Politeness Strategies in Conversations among Iraqi university students

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Abstract

This study aims to find out the language elements used by Iraqi university students. It also aims to discover the politeness strategies used by Iraqi university students; it aims to try to discover the most kind of politeness strategies used by Iraqi university students. The sample used in this study was the recording of conversations that the researcher recorded himself. These data were classified into language patterns according to Lakoff (1975), and then classified them to discover the language strategies used among Iraqi university students during their conversations according to Brown's and Levinson's (1987) classifications. The results showed that the students used different language patterns and also used the strategies of politeness with different uses. The results of the current study showed that students have used the Bald-On Record strategy more than other strategies. While using Off Record strategy was the least used strategy by students.

Keywords: politeness, strategies, Iraqi students, Conversations.

Introduction

People live in integrated units that are communities. These societies are only complemented by communication between their members. One of the most important ways to communicate are the words. Without speaking and conversations among people, the community has no existence and no basis at all. There must be a politeness in the speech and conversations of people among themselves in any society and in any country in the world. Here we emphasize the need to be more politeness to the practice of speaking in all respects. In terms of language and choice the words and in terms of values and principles common to people and speakers (May, L. S., Aziz, A. I., & Mohamad, M. M.2015).

Politeness is an art that must be mastered for the necessity of this factor in our daily lives. The feelings of the listener must be taken into account, as well as the ability to communicate in society in the proper, satisfactory and correct manner. When we talk about the subject of the politeness in conversations and communication between people we find that Brown and Levinson (1987) theory is that explains this topic and from all aspects .

This theory explains how the politeness works in conversations and speech. It is also explains the types of strategies of politeness . We find that this theory was built on the basis of the face provided by Goffman and the logic of the conversation by Grice . Where the concept of the face to two aspects of the life of the individual which is first the positive face, which are the needs that agree with the others. The negative aspect is that the individual has choices without objections by the others .

Politeness is the desire of the individual to communicate with society and with the other and in the right way. Therefore, the face factor is an important factor in the implementation of this desire is to be used positively or negatively according to many limitations and circumstances. This study is mainly based on Brown's and Levinson (1987) theory. This paper will based on this theory in order to answer the research questions and to achieve the objectives of this research which is: Find out the language elements used by Iraqi university students، identify the politeness

strategies used by Iraqi students at universities and discover the most kind of politeness strategies used by Iraqi university students.

Review of Literature

There are many studies that discussed the subject of politeness in conversations. Because of the importance of this aspect socially and personally. There are many theories that are looking at this subject. But Brown and Levinson's theory is the basis of sociology and psychology. Among the studies examined this subject was Mahyuni (2008). Where English and Indonesian were studied. Where the researcher mentioned in this thesis the aspects and conditions of the politeness of speech, which is the level of speech of the speaker and several linguistic aspects. This study spoke about the differences in English language and the Indonesian language. In Kitamura, N. (2000), we find conversations and find the extent of interaction between the speaker and the listener and the chain of interaction in the conversations. The researcher relied on Brown and Levinson's theory and considered it an effective tool in studying the phenomenon of politeness during conversations.

In addition to many studies that examined the subject of politeness during speech and conversations. Among them is (May, L. S., Aziz, A. I., & Mohamad, M. M.), where we note several methods that participants used during their conversation. We also find a comparison between males and females during their conversation on Facebook. In the depth of this study, we find that in some cases female superiority over males in the use of forms of politeness during the conversation, where the women use many formulas of apologies and resort to flexible formulas and forms of sympathy and stay away from the coarse tone during the conversation. Participants also resorted to using negative strategies of politeness to maintain their level of relations. Tsuda, S. (2003) examines the manner in which the Japanese speak in a polite or impolite through several

conversations among themselves and then analyze these conversations by the researcher as well as how to change the behavior of talking among themselves. The results of the data analysis showed how the Japanese behaved when talking to each other for the first time, a very polite way, and then began to mix the less polite way in their words as they began to learn more about each other. Nakayama, A. (2003) showed that the speakers used different techniques during polite and polite conversation.

The analysis showed that it was not a way to change from one way to another based on the speaking time among the speakers. Gupta, S., Walker, M. A., & Romano, D. M. (2007, September) stressed the importance of politeness in social life in general. There are also a lot of researchers that examined on the subject of politeness during the talk, as Cameron (2001), Belková, S., Coppock, L. (2005), (Hayashi & Minami, 1974; Kikuchi, 1994; Nakayama, 2003; Takiura, 2005). This study aims to discover the politeness strategies used by Iraqi students at universities. This study seeks to know the most kind of politeness strategies used by Iraqi university students.

Research objectives

This research aims to:

1– Find out the language elements used by Iraqi university students.
2– Discover the politeness strategies used by Iraqi universities students.
3– Discover the most kind of politeness strategies used by Iraqi university students.

Research questions

1– What are the language elements used by Iraqi university students?
2– What are the politeness strategies used by Iraqi university students?

3- What is the most kind of politeness strategies used by Iraqi university students?

Participants

This study aims to discover the elements of the language used by Iraqi university students. As well as to identify the strategies of politeness used by these students. It aims to discover the most used strategy among Iraqi students in their conversations with each other. Seventy students were selected from Al-Esraa University College while they were in the university. They are students between the ages of 18-21. All these students are students at Al-Esraa University College and have been selected to participate in this research.

Measurements

In order to achieve of the objectives of this research, the researcher was selected 70 students from Al-Esraa University college, and the researcher conducted a number of visits through which Recorded a number of conversations between these students, which were on many topics and not specific to a particular subject. The students spoke freely and did not confine themselves to the presence of the researcher or record those conversations. There were spontaneous conversations among themselves. The researcher used these conversations as a sample to achieve the objectives of this research and to answer the research questions.

Data analyses

The researcher conducted a number of visits to Al-Esraa University College after obtaining official approvals from the university. In order to obtain a number of conversations recorded for Iraqi students at Al-Esraa University College. In order to use these conversations as a sample to achieve the objectives of this research and to answer the questions of this research. After obtaining the necessary approvals, the researcher met with a number of students of Al-Esraa University College inside the university and explained to them the purpose of their meetings and visits. She also explained the research objectives and necessary steps necessary to achieve these goals. The researcher asked students to start automatic and unrestricted conversations among themselves. And not to stick to specific topics. That is, they are free during their talks and talk about subjects they choose to be freer during their conversations. The researcher told them that she will record these conversations for the purpose of achieving the research objectives only and will not be used for any other purpose. The researcher then repeated this process two more times until she got a number of conversations between the students.

The researcher then chose a number of conversations needed for the research. Then she coded these data. In order to answer the first question, which states what language patterns are used among Iraqi university students. These data were analysed according to Lakoff (1975), in order to identify the elements of the language used in the student conversations. As for the second and third questions in this research, the researcher categorized the data according to Brown's and Levinson's (1987) classifications in order to know the politeness strategies used by these students and which are more commonly used during student talks.

Findings

Language Patterns

In this section, the table 1 shows the language patterns that students used in their conversations and analyzed according to Lakoff (1975). By addressing the subject of politeness we find ourselves talking directly about Lakoff (1973). We find that this theory deals with a different aspect from the other familiar aspects of sociopragmatic investigation. This theory confirmed the pragmatical aspects of politeness. It is concerned with the linguistic aspect when dealing with the subject of politeness. When considering the strategies mentioned in this theory, we find that each strategy is established according to a particular position is the person who has been exposed during the period of occurrence .

Lakoff (1973) showed that each strategy contained in this theory is a set of tools used by speakers in their various positions. We find that Lakoff (1973) addresses two main aspects of this theory, namely: Be clear, Be polite to facilitate the process of speech and without any discounts. Ayad H. (2016)

Table 1: Language Patterns of the students conversations

	Frequency of Usage (Number of Participants)	Percentage of usage
Use of Super-Polite Form Of Language	16	23%
Frequent Apology	19	27%
Avoidance of Coarse Language	33	47%
Use of Tag Questions	28	40%
Use of Honorific Markers	26	37%
Indirect Requests	15	21%

In this section we discuss the language patterns used by Iraqi university students during their conversations that were used as data for this research. We mentioned earlier that the analysis of these linguistic patterns would be according to Lakoff's (1975). The results show that the number of students who used super-polite use was 16 students and 23% of the total number of students participating in this research.

Then we move to Frequent Apology, we find that the number of students who used this formula was 19 students and by 27%. Then we move on to the third pattern which is Avoidance of Coarse Language pattern which was used by 33 students and 47%. This pattern was the most widely used of the rest of the patterns. And then moved to the Use of Tag Questions, where 28 students used this pattern and 40%. Then we find that the Use of Honorific Markers was used by 26 students and 36%. We found that the Indirect Requests was used by 15 students and 21%.

Politeness Strategies

Brown and Levinson's model of politeness is one of the most important theories on the subject of politeness. Although this theory has received a lot of criticism until recently, it is considered the most important model among the other models that are looking at this subject. When we search deeper into the focus of theory, we find that it is concentrated on the inside of the speakers of the intention of speaking to this; we find that communication is the basis of their theory. Then we find that there is a new factor has been adopted in this theory is being threatening to face . The threat here means that the listener receives needs that meet his wishes from talk. We also find that the face is divided into two parts: the positive face and the negative side. What is meant by the positive face is that the speaker seeks to be desired by speaking. While the negative face is the desire of each qualified speaker in the actions of others without consequences. Ayad H. (2016)

Table 2: Politeness Strategies of the students conversations

Examples of Politeness Strategies in conversations	Frequency of Usage	Percentage of Usage	
Bald−On Record me to perform my..	34	49%	You have to help
Positive Politeness travel and enjoy..	32	46%	I think we should
Negative Politeness my book at 7:00,	24	34%	You will return me
			is it fine?..
Off Record (Indirect) should attend…	11	16%	I do not know if we

We find that the conversations that took place among the students Iraqi universities have included the strategies of politeness contained in Brown and Levinson's model .

Table 2 shows the numbers of students who have used each strategy of strategies for this theory.

1−   Bald−on record

Bald−On Record refers to the threat of the speaker and to the orders of the listener freely, because of the relationship of friendship between the two, that is, there is a relationship between people is considered as a kind of giving orders to the listener without any condition where people are close to each other is not

surprised using this formula Among themselves during their conversations. As in the following example:

"You have to help me to perform my"..

Where the student asks his colleague to help him directly and without restriction and this refers to the type of relationship and friendship that binds between them, which led to the use of the Bald-On Record strategy during their conversation. We note that 34 students used this formula during their conversations, or 49% of the number of students participating.

2-   Positive Politeness

Positive Politeness strategy is used by people who know each other and have relationships with each other and this strategy is used to reduce the threat of positive face to make the recipient feel satisfied. (William, A. (1997)

As in the following example:

"I think we should travel and enjoy.."

Where the speaker intended to use this formula to reduce the threat to the positive face and try to make the listener feel satisfied when presenting the idea of travel and enjoyment.

We find that 32 students have used the formula of the Positive Politeness strategy. The percentage of students using this formula was 46%.

3-   Negative Politeness

The Negative Politeness strategy is used by the speaker when he wants to impose his control strongly and impose his opinion on the listener. That is, the speaker imposes his words on the listener but in a polite and non-coarse way because the purpose of using this strategy is to impose hegemony to speak in a more peaceful way and less offensive to the listener or recipient.

The following example illustrates:

"You will return me my book at 7:00, is it fine"..؟

The example shows that the speaker has imposed his opinion that the listener must return his book to him at 7:00, but tried to be his words to impose hegemony and in a less offensive way to the listener. We find that 24 of the students who participated in this research used this formula during their conversations. The percentage of students 34% who used this formula during their conversations.

4- **Off Record**

In Off Record strategy we find that the speaker tends to speak in an indirect or unclear way to express a particular situation and the purpose of using this formula is to reduce the threat to the positive face and to minimize his control of the listener.

The following example demonstrates how to use this formula:

"I do not know if we should attend"…

We find that 11 students have used this strategy while talking in the conversations. The proportion of students using this formula was 16%.

Conclusion

Current research data shows that Iraqi university students use a number of language patterns during their conversations and in varying numbers using each of these patterns. These patterns included (the use of Super-Polite Form Of Language , Frequent Apology, Avoidance of Coarse Language, Use of Tag Questions ،Use of Honorific Markers, Indirect Requests). We also note that the use of Avoidance of Coarse Language was the most widely used by students. While Indirect Requests was the least commonly used pattern by these students. As for

the language strategies used by Iraqi university students, the students used strategies that included Brown and Levinson (1987) theory in varying numbers. Bald-On Record was the strategy most commonly used by the students involved in this research, which may be due to the relationship between the students or the friendship Among them, which are generated by talking in a way that directs the speech directly and strongly to the listener while showing the politeness of speaking, because of the nature of the relationship between the students. While Off Record was the least used strategy among Iraqi university students, this may be due to the tendency of Iraqi students to try to steer a particular direction, but in a more polite and less threatening way to the positive face.

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