GENDERLECT AND THANKING

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ABSTRACT: *Thanking is one of the best ways to maintain harmony between people. As face is so fragile, thanking is of the effective ways to saves face of the interlocutors. This being said, thanking is an indispensable part of language. This study deals, not only with thanking as it is, it studies another topic and that is 'gender'. Some studies showed that some linguistic items are used in different percentages among speakers when it comes to gender; say, females are more polite to some extent. Iraqi EFL learners are the sample of this study. This type of study, i.e. to know the differences between males and females concerning a specific area in linguistics is new and exciting. The aims of this study are the following:*
1. Finding out the strategies Iraqi EFL learners use concerning the speech act of thanking.
2. Concluding whether female learners thank more than the males overall.
To fulfill these aims, it is hypothesized that:
1. Iraqi EFL learners use the direct (or explicit) strategies to thank more than the indirect (or implicit) ones.
2. Female learners use more thanking strategies than the male ones.
After presenting the literature, the researcher conducts a test to a random sample of Iraqi EFL fourth year students at the Department of English/ College of Education for Human Sciences.
University of Babylon (2016-2017) The results of the test are analysed as well. After applying the test to the sample, he researcher concluded that the students used the direct strategies to thank almost all the time and they even left some of the strategies (especially the indirect one) unused. This emphasized the first hypothesis of this study. As for gender; females used thanking strategies a bit less than the males and this conclusion rejects the second hypothesis of the study.

KEY WORDS: Speech acts, thanking, gender, strategies, explicit, implicit, felicity conditions, EFL learners.

INTRODUCTION

There must be some harmony and social rapport among society members to overcome life difficulties. This harmony can be maintained through several ways. Thanking is one of the effective ways to maintain this rapport as it is the feeling of gratefulness directed towards others. Such a feeling appears during social exchanges between benefactors and beneficiaries when the latter benefits from gifts, assistance, kindness, help, favours, and support presented by others (Grant and Gino, 2010: 946).Thanking can be used to convey opposite emotions like: sarcasm, irony, and blame as well. It is also used to open, change, and close conversations. Moreover; the speech act of thanking may overlap with praise since speakers sometimes issue indirect thanking. This is another reason to why is the speech act of thanking is chosen in this study in addition to what has been previously mentioned. A more reason is that even though it is important, Iraqi EFL learners might not use all the strategies of thanking evenly, as there are many.
The following questions need to be answered in this study:

1. What are the strategies that Iraqi EFL learners use for thanking?

2. Who thanks more: male learners or females?

This study aims at finding out:

1. The strategies Iraqi EFL learners use concerning the speech act of thanking.

2. Whether female learners thank more than the males overall.

In this study, it is hypothesized that:

1. Iraqi EFL learners use the direct (or explicit) strategies to thank more than the indirect (or implicit) ones.

2. Female learners use more thanking strategies than the male ones.

The procedure can be summed up by the following steps:

1. Presenting the literature of the speech act of thanking.

2. Conducting a test to a random sample of Iraqi EFL fourth year students at the Department of English/ College of Education for Human Sciences/ University of Babylon (2016-2017).

3. Analyzing the results of the test to arrive at the conclusions.

This study is limited to the speech act of thanking. It is also limited to Iraqi EFL fourth year students at the Department of English/ College of Education for Human Sciences/ University of Babylon (2016-2017).

It is hoped that is study will be of pedagogical value to learners, researchers, and textbook writes, especially those who are interested in socio-pragmatic issues.

The Speech Act Theory

The original idea in Austin's book "How to Do Things with Words" (1962) is that performative utterances ('performatives' for short) are fundamentally different from constative (or descriptive) utterances. Whereas constative utterances could be evaluated in traditional terms of truth and falsehood, performatives are neither true nor false; instead, they are to be regarded as felicitous or non-felicitous (see 2.6).

1- He did not do it.

2- I state that he did not do it.

3- I Maintain that he did not do it.

These examples led Austin to conclude that all utterances are 'performative' in the sense of constituting a form of action, rather than simply a matter of saying something about the world. Austin highlights this by drawing a parallel between 'explicit performatives' such as:

4- I promise that I shall be there.

and 'primary performatives' (or 'primary utterances') such as:

5- I shall be there.

Finally, Austin reaches the conclusion that in all regular utterances like [4] and [5], whether they have a performative verb or not, there is both a 'doing' element and a 'saying' element. This leads him to shift to a distinction (1962:109) between locutionary, illocutionary and perlocutionary speech acts (see 2.3 for the classification of speech acts).

The Speech Acts

Actions performed via utterance are generally called "speech acts". In English, they are commonly given more specific labels; such as: apology, complaint, compliment, invitation, promise, request, and thanking (Yule, 1995:47).

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These descriptive terms for different kinds of speech act apply on the speaker's communicative intention in producing an utterance. Normally, the speaker expect that his communicative intention will be recognized by the hearer. Both the speaker and hearer are usually helped in this process by the circumstances surrounding the utterance. These circumstances, including other utterances, are called "the speech event" (ibid).

The Classification of Speech Acts

Austin, cited in Sadock (2005:2), argues that the issuance of any perfomative utterance is in fact the production of three simultaneous acts:

Locutionary Act

It is defined as "the act of speaking". Such an act usually involves the construction of speech. Sadock (ibid) exemplifies this type of act as uttering certain sounds, usually particular words and using them in conformity with the grammatical rules of a particular language and with certain senses and certain references as determined by the rules of the language from which they are drawn.

Illocutionary Act

It is the most important type of speech acts for it represents Austin's first invention. It is called "illocutionary" because it is performed during speaking.

Perlocutionary Act

It is the resultant of the speech on the hearer's as well as the speaker's feelings, emotions or actions. Due to the affectivity of this type, people refer to a certain ship as Queen Elizabeth or a certain couple as husband and wife, etc.

Austin (1962:150-1) presents a five-way taxonomy of illocutionary acts:

1. Verdicatives: consists of delivering a feeling; for instance, acquit, hold (as a matter of low), read something, etc.

2. Exertitives: of giving a decision for or against a course of action; for example, appoint, dismiss, order, sentence, etc.

3. Commisives: commits the speaker to a course of action. Like: contract, give one's word, declare one's intention, etc.

4. Behabitives: are "a very miscellaneous group", and are concerned with attitudes and social behavior. For instance: thank, apology, congratulate, welcome, etc.

5. Expositives: of expounding of views, conducting of arguments, and clarifying. For example: deny, inform, concede, refer, etc.

As for Austin's student, Searle (1976:12), he gives a different taxonomy:

1. commisives: commit the speaker to do something in the future (threat, promise, etc.)

2. Declaratives: change the state of affairs in the real world like the act of pronouncing.

3. Directives: get the hearer to do something such as request and suggestion.

4. Expressives: the illocutionary point of which is to "express the psychological state specified in the sincerity condition about a state of affairs specified in the propositional content". Like: thanking, congratulating, complaining, apologizing, etc.

5. Representatives: Describe the states or events in the world like claim, assertion, and report.

After that point, many linguists proposed their own taxonomies like Bach and Harnish (1979:51) and many others.

The speech act of thanking belongs to Austin's (1962:150-1) behabitives, searle's (1976:12), Jucker and Tavvitsainen's (2008:7), Tsohatzidis's (1994:229) expressives, and Bach and Harnish's (1979:51) acknowledgments (which express perfunctorily if not genuinely certain feelings towards the hearer).

A different approach to distinguish types of speech acts can be made on the basis of structure. That is, there is an easily recognizable relationship between the three structural forms "declarative, interrogative, imperative" and the three general communicative functions "statement, question, command/request"
6a.You wear a seatbelt. (declarative)
6b. Do you wear a seatbelt. (interrogative)
6c. Wear a seatbelt! (imperative)

Whenever there is a direct relationship between a structure and a function, we have a direct speech act and vice versa (i.e. whenever there is an indirect relationship between a structure and a function, we have an indirect speech act (Yule, 1996:55).
Indirect speech acts are generally associated with greater politeness in English than direct speech acts. To understand why, we have to look at a bigger than just a single utterance performing a single speech act (ibid:56).

The Speech Act of Thanking
The speech act of thanking is an illocutionary act performed by a speaker as it is based on a past act performed by the hearer. This past act benefits the speaker and so he feels grateful. Therefore, he makes a statement which counts as an expression of gratitude (Eisenstien and Bodman, 1986:67).Yule (1996:47) defines thanking as "the feeling of gratefulness directed towards others". From this, it becomes obvious that thanking is one of the effective ways to maintain social rapport. Thanking can express emotions, other that gratitude, sarcasm, irony, and blame as well. It is also used to open, change, and close conversations (ibid).

Pragmatically speaking, thanking is considered as a minimally face threatening act. Matti (1999:27) justifies this fact by saying that the speech act of thanking offends the thanker's negative face since he has to accept the debt; therefore, his freedom will be sacrifices and his face will be humbled. Nevertheless, in time thanking is a face threatening act for the thanker, it is a face saving act for the thankee's positive face. However, this threat can be minimized by responding to the thanker.

Strategies of Thanking
According to Johansen (2008:35), the term "strategy" has two distinct senses. The first one denotes a "realization of a speech act", while the second is the measurement that enables the interlocutor to keep harmonious relationships.

Aijmer's Thanking Strategies
Aijmer (1996:37) classifies thanking strategies as follows:
1. Explicit thanking:

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A. Emotional
a. Thanking somebody explicitly:
7. Thanks/ thank you.
b. Expressing gratitude:
8. I am grateful.
B. Non-emotional
a. Acknowledging a debt of gratitude:
9. I owe a debt of gratitude to you.
2. Implicit thanking:
A. Emotional
a. Expressing appreciation of the addressee:
10. That is kind of you.
11. That is nice of you.
b. Expressing appreciation of the act:
12. That is lovely.
13. It is appreciated.
c. Stressing one's gratitude:
14. I must thank you.
d. Expressing emotion:
15. Oh, thank you.
B. Non-emotional
a. Commenting on one's own role by suppressing one's own importance (self-denigration):
16. I am an ingrates, I'm so careless.

Surprizingly, Aijmer considers (14 and 15) as implicit forms of thanking. Anyhow, Johansen (2008:39) connects Aijmer's classification with Brown and Levinson's theory of politeness in which they present the way the speaker can satisfy the hearer's positive face. Therefore, it is a positive politeness.

Farina and Suleiman's Thanking Strategies
Farina and Suleiman (2009:121-3) classify expressing thanking into six strategies and the beneficiary has to choose one or more of them to convey the sense of indebtedness:
1. Thanking
a. By using the word "thank":
17. Thanks a lot.
18. Thank you very much.
b. Thanking and stating the favour:
19. Thank you for your help.
c. Thanking and mentioning the imposition caused by the favour:
20. Thank you for helping me to collect the papers.
2.Appreciation
a. Using the word appreciate:
21. I appreciate it.
b. Using the word appreciate and mentioning the imposition caused by the favour:
22. I appreciate the time you spent for me.
3. Positive feelings

a. Expressing a positive reaction to the favour giver (hearer):

23. You are a life saver.

b. expressing a positive reaction to the object of the favour:

24. This book was really helpful.

4. Apology

a. Using apologizing words:

25. I am sorry for the problem I made.

b. Criticizing or blaming or blaming one's self:

26. I'm such a fool.

c. Expressing embarrassment:

27. It is so embarrassing.

5. Recognition of the problem

a. Acknowledging the imposition:

28. I know that you are not allowed to give me extra time.

b. Stating the need for the favour:

29. I try not to give extra time but this time I need it.

c. Diminishing the need for the favour:

30. You did not have to do that.

6. Repayment

a. Offering or promising service, money, food, or goods:

31. Next time, it's my turn to pay.

b. Indicating indebtedness

32. I owe you one.

c. Promising future self-restrained of self-improvement:

33. It will not happen again.

Felicity Conditions

 Felicity conditions are certain circumstances that must be satisfied if the purpose of the speech act is to be achieved (Crystal, 2008:181) or to be recognized as intended (Yule, 1996:50).

 Each speech act has its own felicity conditions to succeed. For thanking, Coulmas (1981 cited in Matti, 1999:62) categorizes the object of gratitude as mentioned below:

1.a. Thanks ex ante(for a promise, offer, invitation, etc) (beforehand)

   b. Thanks ex post(for a favour, invitation, etc.) (afterwards)

2.a. Thanks for materialistic items (such as gifts, meals, goods, etc).

   b. Thanks for immaterialistic items such as(wishes, compliments, congratulations, help, etc.).

3.a. Thanks for some action initiated (unpromoted by the benefactor).

  b. Thanks for some action resulting from a request, wish, or order of   the benefiter.

4.a Thanks that imply indebtedness.

   b. Thanks that do not imply indebtedness.

Gender

 "the commonest characteristic to be reflected by specific linguistic items" as far as the speakers are concerned is sex (Hudson, 1996:121). Women use forms closer to the standard variety or the prestige accent than those used by men, i.e., female English speakers use linguistic forms "which

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are considered to be 'better' than male forms" (Trudgill, 1974:91-2). Not only better but also "more correct" the women's linguistic forms are considered to be (ibid: 93) and men's speech would be less 'correct' than those of women's (ibid:94).

Holmes (1995) cited in Eckert and McConnell-Ginet (2003:136), shares the same opinion saying that women are more linguistically polite than men. This mirrors the fact that, generally speaking, more 'correct social behaviour is expected of women. Sometimes, they even pretend that they use the more prestigious forms while in their real-life speech (i.e. without knowing they are monitored), they do less so and the opposite is true for men (Trudgill, 1974:95-7).

DATA COLLECTION AND ANALYSIS

Data Collection
The test of this study has been constructed to find out: the strategies Iraqi EFL learners use concerning the speech act of thanking, and whether female learners thank more than the males overall.The test of this study consists of two questions each is of six items to check the students' performance. The first question gives six items, each of which has an A role and B's reply (i.e. thanking) is needed. In the second question, a situation is provided and the students should answer with any thanking expression. Gender of the students (i.e. thankers) is going to be taken into consideration when analyzing the results of the test. The total number of students is twenty: ten of males and ten of females.

To achieve this first aim, Aijmer's (1996:37) model (see 7-8) concerning thanking strategies has been followed in this study. The students' use of the direct and indirect strategies needs to be measured separately.As for the second aim, the students are divided equally into two groups as each student will write down his gender.

Data Analysis
In order to achieve the first aim of this study, the following two tables will be presented to show how the learners performed in responding to both questions. The first table is about the direct (or explicit) strategies used by Iraqi EFL learners, while the second is about the indirect (or implicit) strategies the learners use:

Table 1: Results of the Learner's Response to Explicit Strategies

Strategy	Major	Minor	Males	%	Females	%	Total	%
Explicit	Emotional	a	112	46.66	116	48.33	228	95%
		b	8	3.33	-	0%	8	3.33
	Non-emotional	a	-	0%	-	0%	0	0%
Total			120	50%	116	48.33	236	98.33

The results of this table show that the first minor strategy, which is "thanking somebody explicitly", of the emotional strategies is mainly use. The second emotional strategy "expressing gratitude" is very little used (3.33%). The Non-emotional strategy is never used. So we can surely say that the explicit strategies are used in a very high percentage while the others are never used by the students. They answered using explicit strategies 236 times that is 98.33 of the total answers. Which clearly leave the indirect strategies with less than 2% (see Table 2). This gives the conclusion that the first hypothesis (Iraqi EFL learners use the direct strategy to thank more than the indirect ones) to be validated.

Table 2 below reveals the students' answer concerning the implicit strategies:

Table 2: Results of the Learner's Response to Implicit Strategies

Strategy	Major	Minor	Males	%	Females	%	Total	%
Implicit	Emotional	a	-	0%	3	1.25%	3	1.25%
		b	-	0%	-	0%	0	0%
		c	-	0%	-	0%	0	0%
		d	1	0.41	-	0%	1	0.41%
	Non-emotional	a	-	0%	-	0%	0	0%
Total			1	0.41	3	1.25	4	1.66%

As for the second aim, the total of both tables (1 and 2) will be extracted with separate genders in the following table:

Table 3: The Students' Answers According to Gender

Strategy Gender	Number of use	Percentage
Males	121	50.416%
Females	119	49.583%
Total	240	100%

Here, in this table the percentage of the females' use of the thanking strategies is 49.58% (i.e. 119 times), while of the males' use is "50.41% (i.e. 121 times)". These results reject the second hypothesis where the males of the sample used thanking strategies even more than females.

CONCLUSIONS

After applying the test to the sample, we arrived at the following conclusions. The students used the direct strategies to thank almost all the time and they even left some of the strategies (especially the indirect one) unused. This emphasized the first hypothesis of this study. As for gender; females used thanking strategies a bit less than the males and this conclusion rejects the second hypothesis of the study.

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Appendix

Q1/ Answer on the behalf of B:

1. B: Do you cook the meat?

   A: Of course, we always cook meat, Have some of these vegetables.

   B:

2. A: Let me pick you up to the cinema.

   B:

3. Would you like some more coffee?

   B:

4. A: I'll carry your bag if you like.

   B:

5. B: Can I borrow your pen John.

   A: Of course, take it.

6. B: Do you have a cigarette?

   A: Of course, Here you are:

   B:

Q2/ Give the appropriate thanking to the following situations:

Situation 1: A man could save the life of a child who was about to be crashed by a car.

Situation 2: Tom and Jim Share a room. Tom cleaned up their room alone while Jim was not there. Jim Comes back:

Situation 3: Joe shows Mary a car that he has bought for her:

Situation 4: A professor advised a student who had faced a serious problem:

Situation 5: A student opened the door for the teacher:

Situation6: At a Christmas party, guests arrive bearing gifts for their hosts: