

A Pragmatic Analysis of Expressive Speech Acts on WhatsApp Profile Statuses Among Iraqi Users

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ABSTRACT

Like other social media applications, WhatsApp statuses have become a very popular means for Iraqi users to share their cultural and personal feelings. However, the pragmatic roles of expressive speech acts (SAs) in WhatsApp setting have not been thoroughly investigated. The study aims to achieve two objectives. First, to examine the forms of expressive acts (EAs) posted by Iraqi WhatsApp users. Second, to examine the cultural and contextual factors which effect the formation of the common dialectal expressions. To this end, the study employed a mixed-method approach. It sampled 212 WhatsApp status updates collected from fifty users. A framework for SAs, developed by Searle in 1975, was utilized for the labeling of SAs. The data were analyzed thematically in respect to variation of age and gender. SPSS software was utilized to generate descriptive statistics and statistical tests. Results revealed that complaints were the most frequent acts followed by gratitude expressions. In terms of gender, male users posted more complaints and sarcasms, while the female users posted more mourning expressions and affections. In terms of age, younger users posted more emotional openness, while the older posted gratitude and religious expressions. All users employed emojis, dialectal idioms, and the EAs in order to culturally reveal their rich emotion, functioning as embedded mini-performances. Their statuses also reflect social commentary, identity, and coping mechanisms in digital pragmatics.

Keyword: dialect, , expressive acts, gratitude, Iraqi users, WhatsApp status

تحليل عملي لأفعال الكلام التعبيرية في حالات الملف الشخصي على تطبيق واتساب بين المستخدمين
العراقيين

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ملخص

على غرار تطبيقات التواصل الاجتماعي الأخرى، أصبحت حالات الواتساب وسيلة شائعة جداً لدى المستخدمين العراقيين للتعبير عن مشاعرهم وشخصيتهم ومشاركتها مع الآخرين. ومع ذلك، لم تُبحث الأدوار التداولية للأفعال الكلامية التعبيرية في بيئة الواتساب بحثاً وافياً. تهدف هذه الدراسة إلى تحقيق هدفين: الأول، الكشف عن صيغ الأفعال التعبيرية التي ينشرها مستخدمو الواتساب العراقيون؛ والثاني، بيان العوامل الثقافية والسياقية التي تؤثر في تشكل التعابير اللهجية الشائعة. ولتحقيق ذلك، اعتمدت الدراسة منهجاً كمياً ونوعياً، إذ شملت عينة البحث 212 حالة واتساب جُمعت من خمسين مستخدماً. وقد استُخدم إطار الأفعال الكلامية الذي وضعه سيرل عام 1975 في تصنيف الأفعال الكلامية. كما حُللت البيانات تحليلياً موضوعياً في ضوء متغيري العمر والجنس، تم استخدام برنامج SPSS لاستخراج الإحصاءات الوصفية وإجراء الاختبارات الإحصائية. أظهرت النتائج أن أفعالا كلام الشكوى كانت أكثر الأفعال شيوعاً، تلتها تعبيرات الامتنان. على مستوى متغير الجنس، نشر الذكور شكواى وتعابير سخرية أكثر، في حين نشرت



الإناث تعبيرات الحزن والمودة بدرجة أكبر. أما من حيث العمر، فقد أظهر المستخدمون الأصغر سناً انفتاحاً عاطفياً أكبر، بينما مال الأكبر سناً إلى نشر تعبيرات الامتنان والتعبيرات الدينية. كما وظّف جميع المستخدمين الرموز التعبيرية، والتعابير الاصطلاحية اللهجية، والأفعال التعبيرية للكشف ثقافياً عن ثرائهم العاطفي، بحيث أدت هذه العناصر وظيفية عروض أدائية مصغرة مضمّنة. كذلك تعكس حالاتهم تعليقات اجتماعية، وهوية، وآليات للتكيف ضمن التداولية الرقمية.

كلمات مفتاحية: لهجة، أفعال تعبيرية، امتنان، المتحدثون العراقيون، حالات الواتساب

1 INTRODUCTION

With the development of recent internet technologies, many platforms of social media were developed as the main medium for identity construction, public and personal interaction, and self-expression (Zhang, 2023). One of these platforms is WhatsApp, which is recently regarded as the first application for interaction in the Arab world, including Iraq (Sami, 2021). According to Johns et al. (2023), WhatsApp is not only being used for messaging but also as a main stage for emotional display and self-presentation. The profile status, in fact, is one of WhatsApp's most common and interesting features. To define it, it is a short text and/or image posted by the user to express an asynchronous message directed to the public or a specific person.

In spite of being short and sometimes overlooked, the status, pragmatically, according to Marwick (2013), delivers rich content that reveals a user's beliefs, emotions, social stances, and ideologies. WhatsApp status updates are commonly written in the Iraqi Arabic dialect, where language serves as both a communication tool and a symbol of cultural identity and solidarity.

WhatsApp status updates contain many idioms and expressions that are culturally distinctive. The status feature serves as a communicative act with its numerous cultural references, implicit meanings, and are often rich in emotional connotations (Shahbaz et al., 2024). One of the most interesting things about these textual moments is that they let people show their feelings like happiness, sadness, gratitude, frustration, and love, all in a single line or phrase (Pattusamy & Chopdar, 2024). From a pragmatic standpoint, these statuses offer a rich environment for examining Searle's (1975) definition of expressive SAs. According to Yule (2000), EAs, as opposed to directions or assertives, center on the speaker's mental state. Expressive SAs do not modify the external environment; instead, they articulate the speaker's emotions regarding a circumstance or someone. So, from Yule's (2000) perspective, the way that religious references colloquialisms, and emotional expressions are mixed together in Iraqi WhatsApp messages shows how expressive SAs are being adjusted to modern ways of communication.

While SAs, in general, have been studied thoroughly whether in their digital or traditional communication in different regional contexts, there remains a need for a study in terms of EAs in local dialects on social media applications like WhatsApp. Moreover, while there have been studies on classical Arabic



pragmatics, not many studies have looked into how Iraqi WhatsApp users encode emotional and social meanings in their status updates (Rababah, 2020). As a result of this paucity, it is important academically to inspect the way the expressive SAs are put together and understood in Iraqi Arabic WhatsApp wordings, taking into account the unique cultural and linguistic features of the language.

The main objective of this study is to look at expressive SAs in the status updates of Iraqi WhatsApp users in a realistic way. The emphasis will be on recognizing, classifying, and analyzing the various EAs used, as well as comprehending how these actions represent the emotional landscapes, interactional styles, and sociocultural norms of Iraqi digital communicators.

To accomplish this objective, two key research questions were posed accordingly.

1. What are the most common EAs in WhatsApp statuses employed by the Iraqi users and how are these statuses constructed in the Iraqi dialect?
2. How do emotional, contextual and cultural factors affect the structure and interpretation of these EAs?

As far as the limitation, this study focuses only on WhatsApp statuses posted in the Iraqi Arabic dialect by Iraqi users, not stories or communications. The sample size will be limited to a set number of statuses obtained from voluntary participants (male and female) of various ages.

Regarding the significance, this study is set to enrich the domains of pragmatics, sociolinguistics, and digital discourse analysis by deepening our comprehension of the operation of expressive SAs within a specific, real-world digital context since this study is set to (1) provide pragmatic knowledge into how Iraqi Dialect is used in online communication, (2) present evidence for the cultural and contextual embeddedness of EAs, (3) improve our understanding of identity formation and emotional expression in WhatsApp use, and (4) extend the knowledge of sentiment analysis and natural language processing in context with a dialect.

2 LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 SAT Theory

In his book 'How to Do Things with Words' published in 1962, J.L. Austin in 1975 established the conception of SAs by arguing that utterances are actions in and of themselves rather than just means of conveying information. Austin proposed a three-part model in which he presented three acts: (1) perlocutionary (the impact the utterance has on the listener), (2) illocutionary (the purpose of the utterance), and (3) locutionary (the act of saying something) (Reiland, 2024). On the American context, Searle (1975) developed this theory by establishing a typology of illocutionary acts in a more formal way that includes directives, expressives, directives, assertives, and declarations (Rahmaddinova, 2025). The current research considers solely illocutionary acts that express the speaker's mental or emotional state. Searle (1975) views expressives as apologizing,



criticizing, congratulating, thanking, and lamenting. Unlike other speech acts, expressives are not associated with any changes occurring in the external world or with any attempts to receive action from the interlocutor; on the contrary, expressives are associated with the internal state of the speaker with regard to the respective circumstance.

Expressives often reveal variations across cultures. For instance, to express appreciation or gratitude in English, one simply says 'Thank you', whereas for an Iraqi Arabic speaker says 'جزاك الله خير' (May Allah reward you with goodness), thus combining both social and spiritual aspects of communication. It is therefore clear that speech act (SA) function as platforms for expressing emotions, as well as communicating social values.

According to Blum-Kulka et al. (1989), SAs, particularly expressives, are influenced by socio-pragmatic norms, which encompass cultural expectations related to formality, politeness, and emotional transparency. EAs are typically highly stylized, metaphorical, and even religious in tone in high-context societies like Iraq, where indirectness and emotional resonance are emphasized.

2.2 Pragmatics and Computer-Mediated Communication (CMC)

The transition from face-to-face communication to CMC brings up new challenges as well as possibilities for pragmatic expression. CMC, unlike spoken discourse, does not use nonverbal cues such as facial expressions, intonation, or gestures (Herring et al. 2013). Thus, in order to convey the pragmatic intention, users of WhatsApp need to depend on linguistic creativity, punctuation, emoticons, repetition, and code-switching (Herring, 2007). Online language is 'written speech' because of its conversational tone (Crystal, 2004). He claims that because users take advantage of the hybridity of the medium, expressiveness in digital speech frequently goes beyond that of formal writing. For example, using emojis '😬' or '💔' frequently in WhatsApp status can, unquestionably, enhance the emotional power of brief statements that could otherwise seem unclear. In her study on mobile messaging, Jegede (2024) developed this idea further by demonstrating that users adopt platform-specific pragmatics, modifying their EAs to fit the constraints and capabilities of a particular app.

Due to its temporary statuses and limited characters, WhatsApp status updates foster very concise and powerful self-expressions. In a similar manner, Iraqi users, like their Arabic-speaking counterparts, resort to culturally embedded communication patterns when articulating themselves. For example, status updates like "ماكو وفه بهذا الزمن" (There's no loyalty left in this world), for instance, combine elements of social satire, emotion, and local flavor in a way that combines several dimensions of meaning within a single act of communication.

On the basis of an earlier work by Anber et al. (2018), it can definitely be added that Arabic-speaking users, including Iraqi WhatsApp users, regularly extend the level of poetic-expression-heavy language use in online



communication with a view to filling a paralinguistic gap created through online status updates alone—while status updates happen entirely through text.

2.3 EAS In Arabic and the Iraqi Dialect

Research investigations are many in the field of expressive SAs, particularly in the Arabic dialectal varieties. But, Compared to Modern Standard Arabic (MSA), dialects such as the Iraqi one provide greater emotional immediacy and cultural connection. As stated by Al-Khatib (2006), the emotional expressions of Arabic are often indirect, highly-contextual, and dependent upon common cultural grounds.

The expressive SAs in the Iraqi dialect often have emotive metaphors like 'كلبي متعب' *'My heart is weary'*, religious exclamations like 'الله كريم' *'Allah is generous'*, and regional slang that expresses emotion along with social alignment. Expressions such as 'مو بيدي' *'It is not in my hands'* and 'الدنيا ظالمة' *'life is unjust'* are normally observed in WhatsApp statuses as interpersonal reflection or indirect complaints. Research on Arabic SAs frequently regards dialects as secondary; however, dialect is fundamental to emotional communication in everyday interactions.

In this respect, Hamdan et al. (2023) adds that Jordanian users perform code-switching between MSA and the dialect when changing between formal and intimate phrases. Iraqi users on WhatsApp frequently favor dialect for expressive statuses, as it facilitates personalized and culturally complex self-disclosure. Here are two examples.

- 'ما فقدت أحد، بس كلشي بدا يوجع' *'I haven't lost anyone, yet everything began to hurt'* conveys poetic mood, psychological depth and sadness.
- 'راحو الطيبين' *'These good people have gone'* is an evocative nostalgic statement that also conveys social criticism.

It is worth noting that although John Searle (1969, 1975) categorized such acts as expressives in terms of pragmatics, these expressions in their dialectal forms are not only emotional. They are, in the social context, performative acts in nature since they signal group membership, subtle protest, or emotional solidarity.

2.4 Previous Studies on WhatsApp Discourse

Because of its widespread use and hybrid communication features, which include group engagement, private messaging and semi-public status updates, WhatsApp has received a lot of scholarly attention in the last ten years. Here are six related studies in different regional contexts.

Mobile applications such as WhatsApp are said to foster 'ambient affiliation,' that is, a low-effort means for maintaining emotional and social connections (Yus 2011; Herring & Androutsopoulos 2015). Despite being passive in form, WhatsApp status updates are emotive performances that elicit interpretation and reaction. In this interpretive digital environment, expressive SAs are often unconstrained by conventional grammatical rules or complete sentence structure.

In a Saudi study, Alalmay (2025) revealed that group chats encourage both formal and informal expressions of emotion, including comforting, complimenting and teasing. The scholar observed that Saudi users show a high leaning to code-switch between the MSA and their dialect, especially when trying to express sentiments.

In this regards, there is a high likelihood that his pattern is valid in the Iraqi context, since dialect is the main mode of speech in WhatsApp.

Hamdan et al. (2023) found that Palestinian and Jordanian users utilized WhatsApp as a digital platform for emotional expressions, especially among women and youth. The scholar adds that WhatsApp users frequently include short Quranic verses or culturally meaningful idioms to convey feelings like hope, frustration or sorrow. The researcher came to the conclusion that such expressive status updates demonstrate complex interactions between individual emotion and cultural norms in religious frameworks, emphasizing that EAs in CMC are located within cultural contexts in addition to being individualistic.

Nevertheless, few investigations on WhatsApp as a practical medium have been conducted in Iraqi context. **Abdulbaqi and Wan Fakhruddin** (2024) found that emotionally charged dialect phrases were often employed in a small-scale study of Iraqi Facebook posts. Their study did not directly examine WhatsApp status updates, but it indirectly proposes a probable parallel in WhatsApp use. In fact, the expressive depth of Iraqi Arabic together with its highly metaphorical expressions, religious idioms, fatalistic tones, has not yet been examined in WhatsApp discourse extensively.

In Jordanian and Syrian context, Al-Ali (2014) revealed that elliptical forms, such as *'خلصنا!'* *'We're done!'*, were used by Jordanian and Syrian users so often without any context, leaving readers to infer meaning depending on common cultural presumptions. This trend is reflected in Iraqi statuses, too. For instance, *'ما بقيت نفسية اتحمل'* *'I no longer have the mental power to bear'*, may appear cryptic to outsiders, but it has profound emotional and cultural meaning for those who use it. For a clearer research gap, see the Table 1.

Table 1. Tabulation of the previous studies.

Author and year	Focus of study	Findings of study	Limitations of study	Gains to the current study
Yus (2011); Herring & Androutsopoulos (2015)	WhatsApp statuses as background connection and affective performance.	Statuses serve as interpretive digital presentations through mini-EAs.	General/global view; lacking linguistic depth of a specific region.	Provides an analysis of EAs in Iraqi WhatsApp statuses that is specific to the Iraqi dialect.



Al-Ali (2014)	Jordanian and Syrian users exhibit elliptical expressions and cultural inferences.	Ellipses in statuses are tied by the emotional meanings and cultural presuppositions	No specific data from Iraqi culture; the findings are deduced from other cultures.	Expands upon elliptical expression analysis within the context of Iraqi dialects.
Hamdan et al. (2023)	Status-based emotional expression among Palestinian and Jordanian women and young male users.	Statuses convey feelings within cultural and religious idioms, serving as a secure emotional outlet.	Jordan and Palestine are the primary focus; Iraqi dialect is not investigated.	Examines related cultural factors which helps apply them to Iraq.
Alalmay (2025)	Identity and emotion in Saudi Arabian chats	Users code-switch between their dialects and MSA for depth of feeling.	A focus on group chats rather than status updates	Analyses help look at status updates in the context of Iraq dialect.
Abdulbaqi & Wan Fakhrudin (2024)	Iraqi Facebook posts that use a dialect that is emotionally charged	Although it is emotionally rich, the Iraqi dialect is not widely studied on WhatsApp.	Limited to Analyzing Facebook posts	Helps utilize actual Iraqi dialect data to conduct a direct analysis of WhatsApp statuses

In conclusion, the studies under discussion highlight how WhatsApp status updates function as emotional capsules that are influenced by social norms, dialect, and culture. However, none of these studies have thoroughly examined the Iraqi context, which is a crucial gap that this study attempts to fill. Scholars have investigated social media discursive, sociolinguistic and pragmatic aspects in a variety of international contexts, including the Arab world. There are, however, still few studies that concentrate exclusively on WhatsApp statuses rather than messages or group chats, especially in dialectal Arabic environments like Iraq.



3. METHODOLOGY

The methodology was built on the principles from SA theory by Searle (1975), supplemented with discourse analysis procedures to examine communication strategies and linguistic patterns employed in Iraqi Arabic WhatsApp statuses.

3.1 Research Design

This study employed a qualitative research design based on the pragmatic discourse analysis paradigm. After that, text analysis was quantitatively utilized to quantify and describe the frequency of EAs into categories including complaint, mourning and gratitude.

3.2 Population and Sample

The research focused on Iraqi WhatsApp users, particularly those who utilized their profile status to convey personal experiences, emotions or thoughts. To guarantee that the participants had various linguistic and demographic backgrounds, a purposive sampling technique was utilized to select them. The target demographic covered male and female participants from a variety of age groups, urban and rural locations, and educational backgrounds.

A total of 50 participants were selected. Each contributed 3-5 statuses. To ensure equal gender representation, the researcher picked 50% male and 50% female users with ages of 18 - 55.

3.3 Data Collection Procedures

Two simple methods were used to collect data over a four-week time: (1) participants willingly provided screenshots of their WhatsApp statuses, and (2) a straightforward questionnaire was used to extract contextual information.

For more details, refer to the questionnaire in the appendix. Social media and personal networks were used to recruit participants. The following ethical norms were rigorously adhered to:

- All participants gave their informed consent, and their identities were anonymized by utilizing numerical numbers or pseudonyms.
- Only status updates that were publicly uploaded and were open to the user's contact list were included.
- This study did not use private discussions or real-time chat messages.

3.4 Data Analysis Framework and Tool of Analysis

Three stages of analysis drawing on Searle's (1975) speech act classification in addition to qualitative thematic coding were followed. See Table 2 for the stages.

Table 2. Stages of analysis.



Stage	Analysis	Procedure
Stage one	Classification of EAs	In this classification, statuses are categorized into seven sub-acts: sarcasm/irony, gratitude, spiritual hope, love/affection, complaint, mourning and congratulation.
Stage two	Linguistic and Pragmatic Analysis	In this part, the following procedures are followed: (1) Breaking down the lexical choices, emojis, religious references and metaphors. (2) The emotional expressions are identified into explicit or implicit.
Stage three	Sociocultural Interpretation	In this part, three analyses are involved: (1) The cultural values such as collectivism, religiosity and fatalism are explored. (2) The statuses are mapped as either emotional or situational context as they were presented by the users. (3) Comparing the statuses based on gender and age.

3.5 Tools of Analysis and Generalizability

For ensuring data saturation and analytical depth, every analysis was conducted manually but with NVivo software as a support system for thematic coding. On the other hand, SPSS software was utilized to generate numerical values.

It is worthy to acknowledge generalizability is limited in this study due to the non-random sampling in addition to the subjective nuances during the pragmatic interpretation of the data. Yet, the richness of linguistic and cultural data supports the depth of the study and its relevance to the specific sociolinguistic contexts.

4. DATA ANALYSIS AND RESULTS

Fifty Iraqi participants, aged from 18 to 55, inhabiting urban and rural areas of Qadisiyah province provided 212 statuses in total. The findings were divided into quantitative and qualitative parts since the study adopted a mixed-method approach:

4.1 Quantitative Findings

The analysis of the status updates was performed by means of a thematic and statistical approach. Seven fundamental EAs were categorized: sarcasm/irony, gratitude, spiritual hope, love/affection, complaint, mourning and congratulation. Here is the tabulation of these acts.

Table 3. Frequencies and percentages of the EAS.

EA	Freq.	Perce.
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1	Sarcasm/Irony	19	9.0%
2	Religious Hope	24	11.3%
3	Affection/Love	27	12.7%
4	Celebration	29	13.7%
5	Mourning	31	14.6%
6	Gratitude	38	17.9%
7	Complaint	44	20.8%
Total		212	100%

Based on the Table 3, status updates with compliment and gratitude acts were most common, as opposed to sarcasm/irony, followed by religious hope, which were the least. Affection/love, celebration and mourning wave in the middle. From a social perspective, the evidence indicates that Iraqi users have a tendency to achieve social harmony through the use of their status updates.

Table 4. Gender distribution of EAs.

EA		25 Male users	25 Female users
1	Sarcasm/Irony	15	4
2	Religious Hope	10	14
3	Affection/Love	9	18
4	Celebration	12	17
5	Mourning	10	21
6	Gratitude	14	24
7	Complaint	28	16

According to the highest numbers, the male users produced higher numbers of complaints and sarcasm, while the female users produced higher numbers of gratitude and mourning. But this judgment remains a hypothetical until a statistical test is performed. To this end, a Chi-square test of independence was generated.

Table 5. Results of a chi-square test.

The test	value	DF	Level of Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	13.420	6	0.037
N of Valid Cases			212

Since $\chi^2 (6, N = 212) = 13.42$ and the p-value = 0.037, the relationship between gender and the acts in question is significant. Thus, the female users produced a significantly higher number of statuses expressing mourning, gratitude, and affection, whereas male users were more likely to communicate feelings of complaint and sarcastic expressions.

Based on the distribution of EAs in Tables 3 and 4, it is confirmed that WhatsApp messages are deeply personal, situational, and culturally embedded digital forms of expression. Given that users express themselves in positive and negative forms, with a strong prevalence of statuses pointing to the meanings of commentary on

or coping with or expressing emotions about life events, we might argue that WhatsApp is not only medium itself but also is a microcosm of social and psychological world around the user using such medium.

Since the researcher collected data relevant to age groups, it is necessary to analyze the results in terms of age. For this purpose, participants were grouped into two divisions for the purpose of comparison. Group 1 has 26 users aging from 18 to 30, and Group 2 has 24 users aging from 31 to 55. Figure 1 is illustrative of the variations.

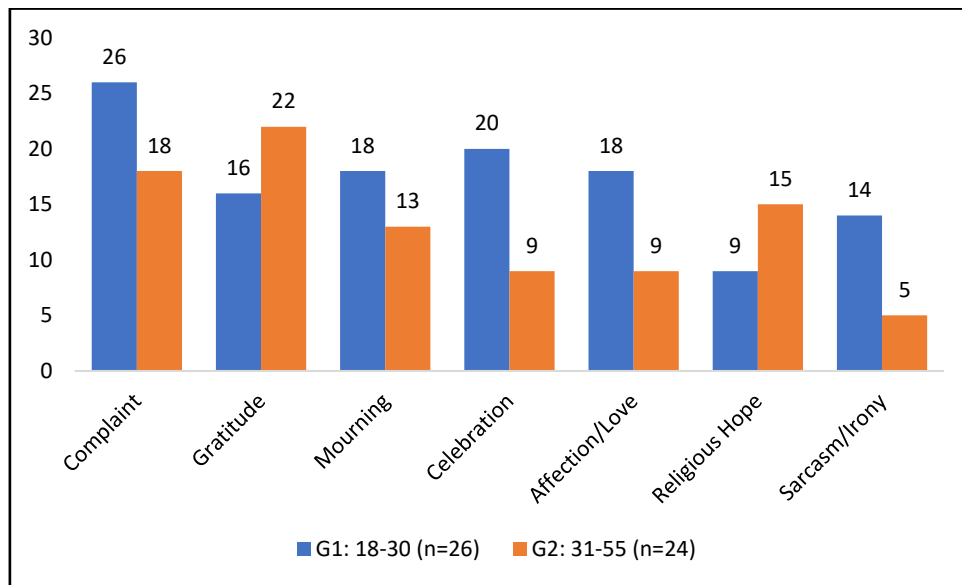







Figure 1. Age variations of EAs.

It was noticed that Group 1 (the younger) expressed affection, celebration and sarcasm, respectively, which means they are more expressive and emotionally open, while Group 2 (the older) constantly expressed religious hope and gratitude, which means they are more reserved and spiritually and socially reflective.

4.2 Qualitative Analysis

This subsection examines each EA presented in the Iraqi dialect. The English equivalents of the statuses and their linguistic interpretations are also included. Table 6 provides a detailed analysis.

Table 6. Qualitative perspectives of the statuses' content.

	E A	Status in Iraqi dialect	Equivalent in English	Interpretation	Remark
1	Sarcasm/Irony	e.g. 1 'الوضع تمام... لكن فقط كلشي ضايع' 	'Everything is good... but all is lost.' 	An ironic means to convey complaint and hopelessness.	These are categories of indirect emotional disclosures which strongly rely on shared scripts from culture and emoji-enhanced clues.
		e.g. 2 'اللي يحبك يختفي بس تحتاجه' 	'Whoever loves you, will disappear whenever you need him/her.' 	Sarcasm about social relations.	
2	Religious expression	e.g. 1 'توكلت على الله وما راح أندم'	'I trust in Allah, and I will not regret it.'	Determination associated with spirituality.	These status updates demonstrate how EAs call forth the divine presence at vulnerable times.
		e.g. 2 'يا رب لا تضيع تعبى'	'Oh god, don't let my efforts be wasted.'	Often posted before exams or interviews.	
3	Affection/Love	e.g. 1 'كلشي يروح إلا الخوي الوفي'	'Everything goes away except the devoted brother.'	A platonic affection based on loyalty discourse that is shared between men.	The majority of affection statuses, especially romantic ones, were more prevalent among women and they frequently avoided naming the beloved in an explicit manner.
		e.g. 2 'أحبك بس الظروف أقوى'	'I love you but the conditions are more hindering.'	When love is in conflict with the norms or pressures of society.	
4	Celebration	e.g. 1 'تخرجت أخيراً الحمد لله' 	'At last, I graduated Thanks be to Allah.'	Religious closure is common, especially at private festivities.	The status updates share happy life accomplishments, graduation and

	E A	Status in Iraqi dialect	Equivalent in English	Interpretation	Remark
		e.g. 2 'انخطبت أدعولي بالتوفيق'	'I got engaged 🤝 Wish me the best.'	Using emojis strengthens the social message.	engagements while expressing appreciation and asking for support.
5	Mourning	e.g. 1 'مرت سنة وما نسينك لحظة يا يمه'	'It has been a year but I have not forgotten about you, mom.'	It serves as a public memorial and an emotional opening.	In mourning stat e updates, references to mothers were mentioned three times more frequently than fathers.
		e.g. 2 'الفراغ كبير، دعواتكم لأبويه'	'It is a big void. Please, pray for my dad.'	Contains both mourning and indirect calls for support.	
6	Gratitude	e.g. 1 'الحمد لله على نعمة الصحة'	'Thanks be to Allah for the blessings of health.'	Particularly used after recovering from a disease. It indicates the socially expected humility.	These are speech acts that both convey emotion and maintain face in a collectivist culture that prioritizes modesty in achievement.
		e.g. 2 'شكراً ربي، كلشي صار تمام'	'Thank you, my god, all ended positively.'	Thankfulness for the divine intervention.	
7	Complaint	e.g. 1 'الدنيا دوارة، لا تفرح كثير'	'Life moves in cycle; try not to get too excited about it.'	A philosophical worldview denoting the unpredictability of life.	1. The use of ellipses, truncation, and spellings that are not conventional. 2. The use of sarcasm as a method of coping with the situation.
		e.g. 2 'ما بقي نفسية تتحمل'	'There is no more mental fortitude to persevere.'	Colloquial expression; frequently intensified with the emoji 😞 .	

The analyses conclude that expressive SAs in WhatsApp statuses reflect personal emotional settings formed by culture, dialect, and social standards. Both SAs of complaint and gratitude serve as the primary modes of expression, closely

associated with Iraq's socio-political context and religious heritage. Both gender and age seem to have a significant impact on EAs. (4) Users charge emotion and social criticism within micro-texts, employing Iraqi Arabic as a culturally rich medium.

5. DISCUSSION

Analysis revealed that the SAs of complaint and expressing gratitude were the two most common acts in Iraqi WhatsApp statuses. Both represent 20.8% and 17.9% of the data, respectively. As such, this duality echoes the social reality of life in Iraq. It is dynamically tied to a balance between spiritual conviction and everyday struggle. Complaint used frequently and took the form of idioms and metaphors such as "الدنيا دوارة" (life moves in cycle) which states a deep sense of dissatisfaction with social turbulence.

In contrast, the expression of gratitude is a sign of being thankful which is another powerful emotional expression with strong religious connotations as in "الحمد لله على كل حال" (praise to Allah in all conditions). This allowed latent sentiment and communicated one's level of faith. These results are in line with the claims put forward by Blum-Kulka et al. (1989) argue that EAs play a role not only in expressing emotions, but also in fulfilling social duties in high-context cultures.

In gender terms, the findings showed considerable differences in expressivity. It is revealed that female users are more likely to update statuses regarding affection, gratitude and mourning. Some of these EAs are supplemented by emoticons and explicit references to religious topics. In contrast, men often employed sarcasm and complaints, using irony as a means to minimize weakness as a way to criticize societal situations, as illustrated by remarks like 'ألوضع تمام... بس كلشي ضايع 😊' 'everything is good... but everything is lost 😊'. These gender-specific EAs substantiates sociolinguistic claims that female users generally display effects more overtly, while male users often express emotion through distancing techniques, especially on public or semi-public digital platforms like WhatsApp (Tannen, 1990; Holmes, 2013).

In addition to gender variations, age appear to have a significant effect on the formation of emotions. Group 1 users reveal a preference for expressive behaviors, including affection, celebration, and sarcasm. They often utilize colloquial language with emojis, which reflect their understanding of digital identities. Users in group 2 reveal a greater frequency of expressions of gratitude and hope as compared to group 2. Their expressions indicated a dependence on well-known religious supplications, conveying moral depth and social sincerity. These findings point to larger trends in CMC research, which imply that younger users make use of the creative opportunities offered by digital mediums for the purpose of identity formation. On other hand, older users make use of these platforms for the purpose of emotional regulation and communication that is focused on values.



It is evident that religious expressions are the dominant in almost all expressive SAs. This reveals the reciprocal interaction between religion and emotional rhetoric in Iraqi culture. Divine subjectivity was always present for users, in which affective experience was understood within a religious frame whether in expressing joy with thanks as in 'الحمد لله' 'Thank you Allah' or in times of sorrow for a loss of someone, 'رحمك الله' 'May Allah have mercy on you'. And expressions like "كريم الله" which 'Allah is generous.' served as socially sanctioned replacements, they were never direct complaints, whereas at the same time they offered a way for people to express their fears without threatening social order or propriety. The observed patterns are in line with Wierzbicka's (2009) argument that SAs require interpretation through the cultural scripts on which they depend.

WhatsApp statuses are not just random updates. They are critical sites through which Iraqis make sense of the problematics of cultural permanence, affect, and identity. This is in accordance with Anber et al. (2018), who argue that the emotional and religious expressions blend together on digital sphere within Arab contexts, which results a kind of self-presentation.

6. CONCLUSION

Analysis of 212 WhatsApp's posts indicated that the Iraqi's expressive SAs are highly emotional rich and adhere closely to the traditions of the Iraqi culture.

Regarding the first research question, findings showed that the EAs high on complaints and appreciations indicate both the intricacies of day-to-day events and also strength of spiritual perspectives. The linguistic structures are discovered to have deep roots and the emotional responses are very strong.

Regarding our second research question, the results show that EAs are largely influenced by Iraqi cultures values but also categorical variables such as gender, age and religion. Iraqi users can stylize the statements as their own emotional mirrors and social signals owing to WhatsApp's limited yet adaptable format.

In terms of age and gender, it was found that the employment of EAs involved mourning and affection was more prominent among female users.

On the contrary, men were more inclined to make notes of acts comprised of complaints and sarcasm. Young users tended to use funnier and more casual EAs in the aspect of age. But old users used the status updates as a forum for public belief and spiritual reflections. The Iraqi dialect has become a precious instrument for the release of emotionally honest communication between any speaker and listener in all segments.

7. IMPLICATIONS OF THE STUDY



The implications of the study are substantial for natural language processing especially sentiment analysis that faces difficulties in understanding the nuances and expressions involved with emotions in Arabic dialects. The results also demonstrate the persistent influences of cultural norms pervading modesty, faith and fatalism in how people express their feelings across contemporary digital media.

8. LIMITATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FUTURE STUDIES

Within the limitations of this study that restricted to the population of Qadisiyah city, it is recommended for future work to involve a larger sample from other cities to conduct a comprehensive analysis of all regional dialects. In view of the great differences in the dialects of northern and southern cities of Iraq, it is desirable to have a comparative study between Iraqi dialects to reveal how these dialects use such acts. For example, Mosul and Kirkuk cities in the north vs Maysan and Basra cities in the south.

9. CONTRIBUTION

This research contributed to the field of digital pragmatics by employing SA theory within a dialectal context, broadening the understanding of EAs in CMC micro-texts. It contributed to the expanding literature of research on Arabic pragmatics, specifically with dialect-specific emotional discourse, a historically underexamined issue.

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