the speech act of agreement at the pragmatic level. It also aims at investigating the most common strategies used by Iraqi EFL learners to issue communicative acts of agreement at the productive level.

2. THE SPEECH ACT OF AGREEMENT
2.1 Definitions and Types

Scholars, like Pomerantz, have dedicated a considerable endeavour in defining the communicative act of "agreement" considering it as one of the most occurring communicative events in everyday interaction.

For Xuehua (2006:56), 'agreement' is an act of expressing similar or identical opinion as that of the initiator .According to Pomerantz (1984:329-330), agreement is an act which occurs when two or more users view the proposed referent in the same way. Moreover, Jonson (2006:42) defines it as "a show of support from one speaker for a belief or proposition expressed by another". Users of language sometimes agree with each other explicitly or implicitly and, thus, the context plays an essential role in eliciting the intended illocutionary force of the utterance or the act performed. For example, one can say 'yes' or ' I agree with you' to implicitly mean 'no' or 'I disagree with you' depending on the context of the utterance performed. Agreement, unlike many speech acts as (offer, invitation, prayer, etc.), always occupies the second part of adjacency pair of conversation. In other words, no one initiates agreement unless there is an already proposed statement. Consider the following demonstrated example:

A: Our troops require an extra training.

 B: I absolutely agree with you.

Pomerantz (1984: 57-101) points out that speakers sometimes use certain structural markers which label their agreement token as complete or partial. These structural markers are called 'hedges'. Brown and Levinson (1987) point out that those hedges can be understood as "the most important linguistic means of satisfying the speaker's want" (Ibid: 146). Some of the common hedges are: I assume/ believe / wonder, I'm sorry/, I myself, actually, maybe, sort of, rather, pretty, certainly, totally, completely, just, etc.. Users of language sometimes resort to hedging their verbal contributions as an attempt to minimize any possible potential threat which the act performed may carry. Some speech acts are destructive or face threatening by its nature like 'disagreement, refusal, rejection, etc.' (Brown and Levinson 1987:60).Thus, resorting to hedges is important in some cases for many considerations like politeness. Concerning agreement, speakers do not usually hedge their agreement token, because it is inherently face-saving act, and it does not jeopardize social harmony between participants (Leech 1983:83).Thus, the participants are, after achieving politeness by maximizing or minimizing certain acts, depending on the imposition or the threat the act may have. For instance, participants may disagree with each other partially to avoid

impoliteness (partial disagreement) and, consequently, the result is 'partial agreement'. Consider the following utterance below with hedged disagreement (partial agreement) taken from (Pomerantz 1978:78):

(1) H: Gee, Hon, you look nice in that dress.

W: …It's just a rag my sister gave me.   (partial disagreement / agreement).

Based on the level of the act strength, Pomerantz (1984:65-75) classifies agreement into two major types with subcategories: complete agreement and partial agreement. The former means that interactants show their agreement confidently or without hesitation. This type includes two subcategories: upgrading agreement and preserving agreement. Whereas, the latter means that the interactants show agreement with hesitation this type includes downgrading agreement (Ibid: 75).The short upcoming paragraphs will provide definitions and examples of the types and the subtypes of agreement mentioned earlier.

An upgraded agreement usually occurs when the recipient strengthens the force of agreement either by adding an intensifier to the prior assessment, as in example no. (3), or by producing a stronger evaluative assessment than the first one, as in example no.(4). Consider the following examples by Pomerantz (1984:67) where evaluative agreement is marked by an arrow:

(2) M: You must admit it was fun the night we we[nt down

→ J: [It was a great fun…

The respondent (J) upgrades or strengthens his agreement by adding the intensifier (great) to the prior assessment .Because of the intensifier, speaker (M) assures that J`s opinion is as the same as his own.

(3)   J: T's-it's a beautiful day out isn't it?

L: Yeh it's just gorgeous...

The utterance above shows that the respondent (L) starts his agreement token with 'Yeah' and then the assessment is upgraded ('beautiful' is strengthened to 'just gorgeous').

A preserving agreement is used to show evaluation of equal strength towards the referent (Brown and Levinson, 1987: 113).In this case, recipients express their agreement by repeating or completing the previous proffered statement .Speakers sometimes use certain strategies for showing this kind of agreement such as ' yes it is', ' I agree with you', repeating the same proposed utterance without adding any modifier, and adding 'too' to the repeated responses. Consider the following examples taken from (Pomerantz 1984:67):

A: Yeah I like it (   )
→ B: I like it too ….
G: Ben Johnson is a great playwright.
→ D: He is a great playwright.

Example (5) shows that the speaker (B) does not strengthen or weaken the force of the act by adding or downgrading the degree of the act illocutionary force. The speaker just shows an agreement with a moderate degree where (B) merely repeats the same proffered statement adding 'too' to it. Similarly, the researcher's demonstrated example (6) shows that the responder (D) repeats the previous statement uttered by (G) without adding any intensifier .By the repetition in, the party expresses the same opinion toward Ben Johnson.

As for downgrading agreement, Pomerantz (1984:68) points out that this kind of agreement occurs when the interactants express their agreement using a scaled down or weakened evaluative terms. For instance, the speaker may substitute 'pretty' with ' gorgeous' as a strategy for lessening the degree of his/her agreement. Consider the following utterance (Ibid):

A: She's a pretty girl.
→ L: Oh, she's gorgeous!

The scheme below illustrates Pomerantz' classification of the speech act of agreement:

Figure (1): The Researcher's Scheme of Pomerantz' Agreement Classification
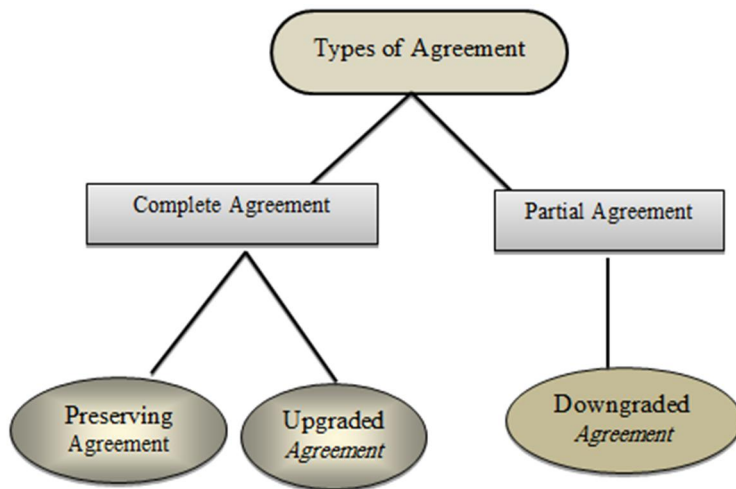
2.2 Categorizations of Agreement

Scholars approached the classifications of speech acts differently. Some of them attempted the classifications lexically based on performative verbs like Austin, whereas some others approached the classifications semantically based on illocutionary acts like Searle (Mey 1993:133).Based on lexical analysis of linguistic verbs, Austin (1962:150-151) sets a speech acts taxonomy in which he typifies them into five major categories: (1) Verdicatives, typified by the giving of a verdict, grade, or appraisal. Examples of such kinds are: convicting, rule, acquire, etc., (2) Exercitives, verbs which illustrate the exercising of powers, rights or influences. For example: advising, ordering, instructing, voting, appointing, etc., (3) Behavitives, which incorporate social behaviour. For example: apologizing, condoling, congratulating, cursing, blessing, etc.,(4) Commissives, those verbs which commit the speaker to some future course of action. For example: promising, vowing, and undertaking, and finally (5) Expositives, which concern with how one makes utterances fit into an argument or exposition. They show the expression of views, clarifications, arguments, references, etc. Examples of this category are: argue, concede, reply, tell, agree, etc.

On the other hand, Searle classifies illocutionary acts semantically into five types: (1) Representatives, the speaker asserts a proposition to be true, e.g., report, conclude, think, disagree, agree, etc., (2) Directives, speaker attempts to get the addressee to do something with such verbs as request, suggest, prohibit, etc., (3) Commissives, the speaker commits himself/herself to a course of actions. For example, using words like (undertake, promise, pledge, etc.), (4) Expressives, they express a psychological state. Examples are: thank, congratulate, appreciate, apologize, regret, etc., and (5) Declaratives, the speaker alters the external status or condition of an object or situation. For instance: merry, declare, appoint, etc.

So, according to Searle's classification of speech acts, agreement doesnot belong to the category of expositives, as in Austin's classification. Instead, the speech act of agreement is a kind of representatives, and thus it shares the features of this class with its other members.

2.3   Felicity Conditions of Agreement

Yule (1996: 50) points out that Felicity Conditions cover expected or appropriate circumstances which allow recipients to recognize an illocutionary force as intended by initiators.These circumstances are

termed as 'crateria' in the theory of speech act . Austin (1962: 14-5) states that these crateria must be satisfied if the speech act is to achieve its purpose properly or felicitously, otherwise, the act is rendered 'infelicitous', or 'unhappy'. For example, if a speaker is joking with some fellows saying : 'I now pronounce you husband and wife.' , the speaker has not, in fact, married them. The speaker's speech act is infelicitous or inapproperiate because the participants are not sincere about the marriage.Thus, achieving successful analysis of illocutionary forces requires fulfilling necessary and sufficient conditions.

Austin (1962: 14-15) typifies felicity conditions as follows:

A- There must exist an accepted conventional procedure having a certain conventional effect, that procedure to include the uttering of certain words by certain persons in certain circumstances.

B. The particular persons and circumstances in a given case must be appropriate for the invocation of the particular procedure invoked.

C. The procedure must be executed by all participants both correctly and completely.

D- Where, as often, the procedure is designed for use by persons having certain thoughts or feelings, or for the inauguration of certain consequential conduct on the part of any participant, then a person participating in and so invoking the procedure must intend so to conduct themselves, and further must actually so conduct themselves subsequently.

Searle (1969: 36) criticizes Austin's Felicity Conditions claiming that they are applicable to certain speech acts like marriage, whereas, they are invalid for others like agreement. Hence, Searle developed Austin's Felicity Conditions by classifying them into five classes: general conditions, content conditions, preparatory conditions, sincerity conditions, and essential conditions. According to Yule (1996:50), general conditions concern the participants' knowledge of the language being used and their non-playacting, content conditions focus on the content of the locutionary act and must predict a future act of the speaker himself, preparatory conditions deal with differences of various illocutionary acts (e.g. those of promising or warning), sincerity conditions focus upon the speaker's intention to carry out a certain act and essential conditions focus on the illocutionary point of what is said.

Applying Searle's framework, the following conditions and criteria should be met for a proposition to be realized as an act of agreement (1975: 361-362):

(1) Preparatory condition:

(a)S1 has asserted or implied or is believed to have asserted or implied P.

(b) S2 understands the propositional content of P and there's no need for further information.

(2) Propositional condition: S2 asserts or implies similar P.

(3) Sincerity condition:

(a) S2 believes that S1 has asserted P.

(b) S2 believes that S1 considers P to be true.

(c) S2 wants to inform S1 that S2 is of a similar opinion and, therefore, agreement is possible.

 (4) Essential condition: Either or both S1 and S2 count the act as an act of agreement.

2.4 Pragmatic Strategies for Showing Agreement

Brown (2007:119) defines strategies as the "specific methods of approaching a problem or task, modes of operation for achieving a particular end, planned designs for controlling and manipulating certain information". The strategies, intended to be involved for acquiring agreement, are basically built on Searle's (1969) and Pomerantz's (1984) models. Accordingly, some strategies for expressing the speech act of agreement are introduced in the following upcoming subsections.

2.4.1. Direct Agreement

This category includes the two major strategies given hereunder

Explicit Performatives: Strategy (1)

Interactants assign the explicitness of their agreement through the use of varying means. Some of these means are: the use of explicit performative verbs which draw the actual illocutionary force of the utterance performed. Hence, the meaning of the performative verb is the essence of the illocution. For example: I agree with you. In this respect, it is so easy for the recipient to capture the speaker's intention since it is overtly indicated.

Austin assumes that explicit performatives usually have certain syntactic features which characterise explicit performatives, i.e., the normal form for them is marked by the use of 1st pronoun singular, present tense, allows the – sounding adverb 'hereby', 'performative main verb' , etc. Applying Austin's syntactic feature of explicit performatives on agreement results with:

 I hereby agree with you.

1-   Implicit Performatives

The speech act of agreement can be achieved through utterances which have no performative expressions, and the interpretation of the illocutionary forces of such utterances are achieved pragmatically (Leech, 1983:148).Some strategies can be used for showing agreement like:

A- **Elliptical expressions**: Sometimes, interactants show their agreement by merely saying (yes) or (yeah).Such utterances have no performative verb and, thus, they are non-performative utterances. Consider the following suggested example:

(4)   D: His ideas are too complicated.
        Q: yeah/yes.   (elliptical expressions)

B-   Repetition : Pomerantz (1984:67) points out that 'repetition' serves a useful mean for showing agreement (preserving agreement).Sometimes, the recipient either repeats what has been stated by the addresser fully adding intensifiers like 'too' to the response, as in (12) or partially as in (13) below. Additionally, speakers may agree with each other by repeating the same proffered statement with little modification to the subject or the object depending on the point of agreement, as in example (14) suggested by the researcher:

(5)   A: Yeah I like it (   )
            → B: I like it too ….   (Ibid.)

(6)   K : .... He's terrific.
    → J : He is.   (Ibid.)
(7)   Smith: The test is easy.
    → Jim: It's easy.

C-   **Appreciations of assessment**: Interactants sometimes show their agreement by stating their appreciation of the other's assessment. Such strategy includes expressions like 'I think you are right' or 'good point'. Consider the following utterances taken from (Jonson 2006: 51):

  (13) J: for years I was just kind of pretending <laugh>
          *V: I know <laugh>

D-   Stating of belief: Sometimes, participants agree by submitting claims to the same knowledge or belief as the initiator of the assessment by using performative verbs like: (believe, think, etc) (Ibid.).For example: (I think /believe so).Consider the following demonstrated utterances:

(14) C: The electricity issues will be fixed in Iraq soon.

D: I think so.   (Meaning: I agree with you)

2.4.2 Indirect Agreement

Speakers do not usually express their intentions directly. Sometimes, they express their intentions indirectly, and the recipients have to seek for appropriate context to elicit the intended meaning. Generally, speakers usually attempt to maintain social harmony and achieve politeness. This attempt is mostly fulfilled by resorting to indirectness when the speech acts are face-threatening which may jeopardise social solidarity, cause impoliteness and communication breakdown. Such acts of this type are: 'disagree, refuse, prohibition, etc.' .Whereas, some other acts are inherently face-saving which are socially preferred to be explicitly and directly delivered in some context (Leech 1983: 83). Such acts are: 'agreement, acceptance, complement, praise, etc.

Generally speaking, the speech act of agreement can be expressed indirectly by various strategies. Some of the common verbal strategies include: rhetorical questions, negation, and tautologies. In direct agreements, the context is crucially important in determining the accurate meaning intended by the initiator.

A- **Rhetorical Questions**: Sometimes, speakers utilize syntactic forms of questions which actually do not aim at seeking information, but to semantically express something already known by the two participants. These syntactic types of questions which don't require an answer are called 'rhetorical question' (Quirk et al., 1985:825). One of the shared knowledge between participants could be agreement towards certain proposed idea(s).Consider the following demonstrated example where agreement is marked by an arrow:

(15) F: Iraqi army achieved outstanding victories against the insurgents over Iraqi cities.

   → G: Who would ever deny it?   (Meaning: everybody agrees with what you have said).

B- **Negation**: Sometimes, participants use negative performatives which contextually operate as positive ones. For examples, users may say 'I do not agree with you' to sarcastically or ironically mean 'I agree with you'. Moreover, the users of language may also say 'no' to mean 'yes' in certain contexts. Consequently, interpreting the speaker`s intended meaning is contextually determined. Consider the following demonstrated conversation between two Barcelona football team fans talking about the great skills of Messi (famous excellent Barcelona footballer).The fans already know the fact that

Messi is an excellent footballer. One of them says: 'Messi is an excellent player'. The recipient replies with a laugh saying: 'I do not agree with you' or 'no'. In this context, the recipient`s response should not be interpreted superficially away from the context (the shared background knowledge between the conversants about Messi being an excellent player). So, According to the context, saying 'I do not agree with you' or 'no' means 'I agree with you' and 'yes'.

C- **Tautologies**: Tautology is one of the key figures of speech and, thus, it is important to know what the word signifies. It can be defined as a term used for repeating the same thing by using different words and phrases. In other words, tautology can be understood as an act of agreement. In this respect, the speaker invites the hearer to seek for an informative interpretation for the non- informative utterance. Consider the following utterances taken from (Meibauer 2008: 458):

(16)   Speaker A: In this region, thousands of victims were killed in war.

    Speaker B: War is war.

Obviously, taking the utterance 'war is war' in isolation is redundant and meaningless unless it is contextualized to mean, for example, (I agree with you that bad things happen in war time).Hence, tautology can be utilized for showing indirect agreement in conversation.

It's worth mentioning that interactants may also use non-verbal strategies for showing various acts including agreement. Some of these strategies include gestures, facial expressions (i.e. smiling to the speaker while s/he is talking) silence, etc. (Scott 2002:314-322).These strategies are manipulated in framing the practical part of the present study because they require face to face interaction.

3. Methodology

3. 1. Introduction

This section represents the practical part of the study in which the researcher attempts to investigate the strategies used by Iraqi EFL learners for showing agreement. This section aims at: (1) finding the types and the frequencies of the students' usages of agreement strategies, and (2) analysing the difficulties which the subjects may face in performing the act of agreement.

3.2 The Subjects

The total number of the sample involved in the practical part of the present study is twenty students of the fourth year students randomly

chosen from Department of English, College of Education, University of Al-Qadisiya during the academic year 2014-2015.The subjects are native speakers of Arabic and they almost share the same social, educational, and economical background. None of the subjects has spent a period whatsoever in English speaking community, i.e., all lack exposure to the cultural environment of the target language.

3.3 The Test

The test includes twenty situations which are likely to occur in a real-life context. The test items are authentic and chosen from a number of sources consulted in this study, basically from Agreeing and disagreeing with assessments: Some features of preferred/dispreferred turn shapes, 1984, by Pomerantz. Each situation given shows an idea which requires a response with an agreement (see Appendix1).Spelling mistakes are ignored as long as their intentions are as clear as possible.

The test was set in April 2015.The students were requested to answer the questions on the same test sheet paper to save time and effort. Moreover, the students were encouraged to respond to all the given situations without being hesitant to ask for any clarification. Instructions were given in Arabic to ensure that the subjects had fully understood the test nature and what was required from them to do.

3. 4 Data Analysis

After collecting the date, the subjects' responses were carefully analyzed to specify the sorts and percentages of the agreement strategies used.

The total number of the subjects' actual responses to the situations is (322) , whereas the number of the blank responses are (60).Each test item is given (5) marks and the success score is (50%) out of (100%).The item left blank is given zero because it gives an impression that the testee is unable to answer the question correctly. As table (1) shows ,the total number of the subjects who passed the test is eighteen with a percentage reached to (90%) whereas only two of them failed to reach the pass score with a percentage of (10%).This means that the students are aware of the speech act of agreement and the possible strategies used for showing this act.

Table (1)

Subjects' Overall Performance in the Test

Sample Total No.	20	Percentage
No. of Passed Subject	18	90%
No. of Failed Subjects	2	10%
No. of the Subjects' Total Actual Responses	322	99%
No. of Direct Agreement Strategies used	295	92%
No. of Indirect Agreement Strategies used	27	8%

The statistical analysis reveals that (92%) from the subjects' responses goes to the direct strategies, whereas only (8%) goes to the indirect as shown in table (1). This means that the Iraqi EFL learners perform direct agreement strategies better than indirect ones. Within the direct strategies, the researcher has noticed that the students' choices of explicit performatives are reached to (198) with a percentage of (67%), whereas their choices of the implicit performatives are reached to (97) with a percentage of (33%) as table (2) indicates. Additionally , analysing the students responses reveals that most of the subjects stick to one direct strategy for expressing their agreement using explicit performative verb (agree).Some others are more frequent in utilizing implicit performatives expressions like (I think so) or (I believe so) as table (4) shows. Whereas, the students' responses to the situations with indirect agreement are reached to (27) responses out of (322) which verifies the ignorance of the subjects to the indirect agreement strategies (see table (3)).

Table (2): The Subjects' Performance of Direct Agreement Strategies

No. of Subjects	Types of Direct Strategy	No. of Frequency	Percentages
20	Explicit Performatives	198	67%
	Implicit Performatives	97	33%

Table (3): The Subjects' Performance of Indirect Agreement Strategies

No. of Subjects	Types of Direct Strategy	No. of frequencies	Total no. of Direct Strategies Selections	Percentage
20	Rhetorical Question	6	27	8%
	Negation	20		
	Tautologies	0		

As far as the subjects' production of issuing 'direct agreement' are concerned, some of them make use of explicit performatives, whereas some others make use of implicit performatives .This actually gives the impression that the subjects are aware of the direct strategies for showing agreement. Below are some examples of the subjects' responses:

- **I agree with you.**
- **Yes, you're right.**
- **I think as you do.**
- **I have the same idea.**
- **Yes.**
- **Good point.**
- **I believe so.**

Table (4) below illustrates the students' Direct strategies used for showing agreement with frequencies and percentage:

Table (4): Students' Overall Performance with direct agreement strategies:

Strategy Construction	Formulaic Expression	Frequencies	Percentages
EXPLICIT PERFORMATIVE	I agree with you	198	67%
IMPLICIT PERFORMATIVE	I think so.	18	6%
	I believe so.	12	4%
	I have the same idea.	8	3%
	That's right.	12	3%
	Yeah.	25	8%
	Right.	13	4%
	Of course yes.	1	0.33%
	I know that.	12	4%
	True.	1	0.33%
			Total : 33%

As far as the subjects' responses with indirect agreement is concerned, the researcher has noticed that only 27 subjects make use of some indirect strategies for showing agreement (negations and rhetorical questions).It seems that they are either unaware of the third strategy (Tautologies) or the possible function it may perform for showing agreement .Some of the students responses to the test situations are given below:

- **Oh really? I already know it.**
- **I do not disagree with you.**
- **Oh yeah?**
- **Do you think I disagree with you?**
- **Do you think I say no?**
- **Well, do you think I have another opinion?**
- **I don't say no.**
- **I'm not blaming you.**
- **I never reject it.**
- **I'm not disagreeing.**
- **I absolutely have no other view.**

Table (5) below shows the students' indirect strategies used for showing agreement with frequencies and percentages:

Table (5): Students' Use of Indirect Strategies for Showing Agreement

Implicit Strategy Construction	Formulaic Expression	Frequency	Percentage
RHETORICAL QUESTIONS	Really? I already know it.	1	0.33%
	Seriously? Huh.I Know smoking is absolutely bad.	1	0.33%
	Oh yeah?	1	0.33%
	Well, do you think I have another idea?	1	0.33%
	Do you think I say no?	1	0.33%
	Are you joking? I know how boys behave.	1	0.33%
NEGATION	I do not disagree with you	4	1.33%
	I do not say no.	2	0.67%
	I never disagree.	3	0.67%
	I am not disagreeing with your view.	6	2%
	I have not to disagree with this.	1	0.33%
	I absolutely never reject it.	1	0.33%
	I do not have other view.	1	0.33%
	I am not blaming you.	1	0.33%
TAUTOLOGY	(None)	0	0%
			Total : 8%

Evidently, the statistical analyses reveal that the students' performance with direct strategies is higher than theirs with in direct ones. The subjects' total direct strategies percentage is reached to (92%), whereas their overall performance with indirect strategies for expressing agreement is reached to (8).Thus, the first hypothesis which reads: **The students' performance of the direct strategies for showing agreement is better than the indirect ones at the productive level** is validated. Within the direct strategies, the analyses reveal the students' usages of explicit performative expressions are higher than the implicit ones for showing agreement. A percentage of (67%) goes to the explicit performatives strategy, whereas only (33%) goes to the implicit performatives for showing the communicative act of agreement. Hence, this also validates the second hypothesis of the study which reads: **The students' performance of the explicit performative strategies for showing agreement is better than the implicit ones.**

4. Conclusions

The present study has yielded the following conclusions:

1- Generally, Iraqi EFL learners' performance, in relation to direct agreement, is better than that related to indirect one. This is what the statistical procedure adopted for comparing the subjects` uses of direct agreement proves to be higher than theirs in the indirect form higher than theirs in the indirect form. A result which verifies the first hypothesis that is: **The students' performance of the direct strategies for showing agreement is better than the indirect ones at the productive level**.

2- The present investigation reveals that the subjects produce explicit performative utterances that grant direct agreement better than implicit ones. This can be clearly illustrated with reference to their production of explicit performatives which accounts for (67%) while that of implicit ones is (33%).This validates the second hypothesis that **The students' performance of the explicit performative strategies for showing agreement is better than the implicit ones.**

3- Based on the statistical validations of the two hypotheses mentioned above, it is concluded that most of teachers, methods of teaching, or English syllabuses do not provide adequate information for learners to successfully acquire pragmatic competence concerning the use of agreement in English.

APPENDIX 1

ملاحظة : يرجى من الطلاب الأجابة على جميع الاسئلة مستخدمين اسلوب الموافقة، علما ان الأختبار مصمما لأغراض بحثية ولأيؤثر على درجة الطالب أكاديميا.

يحتوي هذا الأختبار على عشرون موقفا تواصليا مختلفا.تخيل نفسك في المواقف التالية وأجب بالموافقة، مع التقدير.

ملخص البحث

تستقصي هذه الدراسة استخدام المتعلمين العراقيين للغة الانجليزية لغة أجنبية أسلوب الموافقة تداوليا.كما وتحلل هذه الدراسة المستوى الانتاجي من استخدام المتعلمين لأسلوب الموافقة .تهدف هذه الدراسة بشكلا اساسيا الى تحليل اسلوب الموافقة على المستوى التداولي .كما وتستقصي هذه الدراسة الأستراتيجيات الاكثر استخداما من قبل المتعلمين العراقيين للغة الانجليزية لغة اجنبية لأبدائهم الموافقة وعلى مستوى نتاجهم. تتبنى الدراسة الفرضيتين الاتيتين: (١) أن اداء الطلبة للأستراتيجيات المباشرة لأيضاح الموافقة أفضل من تلك الأستراتيجيات غير المباشرة على مستوى نتاجهم , (٢) أن أستخدام الطلبة للأستراتيجيات التمثيلية لتوضيح اسلوب الموافقة افضل من أستخدامهم لتلك الأستراتيجيات الضمنية. لتحقيق هدف الدراسة والتحقق من فرضياتها ،تم عشوائيا اختيار عشرين طالبا من قسم اللغة الانجليزية ، كلية التربية ، جامعة القادسية للعام الدراسي (٢٠١٤-٢٠١٥) للأجابة بالموافقة على استبيانا مكونا من عشرين موقفا تواصليا مختلفا.

أثبتت الدراسة صحة فرضياتها وأقتضت بأنه (١) نسبة (٩٢٪) هي من نصيب الأستراتيجيات التي توضح الموافقة بشكلها المباشر ، بينما (٨٪) هي من نصيب تلك الأستراتيجيات التي توضح الموافقة بشكلها غير المباشر، (٢) نسبة (٦٧٪) من نصيب أستخدام المتعلمين للأستراتيجيات التمثيلية لتوضيح الموافقة ، بينما نسبة (٣٣٪) فقط من نصيب تلك الاستراتيجيات الضمنية لتوضيح الاسلوب نفسه.وعليه، فقد استنتجت الدراسة ضعف اداء المتعلمين العراقيين للغة الأنجليزية لغة أجنبية بأستخدام الأستراتيجيات المباشرة والتمثيلية في توضيح اسلوب الموافقة بشكلها غير المباشر مقارنة

مع ادائهم لتلك الأستراتيجيات غير المباشرة والضمنية التي توضح الموافقه بشكلها المباشر.

Q/ Please, agree with the following situations:

1- One of your schoolmates says to you, "Students should not be given so much homework after a class."

2- One of your students says to you, "I am so sorry that I have failed in your test. It is too difficult."

3- Your cousin says to you, "The party both you and I went to was very interesting."

4- In a barbershop, individuals discussing the issues of traffics in your city. One of them says to you, "The governorate should stopping importing too much cars to the province."

5- Your brother says to you, "Our soccer team required an extra training."

6- Your son says to you, "That movie is so comic."

7- A taxi driver says to you, "The economic situation is going worse this year in the country. The government should find alternative plans for improving the situation".

8- One of you relatives advices you saying, "Smoking is definitely bad for your health".

9- Your classmate says to you, "Ben Jonson's volpone is an interesting play."

10- You and your cousin are discussing the unemployment issues in the country. He says to you, "The government should at least hire the graduates to reduce the issues of unemployment."

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Your teacher says to an M.A student, "A minute should not the M.A student waist".

12- One day, you are watching TV news and hear a reporter saying, "The Iraqi army and the volunteer forces achieved remarkable victories against terrorism all over the country."

13- A flight attendant converses with you saying, "Basketball is the most popular sport in USA".

14- One day, your mom says to you, "Video games containing violence are inappropriate for children."

15- One of the students says to you, "Schools should teach arts and music to their students".

16- Your neighbour is discussing human treatment with you saying, "One should treat others as one would like others to treat oneself".

18- Your sister converses with you about the greatest waterfalls in the world saying, "Niagara Falls is undoubtedly one of the biggest waterfalls in the world located in Canada."
19- Your mother says to you, "Boys are getting naughty these days".

20- One of colleagues converses with you about Shakespeare's Romeo and Juliet saying to you, "I think Romeo and Juliet is philosophically a political play".

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- Undocumented examples are non-authentic and are created for illustrative purposes by the researcher.